



# Cross Town Trail Connector Master Plan



*A Trail Alignment Study*

February 2020



Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.

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## BACKGROUND

The Parkersburg to Pittsburgh (P2P) rail-trail will be a 238-mile trail running from Parkersburg, WV to Pittsburgh, PA and is currently near 80 percent complete. There are a few short gaps or missing connections in West Virginia to complete the 150-mile-plus stretch of the rail-trail from Parkersburg to the state's border with Pennsylvania in Monongalia County. One of the few gaps exists in Fairmont, WV. The gap lies in between the end of the West Fork River Rail Trail (WFRRT) on the west side of Fairmont to the MCTrail trailhead near Morgantown Avenue on the east side of Fairmont, approximately 4.8 miles. Completing the gaps that exist in Wood, Harrison, and Marion counties will have a transformative impact on West Virginia's economy by drawing some of the 800,000 hikers and bicyclists who visit the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) each year into West Virginia and ultimately a share of the more than \$40 million the trail users spend annually in communities along the GAP trail.

Since the summer of 2018, the City of Fairmont has led a small group of local technical stakeholder organizations to work on the trail development effort. Marion County Parks and Recreation (MCPARC) has agreed to lead the effort for completion for the section east of the Jefferson Street Bridge (approximately 1.5 miles) and the City of Fairmont's planning department will lead the effort to complete the section west of the Jefferson Street Bridge (approximately 3.1 miles). In the spring of 2019, the City of Fairmont received a grant from the Mon River Towns Program to go towards planning the trail alignment from the WFRRT Trestle to the Jefferson Bridge.

## PROJECT PURPOSE

The objective was to develop a route to connect the West Fork River Rail Trail to the south with the MCTrail to the north and complete the missing link of the P2P trail in Marion County. The routes through town to connect the two rail trails have been discussed in detail many times before but this is the first time the City of Fairmont led a planning effort intended for a master planned route for the intention of following through with completing the trail connection.



## PAST STUDIES

Many studies have been completed for Fairmont and Marion County. Below are just a few that have sections discussing the rail trail cross town connector and routes that could be used to successfully complete the task. It is important to state that this plan is not reinventing the wheel, it is taking the key points from each study and combining the best ideas into a plan the City can use to accomplish immediate goals and future.

- Fairmont Pedestrian Bridge 2008
- Beltline Master Plan 2010
- Fairmont Connectivity Plan 2014
- Fairmont Beltline Redevelopment Plan 2015
- Comprehensive Plan Update 2018
- Connecting Parkersburg to Pittsburgh by rail-trail – Feasibility Study 2018

## PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT:

The City of Fairmont along with Mon River Towns held a public meeting to kickoff the cross town trail planning and to update each group on their progress. Groups that attended the meeting included the City of Fairmont, MCPARC, Mon River Towns and the Rail-to-Trail Conservancy. The shared ideas and efforts helped guide the plan so that the planning effort took into account work already completed and underway. This initial meeting was held on July 17, 2019. The planning undertook review of past studies, mapping, property ownership and many interviews of interested parties. A Public meeting was held on December 3, 2019 in which CEC presented the overall conceptual masterplan.

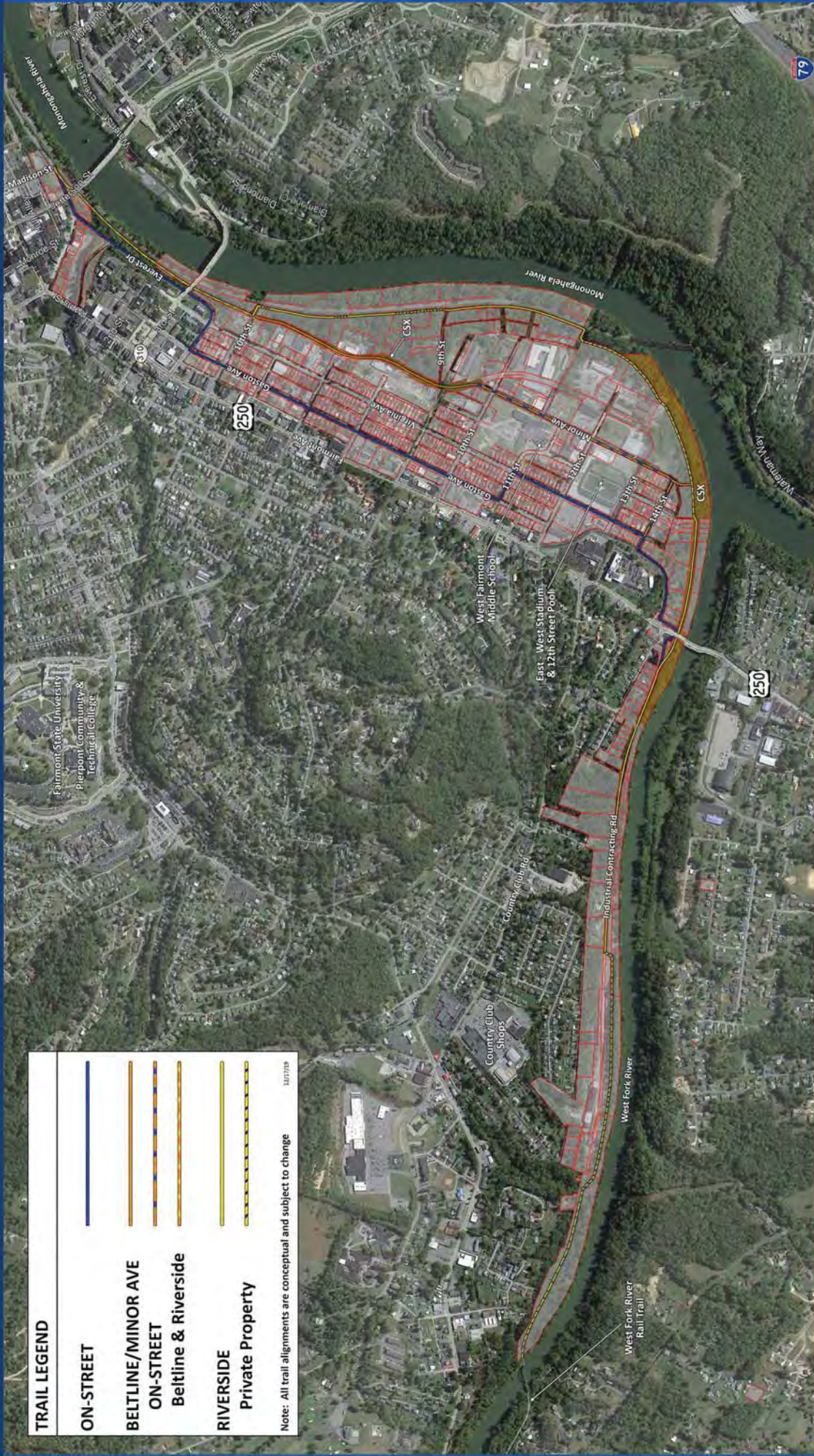
## HOW TO USE THIS PLAN:

This Plan contains recommendations for implementation of bicycle improvements to connect the West Fork River Rail Trail on the 'West Side' of the City to the Jefferson Street Bridge. The Plan serves as a guide for proposed bicycle improvements and to establish multiple bike routes. By prioritizing recommendations, and identifying potential costs and funding sources the Plan guides future coordination, design, and construction of individual projects throughout implementation. Since there are short to long term recommendations, the Plan should be revisited in 5 years to determine if an update is needed and to re-assess the status of recommendations.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Provide a trail route that links existing trails to the north and south of downtown Fairmont.
- Provide a trail that can be phased-in over time and allow for multiple in-city options for users of the trail network.
- Provide a system of trails that links existing schools, parks and public facilities to residents utilizing the proposed trail as a means of transportation.
- Define a phasing plan that creates a list of short and long term projects.





**TRAIL LEGEND**

- ON-STREET**
- BELTLINE/MINOR AVE**
- ON-STREET**
- Beltline & Riverside**
- RIVERSIDE**
- Private Property**

Note: All trail alignments are conceptual and subject to change

12/27/19

# The City of Fairmont, WV Cross Town Trail Connector Masterplan



## ROUTES/CORRIDORS:

After review of past studies, public input and on-site review, it was determined that the best strategy is to create a multi-level system of trails. Private property and property owned by CSX have halted progress of the connector trail in the past. This plan suggests an approached with three distinct trail opportunities. All three options utilize a 1.4 miles section on the southern end of the trail. This narrative will begin at the terminus of the West Fork River Rail Trail (WFRRT) or the newly decked trestle. The trail begins from the trestle and utilizes an existing crushed stone surface which is currently being used by the public and being maintained. The existing trail travels north along the West Fork River until reaching a gate on private property (Industrial Resources, Inc.). At this point, a new trail will be required to be built in the greenspace between the river and Industrial Resources.



Change from on-road to trail location.

In review of past plans, the City has a conceptual design/route for a trail in this area. The plans should be re-evaluated for current standards and be reviewed by the private business owners to determine if and how the proposed route will coincide with their business. The proposed on-grade trail will require minimum earthwork as the area is fairly flat. There are some drainage areas

that will need to be addressed with either culverts or small pedestrian bridges. This section of trail will travel approximately 0.5 miles in length. At the end of this section, the trail will be directed to the northern gate of the property where it will become and share-the-road trail for an additional 0.5 miles until reaching US Route 250.

US Route 250 or Fairmont Avenue is a busy road with two travel lanes and a medium turning lane. The crossing location is not at a light and therefore not a legal crossing. Each of the three routes listed below, start at this bridge and proposed going under the bridge for safety of the pedestrian users.

*Summary:* Additional engineering is required for the off-road sections including the underpass section (US Route 250) and the proposed trail paralleling private property (Industrial Resources, Inc.)

Existing Trail Connector.



## Options A: On-Road

The on-road option starts by utilizing WVDOH owned property on the East and West Sides of the US Route 250 Bridge. A new trail will need to be built in this area with grading and ramps to make up for the elevation loss and then gain to get the trail up to the elevation of Beverly Road. This will require additional engineered design. Once the trail reaches Beverly Road, it becomes a share-the-road system in both directions utilizing sharrows and signage (See the below figure for examples).

The route will take a right and travel east on 14th Street followed by a left/north on Virginia Ave. The route heads north until 11th Street. This intersection is an opportunity to connect the trail to West Fairmont Middle School to the west. The main route will head left/west on 11th Street until reaching Gaston Ave where the route turns right/north. Gaston Ave. was selected for the low volume of vehicular traffic, the least amount of elevation change and the stop conditions that appeals to safety for bicyclist. This part of the trail travels approximately 0.7 miles when it reaches

Share-the-Road  
Signage Used in  
Conjunction with  
Sharrows



4th Street. At 4th Street, the trail turns right/east and travels across Virginia Ave. where 4th Street becomes Everest Dr. The route follows Everest Dr. until reaching Cleveland Ave. where it turns right/north until reaching the final destination of Madison Street. This is the end of the share-the-road route.

*Summary:* Option A is an on-road route utilizing share-the-road options creating one dedicated on-road trail system through the beltline neighborhood. The on-road sections are on City roads and can be implemented quickly as funds allows.



Share-the-Road and Sharrows

## Options B: Beltline/Minor Ave

The Beltline/Minor Ave option starts under the US Route 250 Bridge on CSX Property and travels along the river heading east and north until reaching an uphill connector to Minor Ave.



Connection to Minor Ave.

There is an existing city right-of-way in this area but a more pedestrian friendly route is adjacent albeit on private property. This option should be explored with the private property owner. Once on Minor Ave., the trail becomes a share-the-road trail passing the 12th Street Pool, East West Stadium, private businesses and West Fairmont Middle School. The trail goes through the intersection of 10th Street and through an existing parking lot area where it crosses into CSX property (the abandoned Beltline rail). The trail travels through areas of overgrown wooded area along the abandoned rail corridor. The trail crosses private businesses and the county bus storage area at the 0.3 mile mark. There is ample room to create a dedicated and safe trail within the footprint of the corridor. At an additional 0.2 miles, the trail reaches the 3 Rivers Iron & Metal companies property. The trail will need to be routed around this section as there is many obstacles there and a safe route will need to be worked out with the private property owner. Once the trail travels beyond this property, it

goes through property owned by the Marion County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) for another 0.25 miles. The trail then continues north near City utility easements paralleling the CSX property until reaching an existing gravel access through private property to reach Madison St.

*Summary:* Option B is a mixed trail utilizing on-road share-the-road option and new trail on abandoned rail corridor, private and public property. This trail option allows for users to bypass a majority of the neighborhoods and traffic while connecting existing parks, businesses and the middle school to the system. This option will require the purchase or negotiation of CSX property which is currently landlocked and not accessible by CSX.



Leaving CSX property for Minor Ave.

## Options C: Riverside

The Riverside option starts under the US Route 250 Bridge on CSX Property and travels within the CSX property along the river heading east and north until reaching an uphill connector to Minor Ave. This is similar to option B. At this point, the plan is to negotiate with private property owners for a trail right-of-way at the bottom or river side of their property. The trail then would be running parallel with CXS property but the negotiations will be with private property as opposed to CSX. The trail will need to cross four private property owners until reaching 9th Street. The trail will parallel 9th Street and the CSX tracks until reaching the next private property. This owner has the next two parcels and the negotiation again would be for the bottom or river side of the property. The trail then enters Marion County Chamber of Commerce Property, followed by a private property and once again the a Chamber property until reaching the area of 3 Rivers Iron & Metal where it will then follow the final route laid out by Option B.



Example of Riverside Trail

*Summary:* Option C is a new trail utilizing abandoned rail corridor, private and public property. This trail option allows for users to be closer to the river in a wooded environment. It gives the long distance riders the opportunity to bypass the busier section of the in-town routes. This option will require the purchase or negotiation of CSX and private property but does limit the CSX property to abandoned corridor sections.

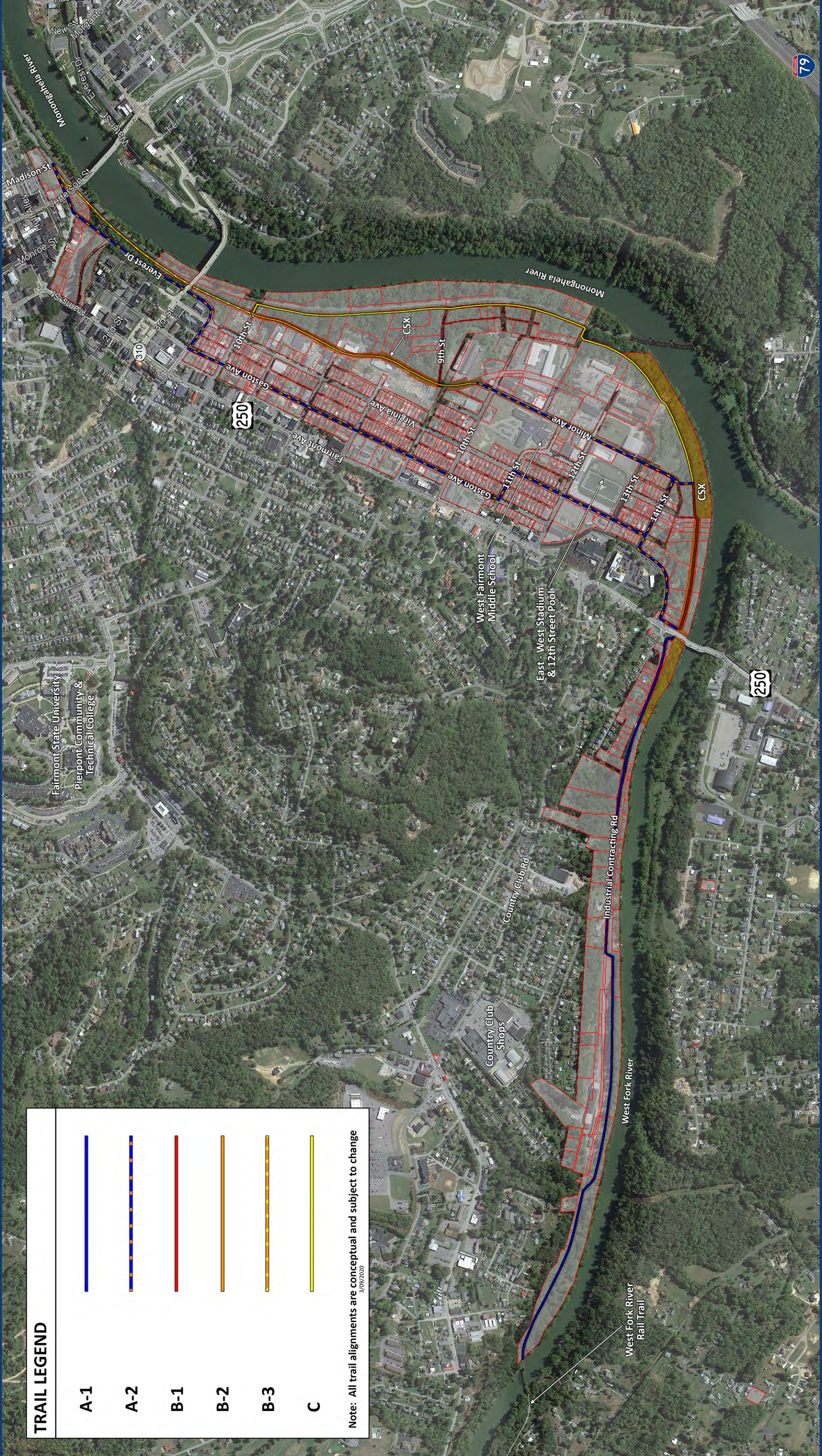


Trail terminus at Madison Street. Upper road will be utilized for option A and the lower gravel road for options B and C.

**TRAIL LEGEND**

<b>A-1</b>	
<b>A-2</b>	
<b>B-1</b>	
<b>B-2</b>	
<b>B-3</b>	
<b>C</b>	

**Note:** All trail alignments are conceptual and subject to change  
3/05/2020



# Trail Sections Exhibit

<b>A-1 TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
GRADE CHANGE UNDER RT 250	1	LS	\$320,000	\$320,000
FULL TRAIL SECTION (PAVED)	4250	LF	\$100	\$425,000
VEGETATED TRAILSIDE CHANNEL	4250	LF	\$8	\$34,000
CULVERT	21	EA	\$1,000	\$21,300
BRIDGE	2	EA	\$10,000	\$20,000
TRAIL SIGNS	4	EA	\$300	\$1,200
ROADWAY SIGNS	7	EA	\$125	\$875
SHARROWS	44	EA	\$350	\$15,400
TRAIL KIOSK AND MAP	1	EA	\$20,000	\$20,000
TRAILHEAD	1	EA	\$40,000	\$40,000
SUBTOTAL				\$897,775
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$134,666
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$103,244
<b>SECTION A- 1 - ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,135,685</b>

<b>A-2 TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
ROADWAY SIGNS	10	EA	\$125	\$1,250
SHARROWS	72	EA	\$350	\$25,200
SUBTOTAL				\$26,450
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$3,968
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$2,433
<b>SECTION A-2 ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$32,851</b>

<b>B-1 TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
FULL TRAIL SECTION (PAVED)	1900	LF	\$100	\$190,000
VEGETATED TRAILSIDE CHANNEL	1900	LF	\$8	\$15,200
CULVERT	10	EA	\$1,000	\$9,500
ACCESS FROM 14TH	1	LS	\$30,000	\$30,000
TRAIL SIGNS	2	EA	\$300	\$600
TRAIL KIOSK AND MAP	1	EA	\$20,000	\$20,000
SUBTOTAL				\$265,300
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$39,795
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$30,510
<b>SECTION B-1 - ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$335,605</b>

<b>B-2 TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
FULL TRAIL SECTION (PAVED)	2500	0	\$100	\$250,000
VEGETATED TRAILSIDE CHANNEL	2500	0	\$8	\$20,000
CULVERT	13	0	\$1,000	\$12,500
BRIDGE	1	0	\$10,000	\$10,000
TRAIL SIGNS	3	0	\$300	\$900
SUBTOTAL				\$293,400
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$44,010
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$26,993
<b>SECTION B-2 ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$364,403</b>

<b>B-3 TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
FULL TRAIL SECTION (PAVED)	2750	LF	\$100	\$275,000
VEGETATED TRAILSIDE CHANNEL	2750	LF	\$8	\$22,000
CULVERT	14	EA	\$1,000	\$13,800
BRIDGE	1	EA	\$10,000	\$10,000
TRAIL SIGNS	2	EA	\$300	\$600
TRAIL KIOSK AND MAP	1	EA	\$20,000	\$20,000
TRAILHEAD	1	EA	\$40,000	\$40,000
SUBTOTAL				\$381,400
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$57,210
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$43,861
<b>SECTION B-3 - ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$482,471</b>

<b>C - TRAIL SECTION</b>				
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>QTY</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>	<b>COST</b>
FULL TRAIL SECTION (PAVED)	5450	LF	\$100	\$545,000
VEGETATED TRAILSIDE CHANNEL	5450	LF	\$8	\$43,600
CULVERT	27	EA	\$1,000	\$27,300
BRIDGE	4	EA	\$10,000	\$40,000
ACCESS TRAIL TO LOWER LEVEL	1	LS	\$30,000	\$30,000
TRAIL SIGNS	8	EA	\$300	\$2,400
SUBTOTAL				\$688,300
CONTINGENCY (15%)				\$103,245
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING				\$79,155
<b>SECTION C ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>				<b>\$870,700</b>

## Final Recommendations and Next Steps

The Cross Town Trail Alignment Study identifies three options for the cross town connection. Each of the routes can be standalone trails but the entire system of all three options allows for an in-town system connecting community assets. By providing multiple routes, the system allows for multiple trail user types and future opportunities for development on properties along the trail system. This neighborhood system creates neighborhood and community connectivity while giving rail trail visitors an opportunity to see what Fairmont has to offer.

It is recommended that Option A is the starting point for the project. East of Rt 250, Option A extends for over 9,000 LF of trail to be placed on existing city streets. This is over half of the distance to connect with the West Fork River Rail Trail. Additionally, the existing concept the City of Fairmont has for Industrial Rd east of Rt 250 can be utilized to start negotiations with the private land owner to acquire a trail right-of-way. During this process, the City can begin discussion with the WVDOH on the proposed trail underpass that will go under the bridge at Rt 250. This section is the most expensive section of Option A but the most significant for the safety of the future trail users. Additionally, this underpass and Industrial Rd section will be utilized for the other two Options.

As the City seeks funding for Option A, it would be advantageous to start discussion with landowners for right-of-way routes on the Option B and C routes. Option B includes CSX property in the middle of the route and will more than likely take the longest to negotiate. It is the team's suggestion to work with the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (RTC) as they have been in negotiations with CSX on properties within the area. Option C requires existing public property and private property. Negotiation for trail right-of-ways for approximately five private property owners should begin when the City is approaching property owners on the other Options so that all of the right-of-ways are being pursued from the beginning which will allow for flexibility during negotiation and final alignment.

Although this study explored many alignments this study recommends three. There is many remaining next steps for implementation. These next steps include property negotiations and/or acquisition, engineering design and environmental compliance, culvert and bridges design, WVDOH coordination, fund seeking and intergovernmental agency teaming (City and County). The commitment of the City to complete the Cross Town Trail and connect the rail trails to the north and south of Fairmont are essential for Fairmont to become a major Trailhead on the Pittsburgh to Parkersburg Rail Trail.

Implementation of the Cross Town Trail will take several years, perhaps 5-10 years. In addition, continuing support from the City of Fairmont and the community will be key to seeking implementation funding and programming funds. Two key funding sources that have been identified are the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the WVDEP AML Pilot Grant Program (Pilot). The Pilot grant in particular is a great opportunity. It would allow for the entire system to be designed and built as one single project. Since 2016, 28 projects have received a total of \$80 million dollars in WV. This does not include the 2019 grant year.

## Closing

The Cross Town Trail promises to create a safe, non-motorized connection through the City to connect the West Fork River Rail Trail to the Monongahela River at Madison Street and eventually a connection to the East Side at Palatine Park. The goal to provide a safe connection between the northern and southern rail trails and linking community assets can be met through this concept. The concept also allows for a phased approach as funding allows creating a system of successful projects to create an in-town safe trail network.





## *A Trail Alignment Study*

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Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.