



White Salmon Bluff Connector Trail Study Stakeholder Meeting #2

Discussion of Public Comments and Preliminary Design Concepts
November 14, 2024

Agenda

1. Call to Order (Troy)
2. Welcome and Introductions (Troy)
3. Information Sharing and Discussion (HHPR)
 - a. Project Status Update
 - b. Discussion of Public Comments
 - c. Opportunities and Constraints
 - d. Review Preliminary Design Concepts
4. Questions and Comments (HHPR)
5. Next Steps (HHPR)
6. Adjournment (Troy)



Ground Rules

Contribute to the project design process by:

- Sharing input or providing guidance
- Listening actively
- Being respectful of others/no derogatory language
- Allowing others to speak
- Following the agenda

Stakeholder Expectations

Community stakeholders shall provide their input and guidance related to their knowledge, experience, or observations of the project area. Participation shall be objective and help expand the project understanding and work towards the project goals. Stakeholders may also ask general questions the consultant and staff should be aware of regarding the project.

Communication with Staff and Consultants

Questions regarding the bluff trail can be directed to the consultants throughout the duration of the project but are also encouraged to be saved for meetings.

Consultant Contact – Thuy Cao, Public Involvement Specialist thuyc@hhpr.com (503)221-1131 ext. 154

City Contact – Troy Rayburn, City Administrator administrator@ci.white-salmon.wa.us (509)493-1133 ext. 202

Project Overview

Project Team

City of White Salmon

(Administration)



Harper Houf Peterson Righellis (HHPR)

(Civil Engineering, Structural, Stormwater, Environmental, Landscape, Planning)



Columbia West Engineering

(Geotechnical Engineering)



Purpose

- Firefighter and Emergency Services access to the bluff
- Analyze and develop a trail connection from SR 14 to SR 141.
- Create steep-grade link to the pedestrian corridor in Downtown White Salmon.
- Trail segment aims to connect the City of White Salmon, located on the bluff above the Columbia River, to:
 - Pedestrian routes along the waterfront;
 - SR 14;
 - Bingen, WA; and
 - Hood River, OR.

Stakeholder Meeting #2 will review public comments, identified opportunities and constraints of the project site, and preliminary concept design for the trail.

Site Area

White Salmon Bluff Connector Trail Concept

The image is an aerial photograph of a wooded area with a proposed trail route overlaid in red. The trail starts at the 'North Trailhead' (marked with two green figures) and ends at the 'South Trailhead' (marked with two green figures). The route is enclosed in a yellow dashed line. Five inset photos show different trail features: a wooden staircase with metal railings, a wooden boardwalk with black railings, a wooden viewing platform with a railing, a wooden bridge over a stream, and a wooden staircase with a handrail. Labels include 'North Trailhead', 'South Trailhead', 'Pup Salon', 'Mt Adams Chamber of Commerce', and 'White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site'.

North Trailhead

South Trailhead

Pup Salon

Mt Adams Chamber of Commerce

White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site

Aerial Map



Background

- Need to include firefighter access to the bluff
- There are currently no pedestrian routes or separate pedestrian paths that connect White Salmon to the Columbia River waterfront.
- Connector aims to create a safe, dedicated pedestrian path, distinct from high-traffic routes on both SR 14 and SR 141.
- Enhance multi-modal accessibility and integration with the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge replacement project.



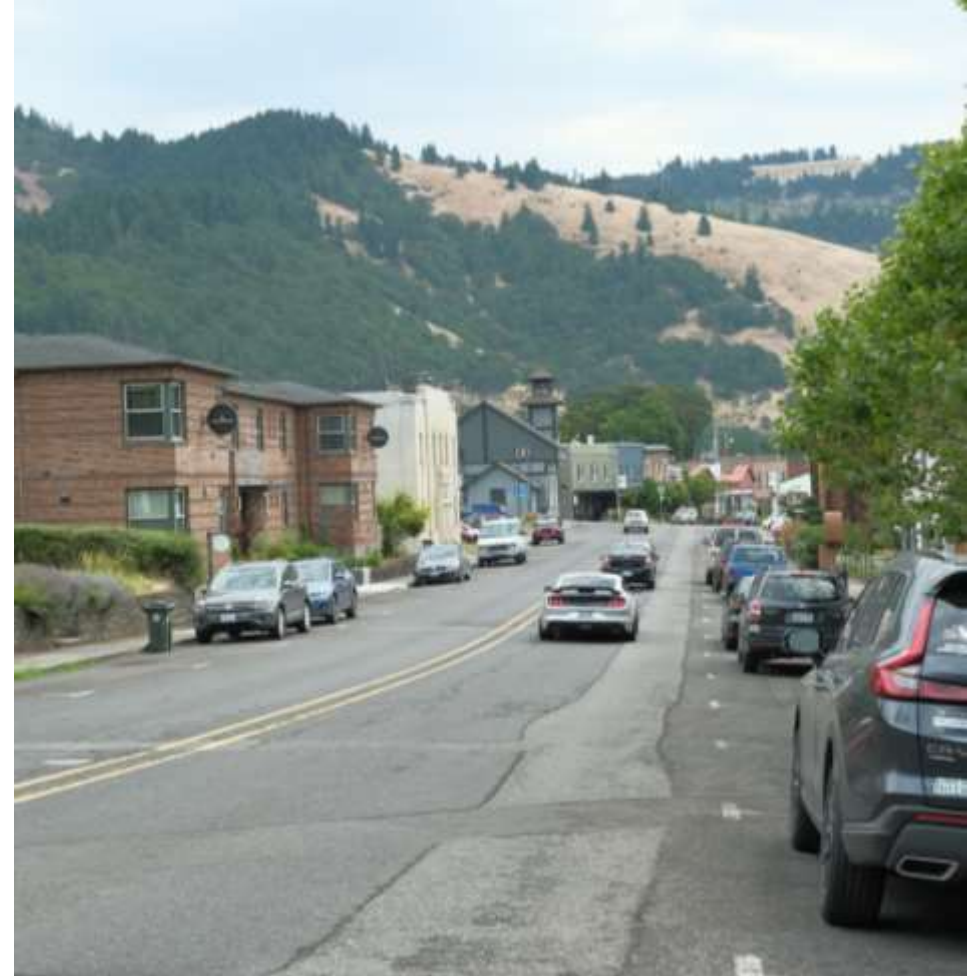
Transportation Alternatives

- Downtown White Salmon sees over 3,000 cars on average daily, and nearly 10,000 cars on SR 14.
- Traffic levels raise significant concerns for pedestrian safety.
- Trail will prioritize safety with clearly marked and secure crossing where the trail intersects existing roads.
- Connect to the Columbia River, existing Park and Ride, and future bridge.



Parking Possibilities and Trail Connections

- Need to consider wayfinding and directional signage for connections
- Project will not include a parking lot
- This will be a pedestrian oriented trail that does not emphasize vehicles
- How will parking connect to the trail?
- How can parking connections to the trail encourage additional walking or biking opportunities?



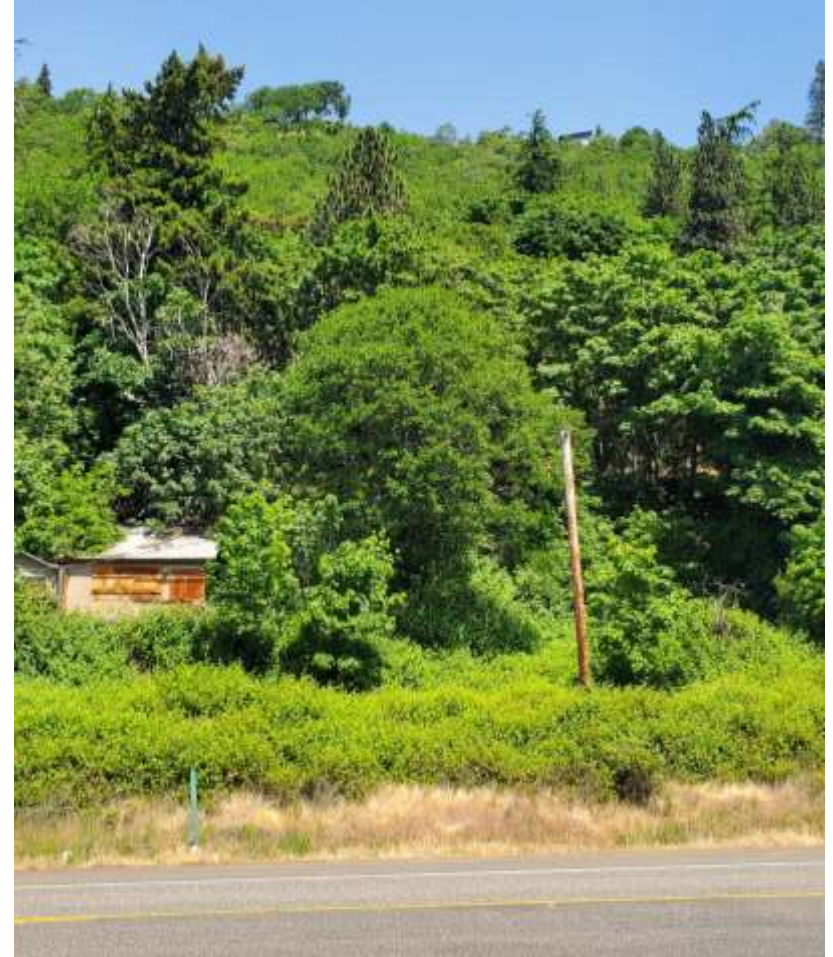
Wildfire Mitigation

- Use non - combustible materials
- Emergency / Fire Personal Access on Bluff and Dock Grade Road
- Fire Dept. Water Connections Every 200 feet for Fire Fighting
- Proposed buffer / Fire break on either side of Stairs / Pathway



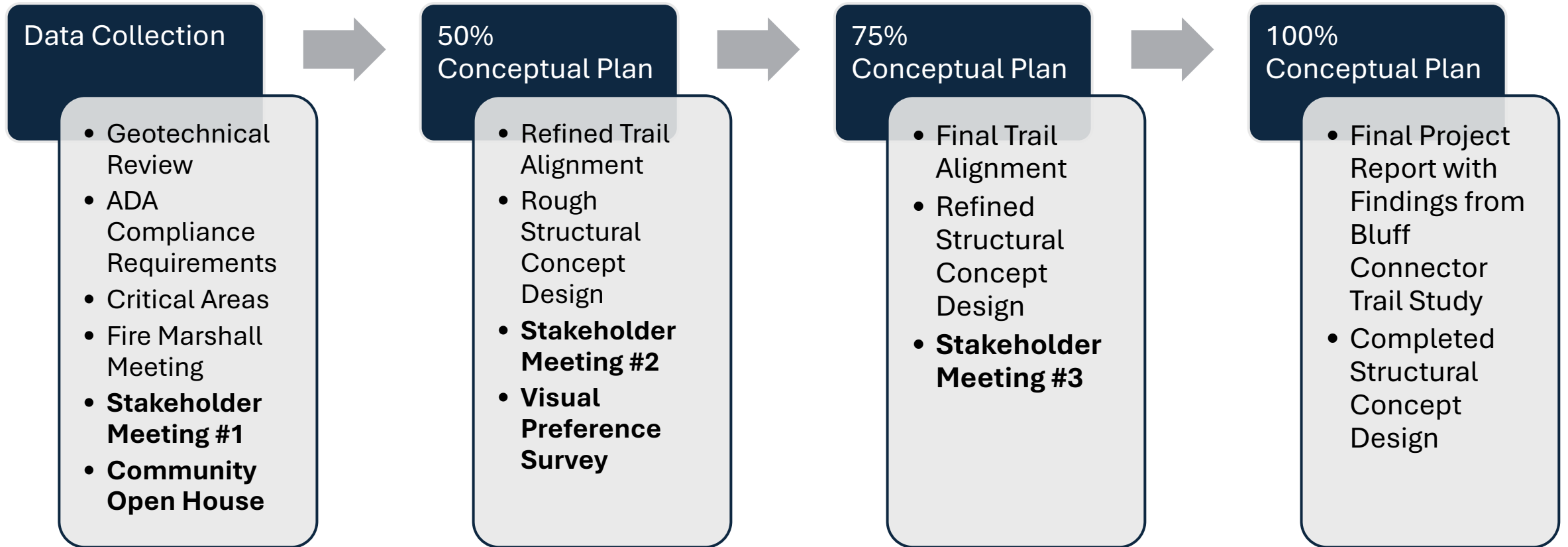
American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Due to steep terrain, an ADA-compliant route may need to bypass the stair sections.
- Focus on ensuring that path connections extend eastward from the SR 14 trailhead into the City of Bingen and up to White Salmon.
- Provide a fully ADA-accessible route.



Project Status Update

Project Timeline



Discussion of Public Comments

Key Considerations

The project team is seeking input and guidance from project area stakeholders regarding the following issues:

- Pedestrian mobility,
- Walkability as an alternative means of transportation,
- Obstacles impeding the creation of a fully integrated trail network,
- Wildfire mitigation efforts,
- Design compatibility issues, and
- Conflicts with the interests of adjacent neighbors.

Stakeholder Meeting #1

Concerns

- Wildfire mitigation
- Privacy and property impacts
- Parking and traffic
- Safety and liability
- Accessibility
- Environmental impacts
- Project need and alternatives
- Public input process
- Litter

Benefits

- Recreational opportunities
- Community and public health
- Access to White Salmon bluff
- Scenic views for public enjoyment
- Restoration of historic stairs
- Pedestrian options and walkability
- Alternative connections
- Wildfire mitigation and emergency access

Community Open House

Concerns

- Wildfire concerns
- Parking and signage
- Ongoing maintenance
- Emergency access and safety
- Privacy and property impacts
- Pedestrian and bike access
- Use of funds
- Property values and taxes

Benefits

- Wildfire mitigation
- Recreational opportunities
- Pedestrian and bike connections
- Connection with community
- White Salmon character and uniqueness
- Decrease reliance on cars
- Improve public health
- Scenic views and community access to nature

Suggestions Received

This is not a complete or exhaustive list of suggestions received but a summary of frequently mentioned items for consideration:

- **Trailhead locations to improve pedestrian access.** Locate trailhead in a prominent location to encourage pedestrian access, such as Downtown White Salmon or even another trailhead in Downtown Bingen that encourages direct pedestrian connections between cities.
- **Art, education, and cultural representation.** Opportunities for public art and sculptures, specifically from the indigenous perspective to represent their cultural significance in the area. Create additional opportunities for education about the bluff's ecosystem, nature, and history or culture.
- **Addition of a gate to enforce trail hours.** Consider the addition of a gate that can be securely locked before and after trail hours or during closures that could effectively prevent visitors from entering.
- **Horizontal water extensions across the bluff for firefighting.** Rather than just providing water access along the stairs, consider then expanding water access horizontally along the bluff for wider emergency access to potential wildfires anywhere on the bluff.

Suggestions Received (cont.)

- **Systems approach to pedestrian improvements.** Review potential improvements to the overall system and network of pedestrian routes and find opportunities for improvements to existing pedestrian facilities that would tie into the bluff connector trail.
- **Bicycle routes to connect to future Hood River-White Salmon bridge.** Look at alternative bike routes that connect the White Salmon community directly to the future bridge project. A suggestion was made about considering a mountain bike path adjacent to the stair alignment. Several comments suggested bike routes down Dock Grade Road.
- **Security and live cameras.** Consider installing cameras at the viewing platform or main security points to ensure public safety.
- **Hours of operation.** Limit trail hours to be closed when dark or late and allow for seasonal or emergency closure during times of high wildfire risk or winter storms that create unsafe conditions.
- **Community-oriented design.** Creating an intimate and quaint design that considers the communities interests fire and foremost, with tourism not at the front of mind.

FAQs – General

What is the timeline for this project?

The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed early 2025. Only feasibility is being looked at, there is no further work identified at this time. There is no plan or timeline for either design or construction of the trail.

Will the trail have set hours and who will enforce these hours?

It has been discussed that use of the trail be limited to dusk until dawn, however, details like this would be determined if the project were to advance.

Is the project planned in conjunction with any other future developments along the waterfront?

The project team is coordinating with the Hood River Bridge Replacement team that will be constructing the new pedestrian crossings of HWY 14 as part of their project.

What level of outreach will be made to other entities with similar structures or features in place?

As part of this study, the project team has researched similar projects that have been constructed more recently to find out standards and operations utilized. As standards for safety and construction have changed in recent years, this project will be heavily constrained by newer safety requirements and measures that are not present in many more known examples.

FAQs – Project Impacts

What will potential adverse impacts of this project to neighboring property owners be assessed, eliminated, and/or mitigated?

The project team has considered any adverse impacts that affect the feasibility of the project and will adjust the design wherever possible.

How will this project address concerns with resident and migratory wildlife?

There are ample portions of the trail that are either elevated or at grade to allow wildlife to pass through without obstruction.

Where will parking be located and how will visitors know not to park in private neighborhood streets?

Existing parking is available on either end of the trail with public parking surrounding Rhinegarten Park and along Jewett Blvd., as well as the existing S Dock Grade Rd. Parking area. Signage will be placed at the entry of Edgecliff Drive and any other potential street entrances and spots notifying that public parking is not available. Wayfinding signs can be used to direct the community to parking spaces.

FAQs – Maintenance and Safety

Who is responsible for ongoing maintenance of the trail?

If the project moves forward, the City will be responsible for maintenance and costs of the stairs.

How wide is the buffer around the stairs and how will that be maintained?

The feasibility study is likely recommending a minimum 20 feet be maintained for a vegetation clearance buffer around either side of the stairs. The exact dimensions of the buffer will not be determined until a design is completed. Maintenance would be determined in later processes if the project were to move forward.

What forms of security are envisioned for this project?

Security gates will likely be included at each end of the bluff section of the trail, with fencing proposed around sections of the trail adjacent to private property.

How will this project ensure safety such as prevention of suicide risks and other dangers?

The project will follow standard requirements for public structures where the height requires railings or other means of protection. In general, the path will be as close to the existing grade as possible. The steepest drop in slope will be at Platform 1 which will be conceptually designed as close to the bluff as possible while still maintaining adequate distance from adjacent properties and meeting structural and safety requirements.

FAQs – Wildfire and Emergencies

What will potential adverse impacts of this project to neighboring property owners be assessed, eliminated, and/or mitigated?

The project team has considered any adverse impacts that affect the feasibility of the project and will adjust the design wherever possible.

What criteria would warrant closure of the trail to restrict access during extreme weather conditions?

Generally, trails may be closed during severe red flag conditions with site specific fire plans in place. Closures may align with fire danger ratings as current status is regularly reported and updated by DNR. The stairs may also be closed as weather requires and would be implemented by the City much like Dock Grade Road during severe weather emergencies including winter storms.

Where is emergency access proposed and how will firefighters access proposed standpipes?

Access points will be from the top of the bluff, Dock Grade Road, and at HWY 14. The location and spacing of water standpipes has been discussed with the Fire Marshall and the design team is following those recommendations. There may be situations where the trail may not be safe and conditions will need to be assessed by the Fire Marshall at the time of the incident.

FAQs – Costs

How much is this project costing? Where will funds come from in maintaining the trail?

This feasibility study is being funded through a grant administered by WSDOT to the City of White Salmon in the amount of \$85,000. If the project is designed and built in the future, it would be owned and maintained by the City of White Salmon.

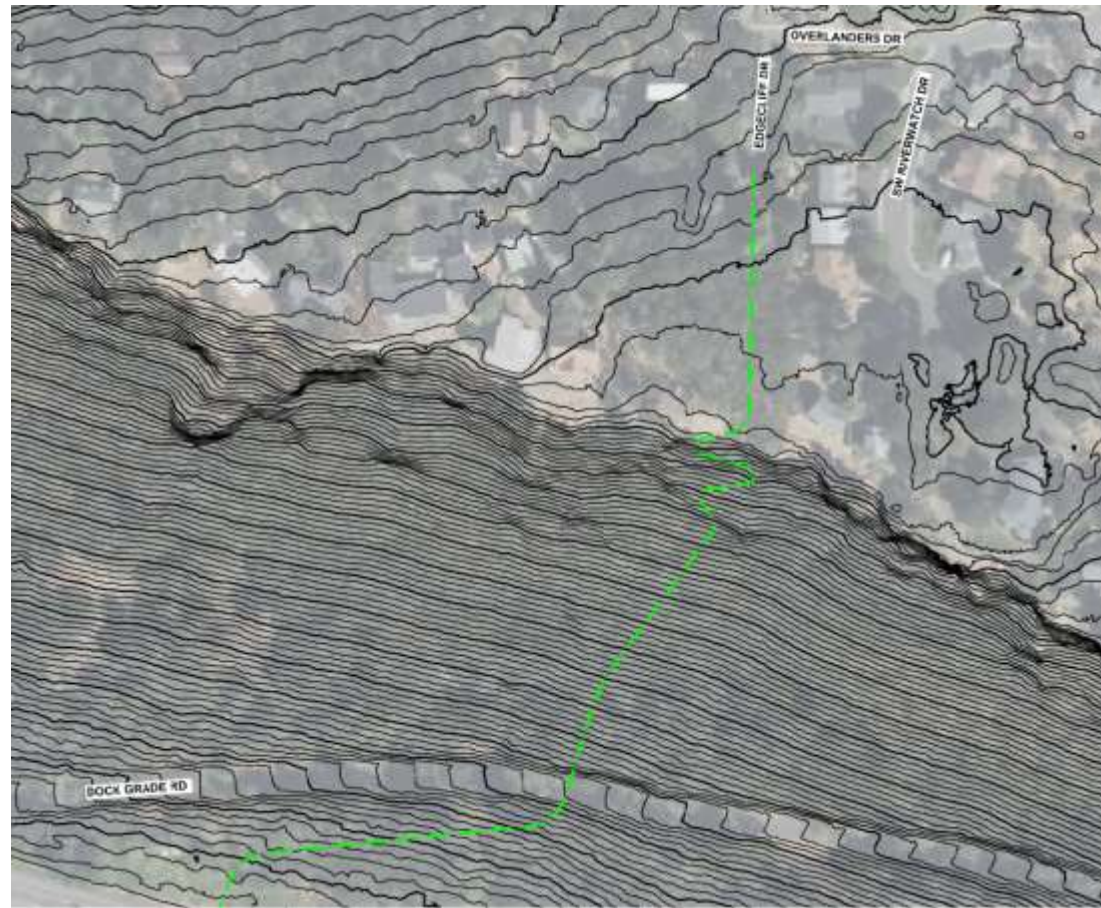
What is the cost of insurance for the trail? Will the trail affect adjacent homeowners' insurance?

There are no anticipated increases in risk, liability, or premium increases in conjunction with the project. Research has not been done pertaining to homeowners' insurance, being that it would not be a typically impacted item associated with public improvements.

Opportunities and Constraints

Alignment Analysis

Bluff Segment

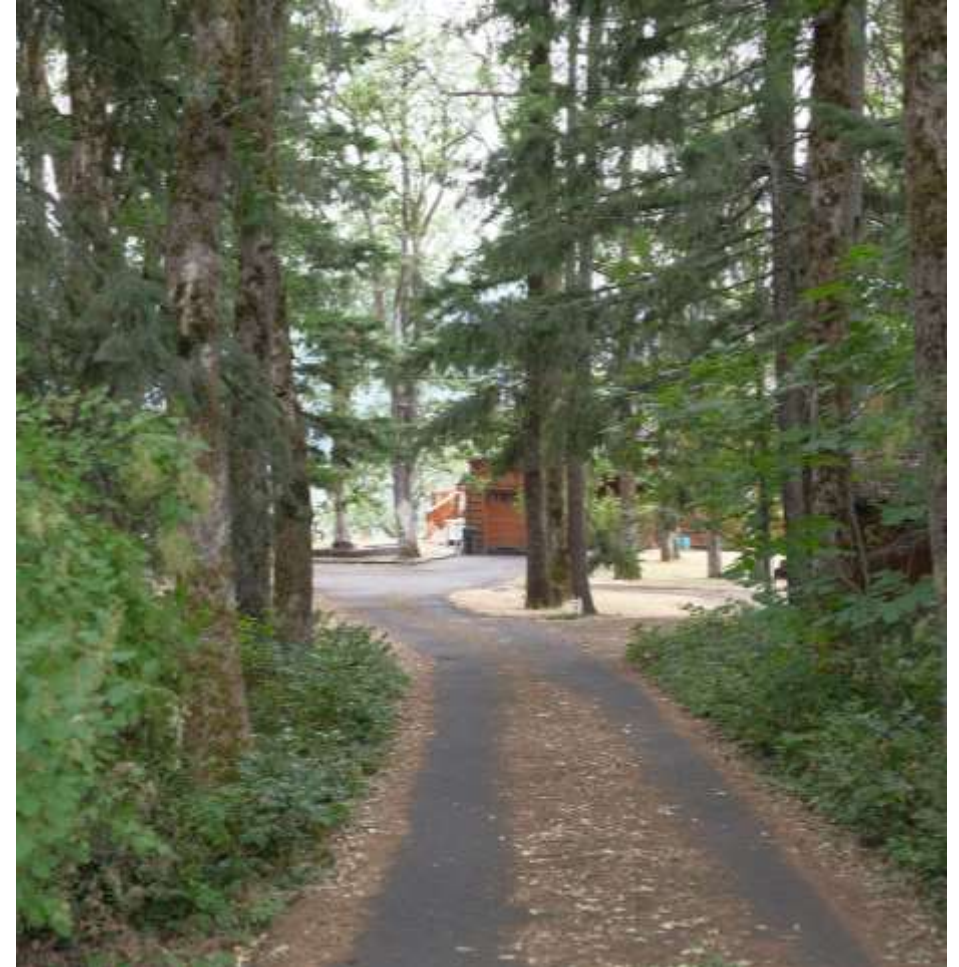


Alternate ADA and Bicycle Route



Legal Framework and Best Practices

- Applicable codes:
 - International Building Code (IBC)
 - WSDOT
 - United States Forest Service Standards
 - OSHA
 - Federal ADA Standards
 - White Salmon and Bingen City Codes
- Fire life safety requirements
- Easement constraints on private property donated for the purposes of the trail
- No pocket parks proposed that would create large gatherings



Potential Parking

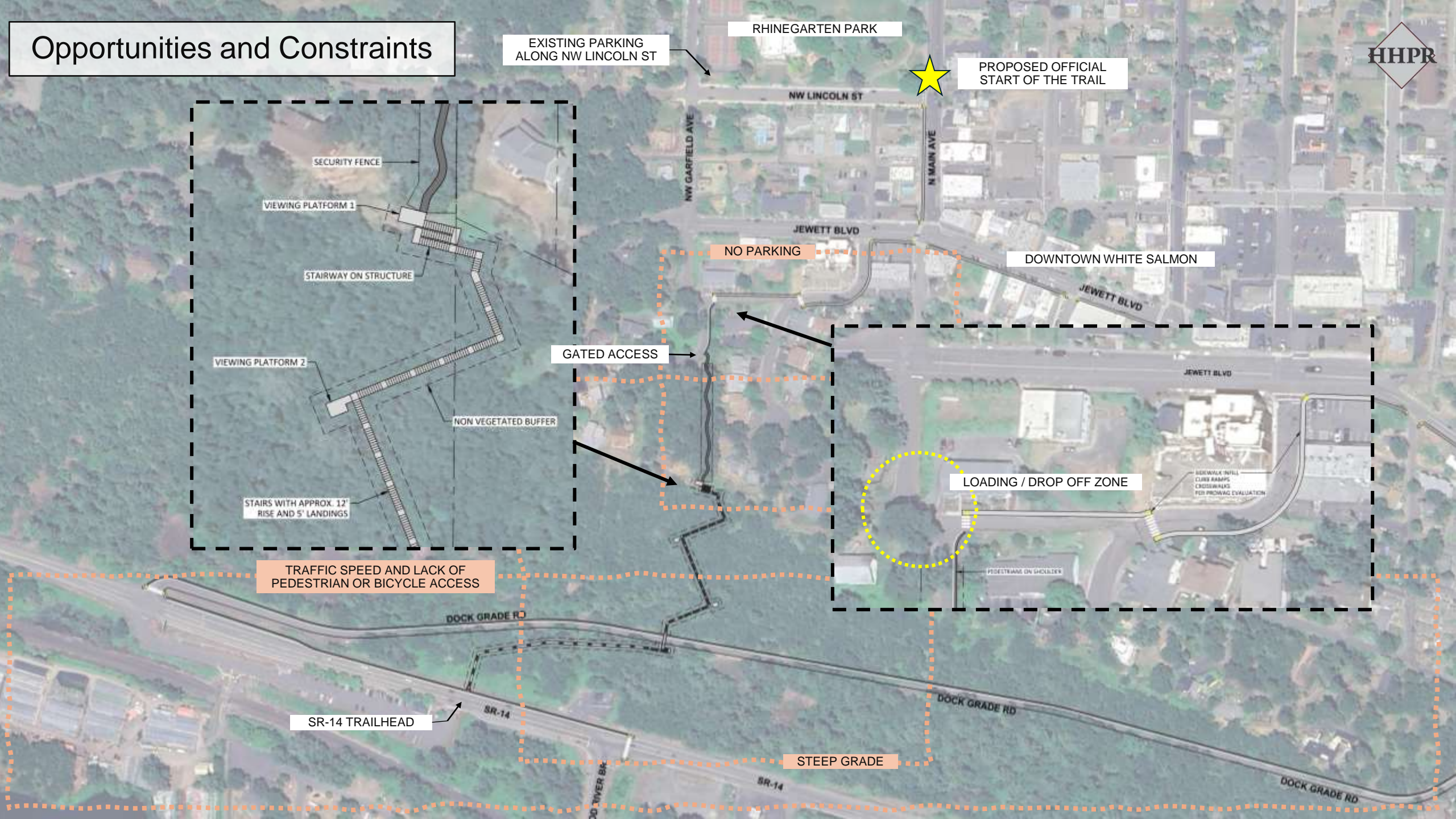
Legend

- 1) NW Lincoln St.
Rhinegarten Park
- 2) Public Parking Lot
- 3) W Jewett Blvd.
- 4) Dock Grade Rd.
Free Parking Lot



HHPR

Opportunities and Constraints



Preliminary Trail Alignment and ADA / Bicycle Access Route



PROPOSED TRAIL ALIGNMENT

PROPOSED ADA / BICYCLE
ALTERNATE ROUTE

NW LINCOLN ST

NW GARFIELD AVE

N MAIN AVE

JEWETT BLVD

JEWETT BLVD

JEWETT BLVD

JEWETT BLVD

DOCK GRADE RD

SR-14

HOOD RIVER BR

SR-14

DOCK GRADE RD

DOCK GRADE RD

DOCK GRADE RD

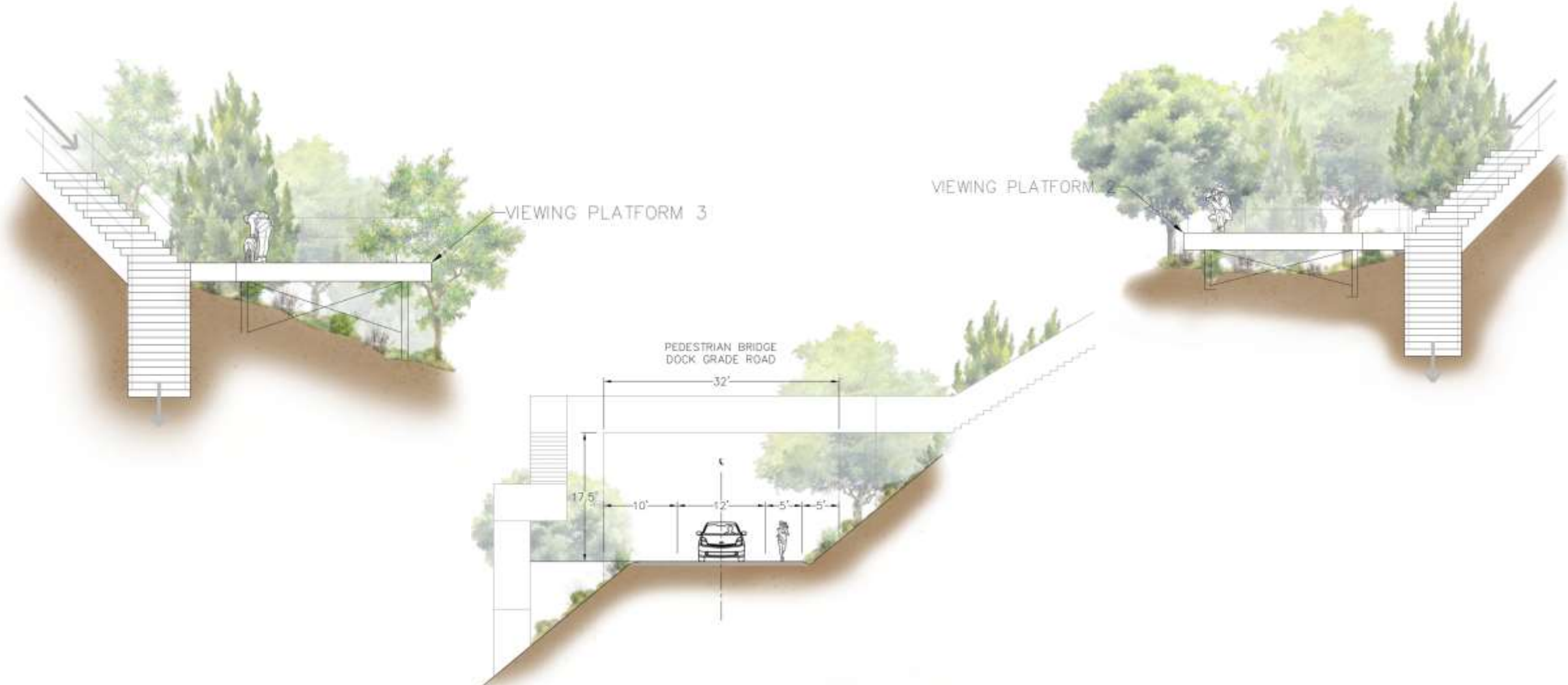
Review Preliminary Design Concepts

Design Process

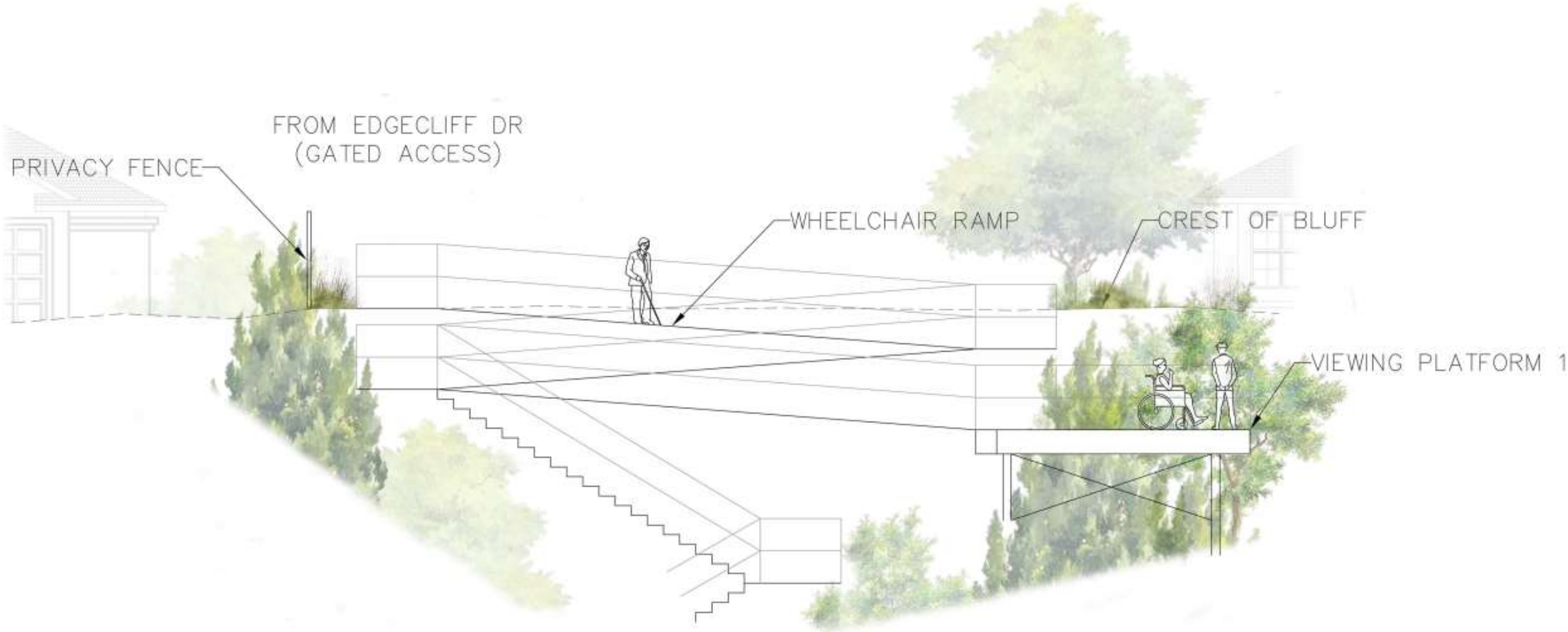
Stormwater, fire burn mitigation, landscape architecture, & structural engineering.



Conceptual Renderings



Conceptual Renderings



Rough Conceptual Rendering of Viewing Platform 1

This is the steepest part of the slope



Rough Conceptual Rendering of Viewing Platform 1

This is the steepest part of the slope



Questions and Comments

Next Steps

- **Visual Preference Survey**
Open December 5th through 26th
Online visual preference survey that includes several design elements such as construction materials and site furniture options.
- **Stakeholder Meeting #3**
[TBD] Mid-January
Final meeting to review public input on design options and select preferred design materials and project elements.

