



# Baldwin County Rail-Trail Design Plan

FOLEY – SUMMERDALE – ROBERTSDALE – LOXLEY – BAY MINETTE

A LEADERSHIP BALDWIN RAILS-TO-TRAILS INITIATIVE

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# Introduction

Imagine stepping out your door and onto a trail that winds through the heart of Baldwin County — from bustling downtown Foley to the county seat of Bay Minette, connecting communities, neighbors, and generations along the way. That trail already exists in our imagination. Now it's time to build it.

The old Louisville & Nashville Railroad once stitched Baldwin County together, carrying timber, crops, and settlers along a corridor that helped build the towns we call home. Today, that same corridor holds the promise of something new: a rail-trail that honors our past while investing boldly in our future.

## Who We Are

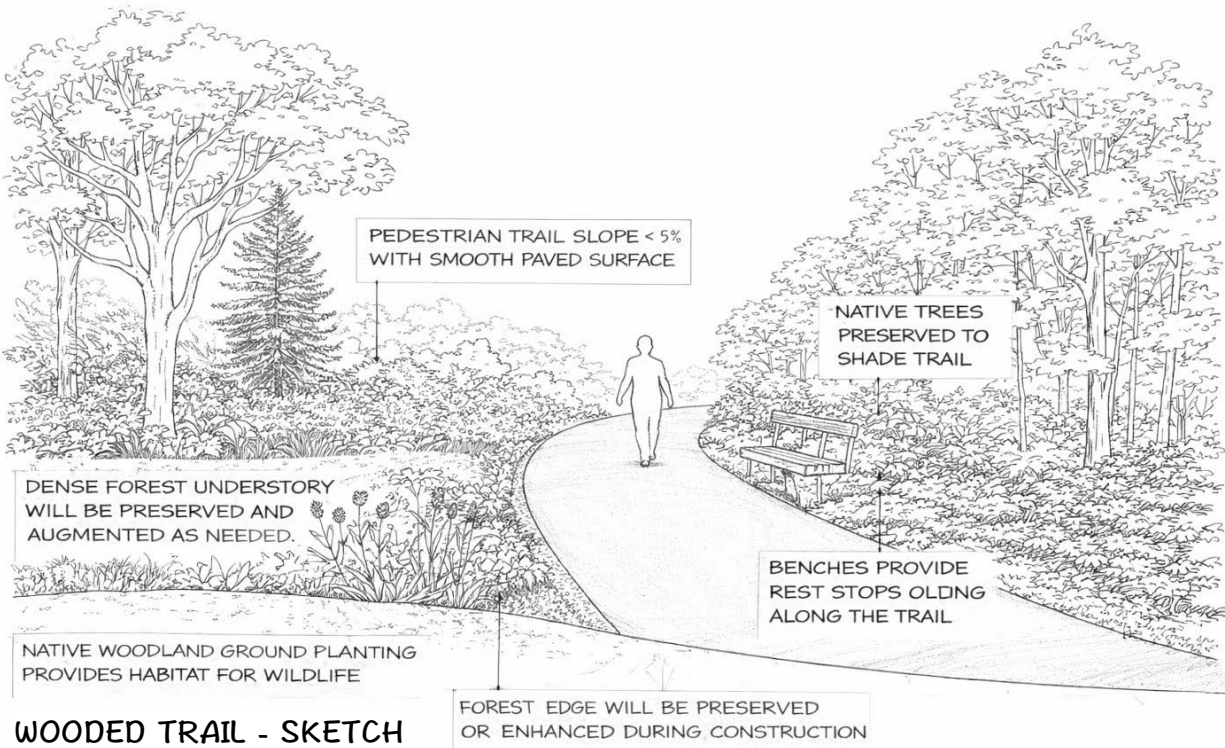
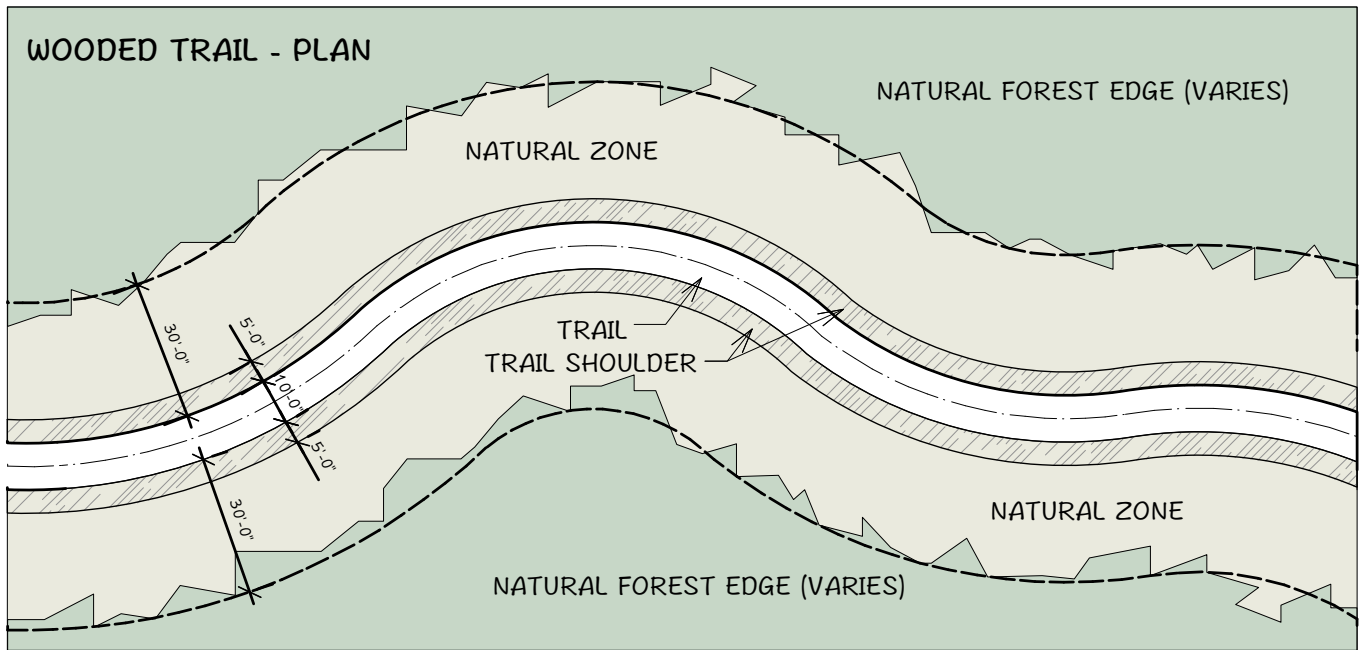
The Trail Ahead is a project of the 2026 Class of Leadership Baldwin County, a group of community leaders committed to shaping the future of the county we love. We believe that a connected, walkable, bikeable Baldwin County is within reach — and that the old L&N rail corridor is key to making it happen.

We are building a broad coalition to make this trail a reality, bringing together organizations like the Baldwin County Trailblazers and municipal bike-pedestrian committees from across the county. We know that trails like this don't get built by one person or one group — they get built by communities that decide, together, that the future is worth working for. We'd love for you to be part of ours.

## The Design Plan

The old L&N railway bed crosses several municipalities and landscapes, from commercial corridors to farmland. This unified design plan is meant to serve as a blueprint for city and county government offices to utilize, creating a cohesive trail identity from start to finish and making it as easy as possible to build new sections of trail as resources become available.

We have identified six distinct trail types along the proposed route: wooded trail, back of business, street frontage, buffer zone, park zone, and scenic side trail. This design plan recommends building and landscaping standards for each zone, as well as pedestrian crossings, amenities, and trail surfaces.



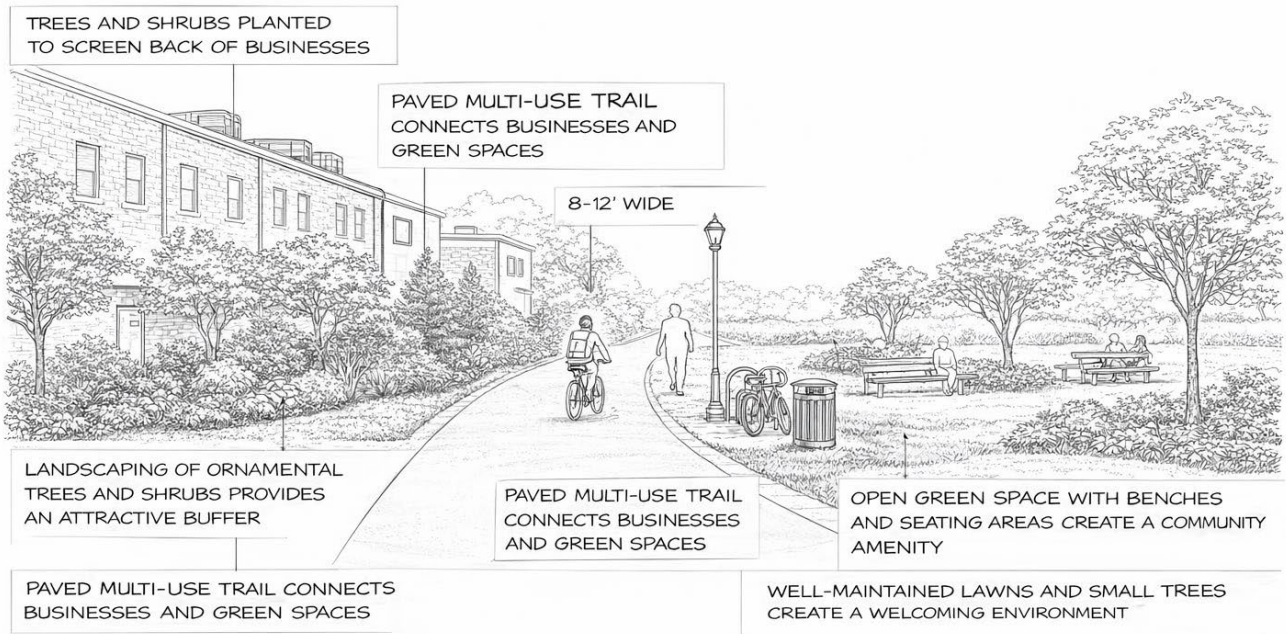
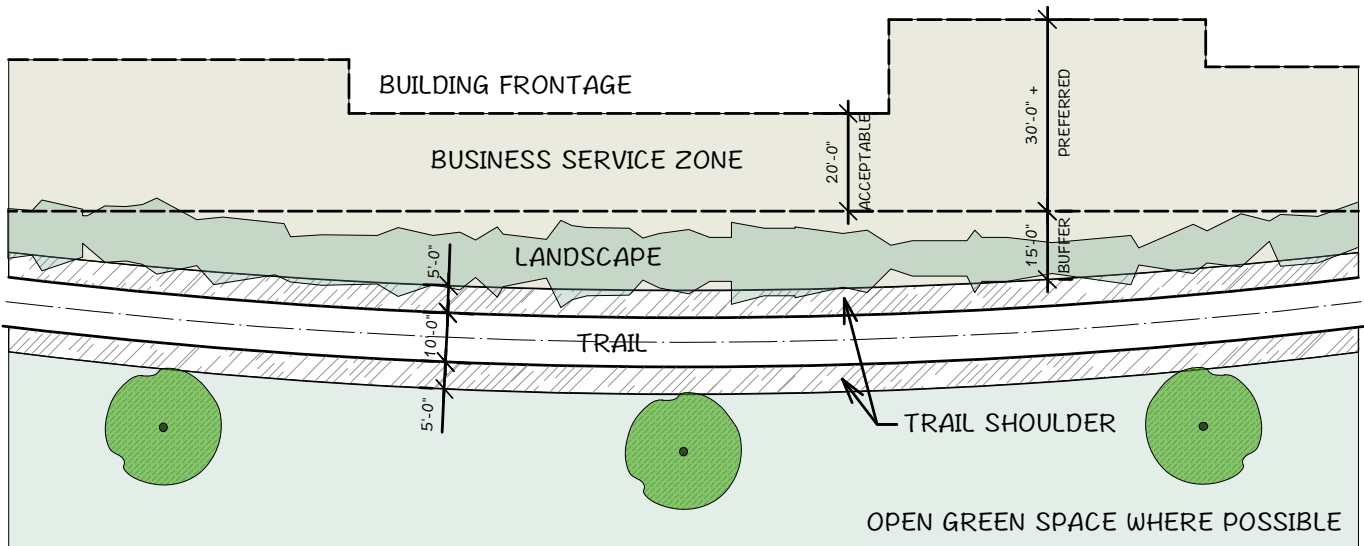
# WT – Wooded Trail

**KEY FEATURES**

10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate



## BACK OF BUSINESS TRAIL - PLAN



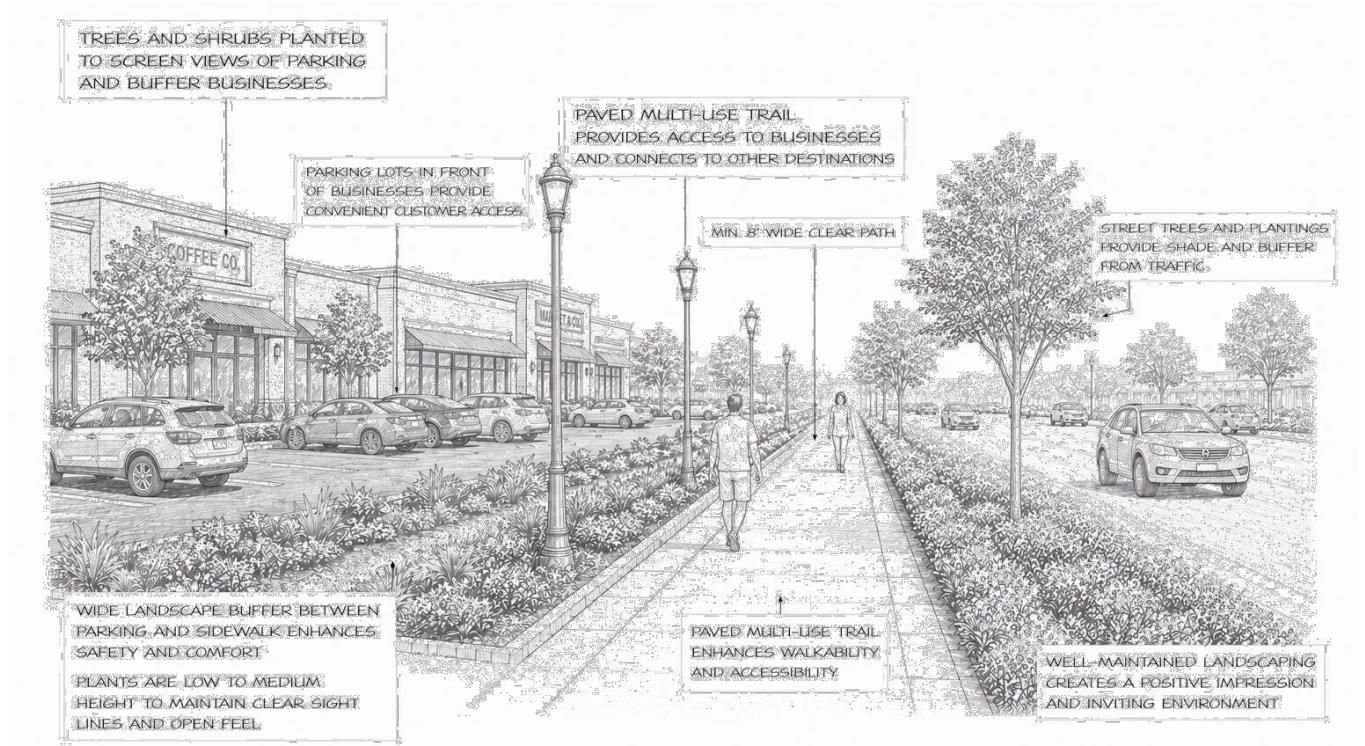
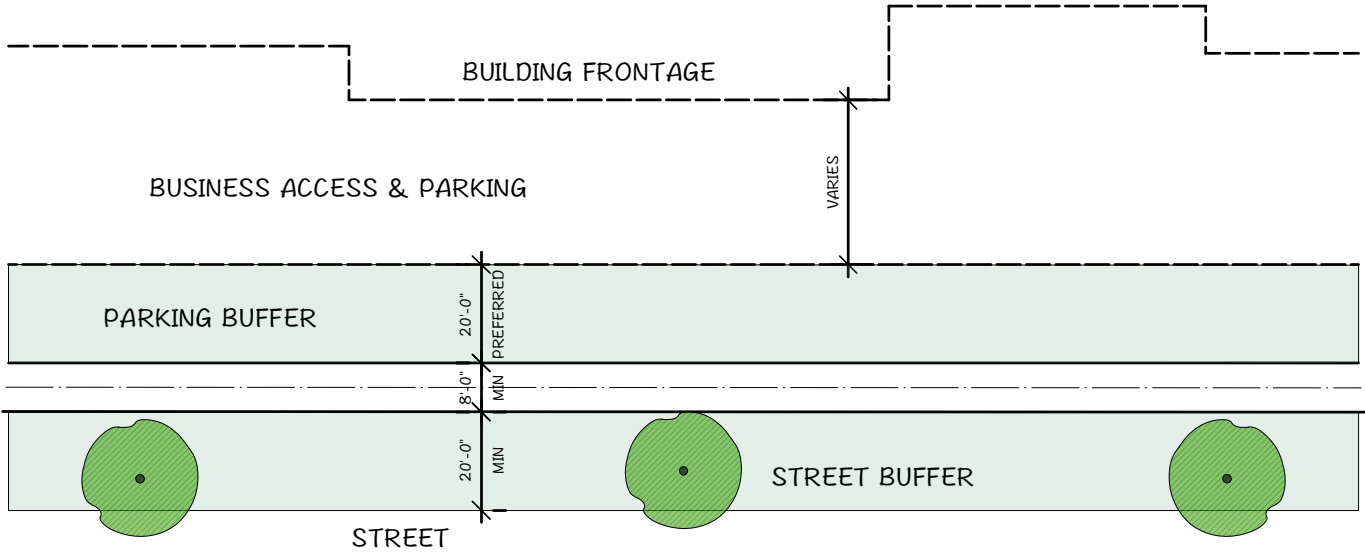
## BACK OF BUSINESS TRAIL - SECTION

# BB – Back of Business

### KEY FEATURES

10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate

## STREET FRONTAGE TRAIL - PLAN



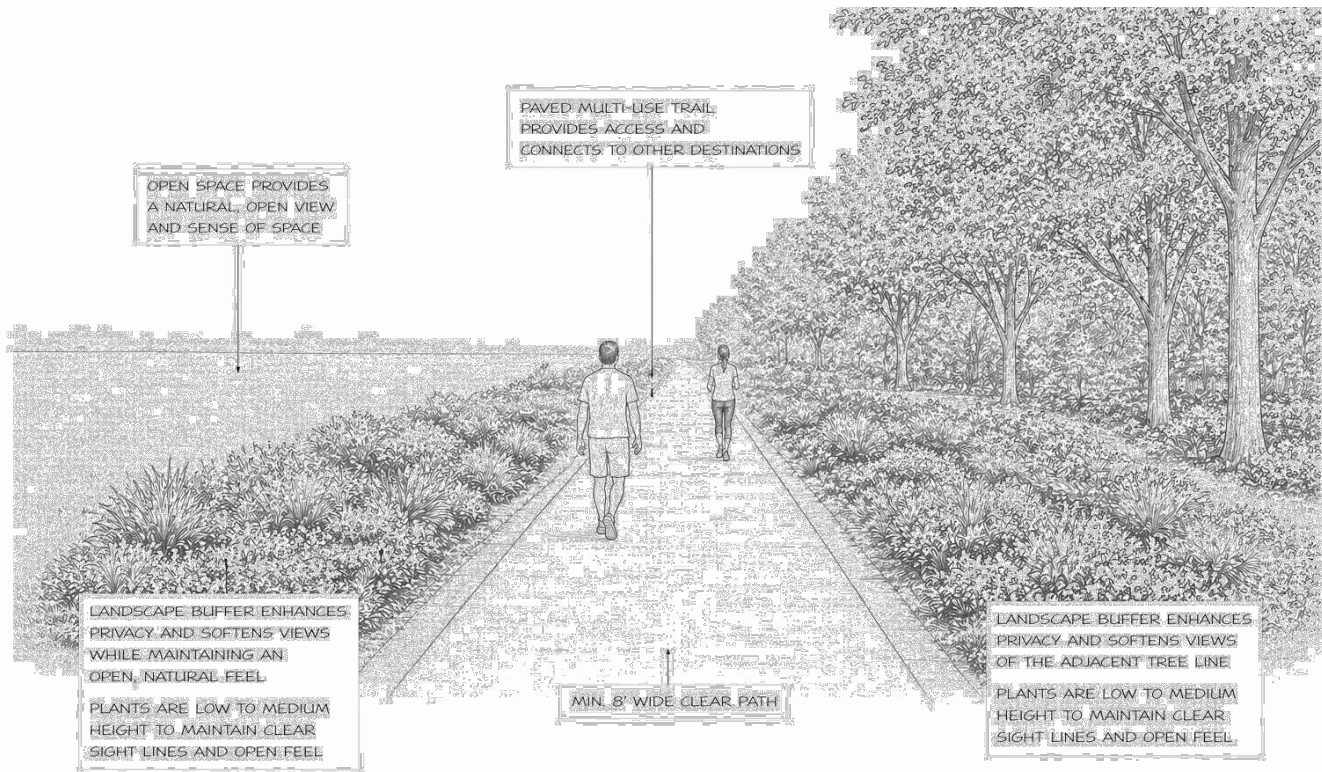
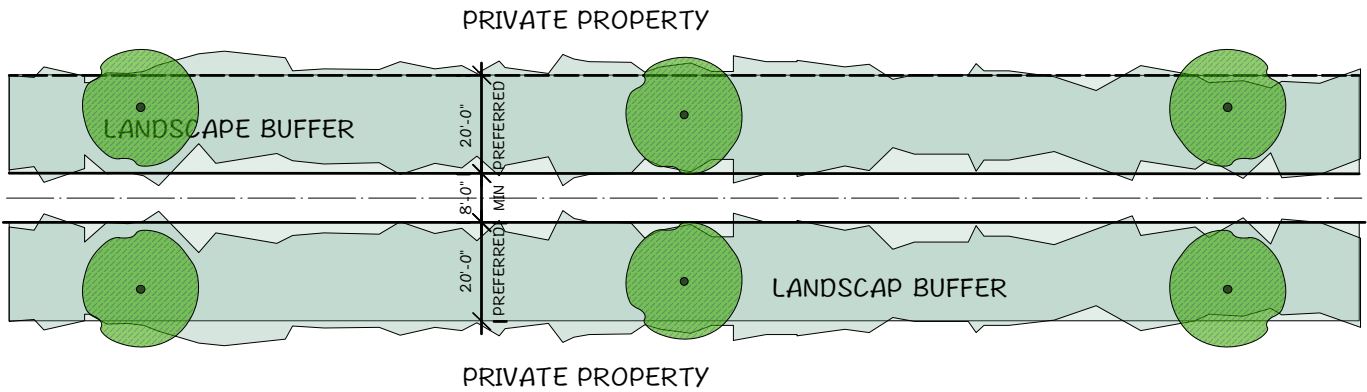
## STREET FRONTAGE TRAIL - SECTION

# SF – Street Frontage

### KEY FEATURES

10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate

## PRIVATE PROPERTY BUFFER TRAIL - PLAN

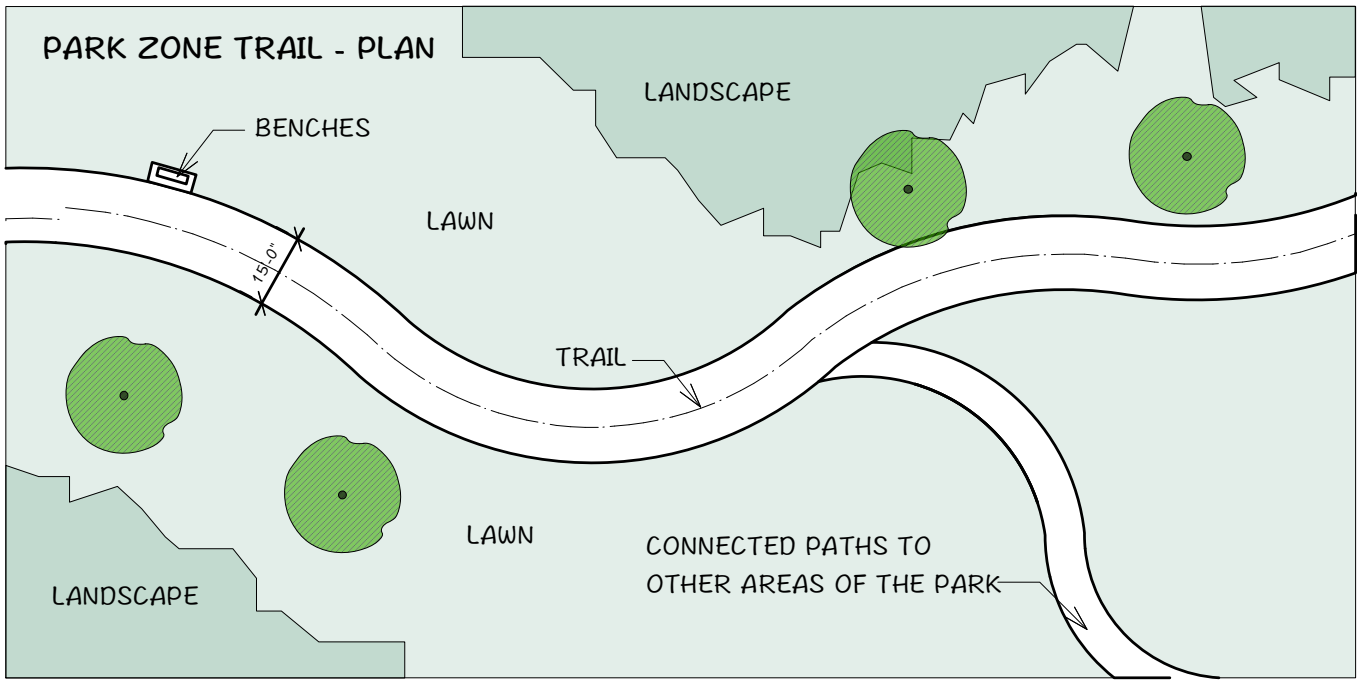


## PRIVATE PROPERTY BUFFER TRAIL - SECTION

# PP – Private Property

### KEY FEATURES

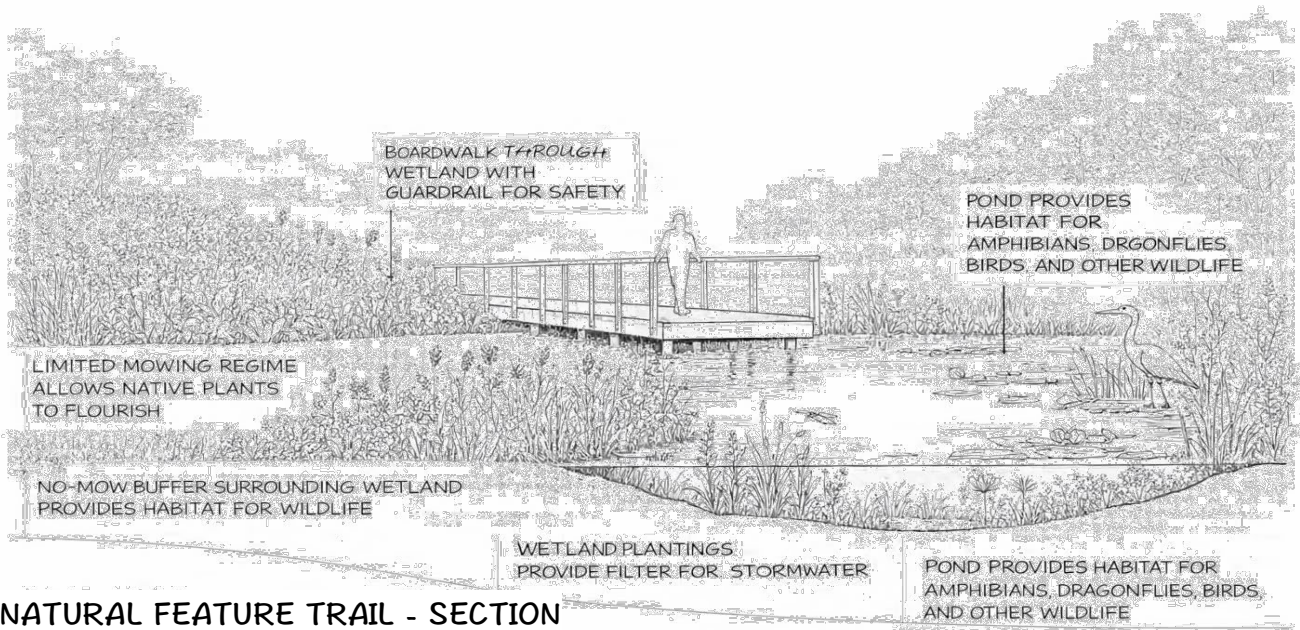
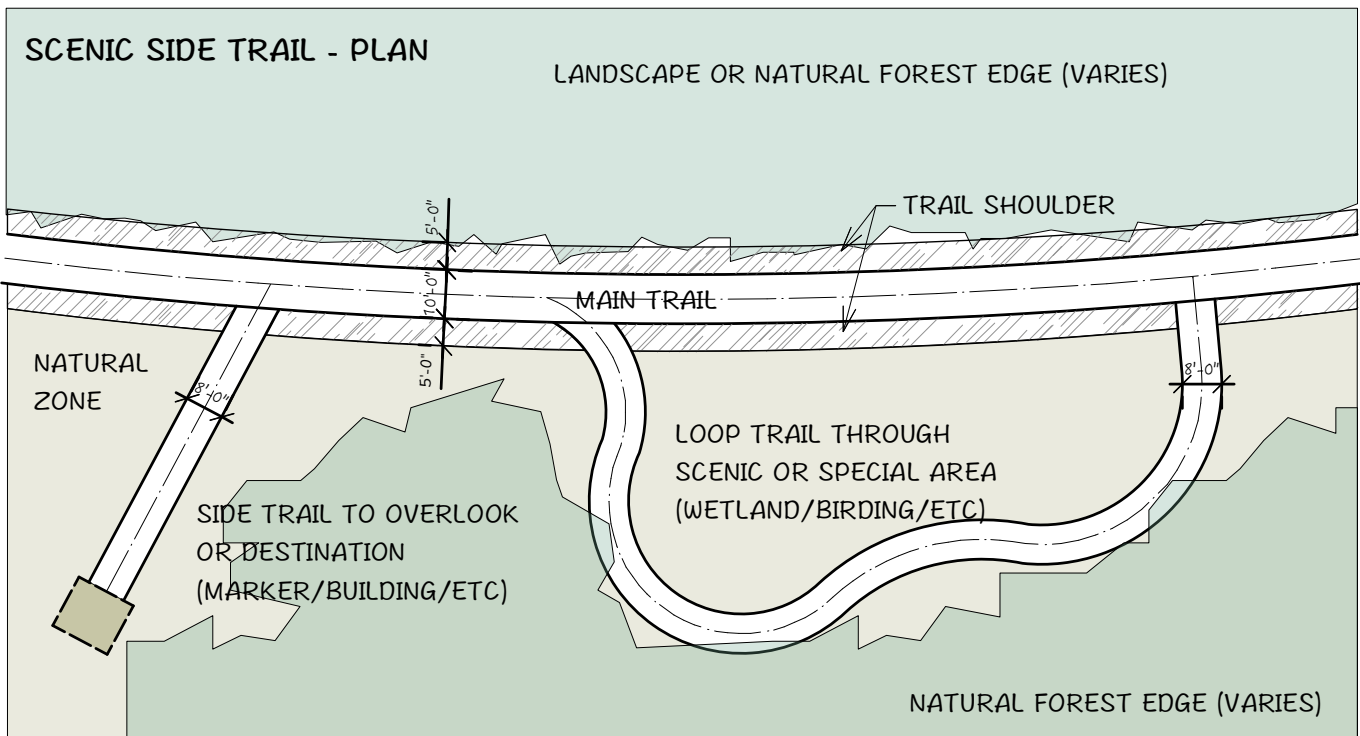
10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate



# PZ – Park Zone

## KEY FEATURES

10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate

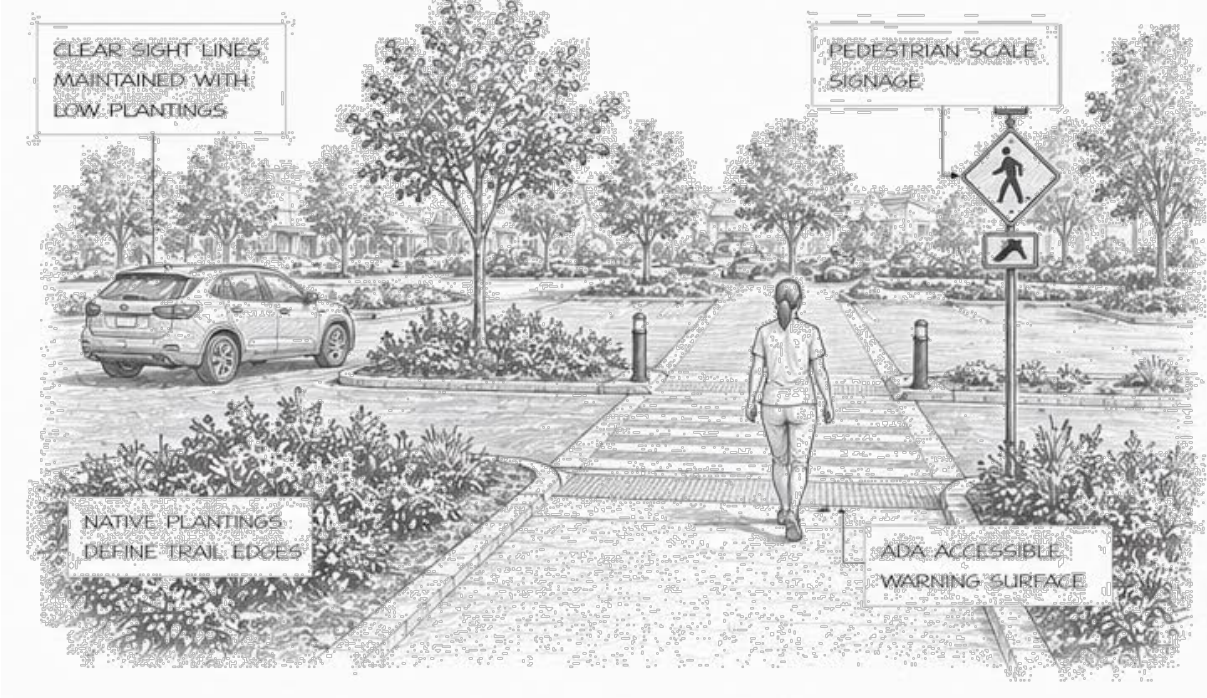


# SS – Scenic Side Trail

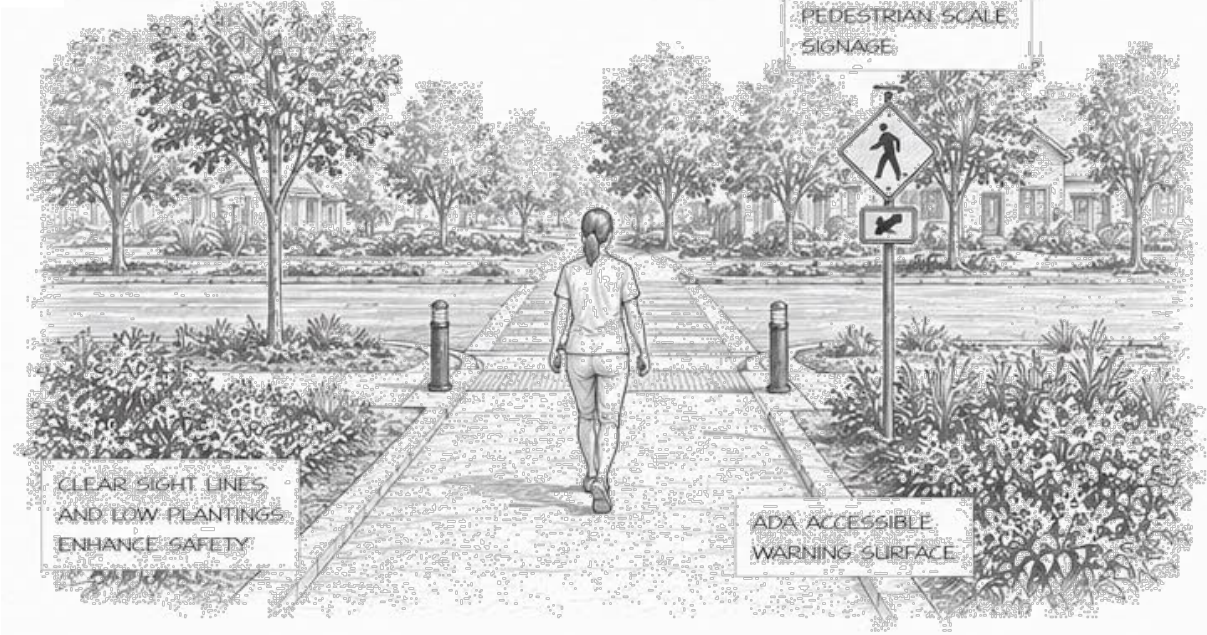
## KEY FEATURES

10' Wide Multi-Use Trail - Asphalt or Concrete Preferred, Well Packed Crushed Stone or Gravel Alternate

## PARKING LOT OR PRIVATE DRIVE CROSSING



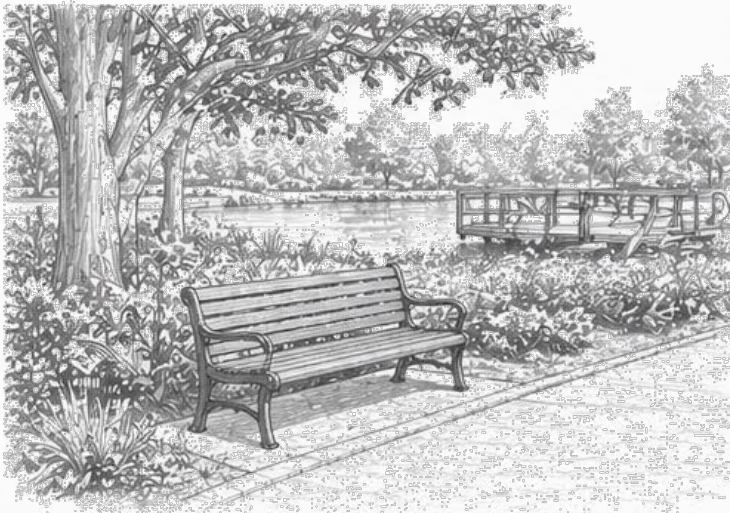
## SMALL STREET CROSSING



# Pedestrian Crossings

### BENCHES

PROVIDE RESTING OPPORTUNITIES  
AND ENJOYMENT OF PARK VIEWS



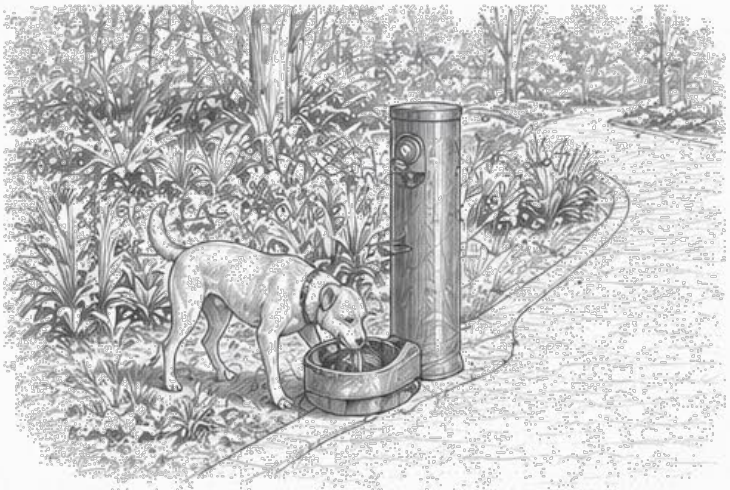
### BIKE RACKS

ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION  
AND TRAIL ACCESS



### PET DRINKING WATER FOUNTAIN

PROVIDES HYDRATION FOR PETS  
AND SUPPORTS TRAIL COURTESY



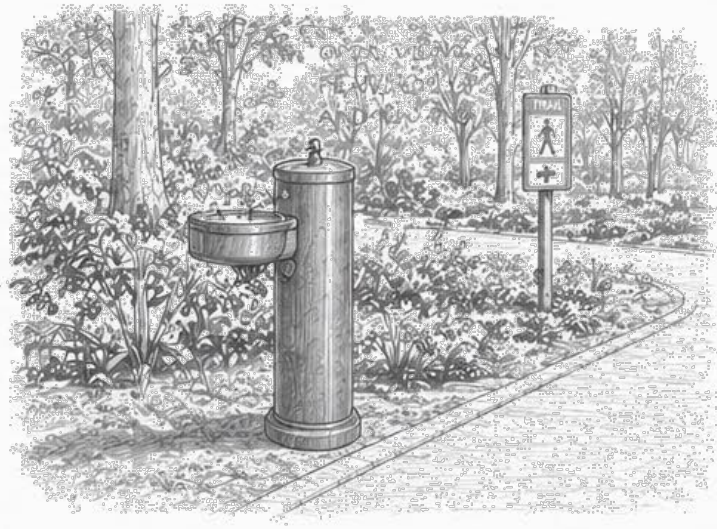
### TRASH CANS

PROMOTE CLEAN TRAILS  
AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

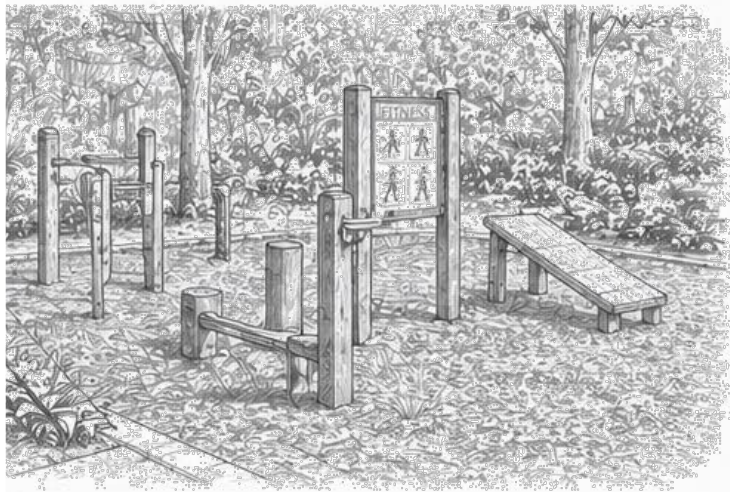


# Trail Amenities

**DRINKING WATER FOUNTAIN**  
PROVIDES HYDRATION FOR TRAIL USERS



**TRAIL FITNESS STATION**  
SUPPORTS HEALTH AND WELLNESS  
FOR ALL AGES



# Trail Amenities

## SUMMARY

Choose the trail surface that best fits your users, environment and budget. Consider user acceptance, accessibility, initial and maintenance costs, life expectancy and material availability.

Hard surfaces are more durable and accessible with lower maintenance, but cost more upfront. Soft surfaces cost less initially and blend with the natural setting, but require more maintenance and may not hold up under heavy use or wet conditions.

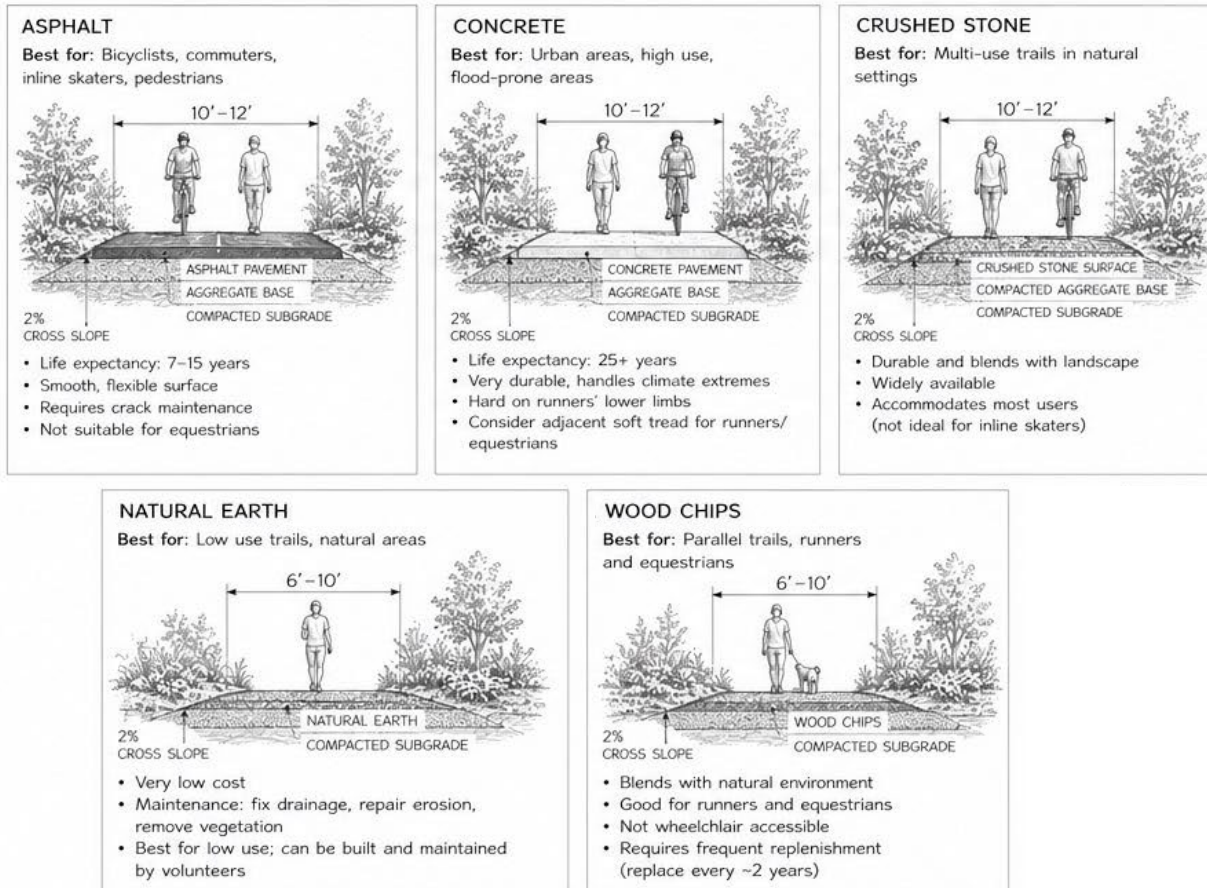
Start with the right surface for today, knowing that trails can be upgraded as funding allows.

## HARD SURFACES

- Durable and accessible
- Withstand heavy use and varying weather
- Lower long-term maintenance
- Higher initial cost



## TRAIL SURFACE TYPES – TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS



# Trail Surfaces

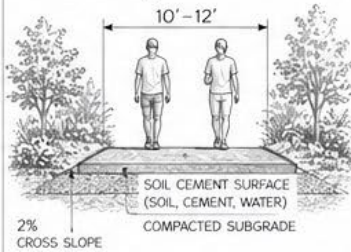
### SOFT SURFACES

- Lower initial cost
- Blend with natural environment
- Higher maintenance
- Less durable under heavy use or severe weather



### SOIL CEMENT

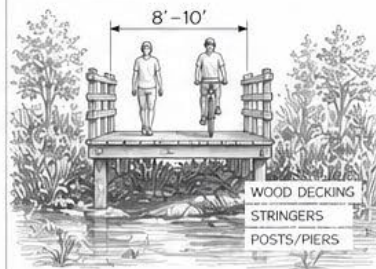
**Best for:** Cost-effective hard surface in natural settings



- Less expensive than asphalt
- Firm, stable surface
- Requires excellent drainage to prevent erosion

### BOARDWALK

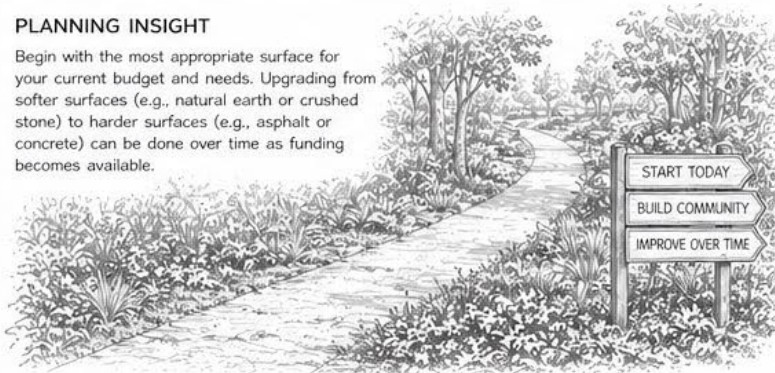
**Best for:** Wetlands, sensitive environments



- Minimizes impact to wetlands
- Allows drainage and water flow
- Can be slippery when wet
- High initial and maintenance cost

### PLANNING INSIGHT

Begin with the most appropriate surface for your current budget and needs. Upgrading from softer surfaces (e.g., natural earth or crushed stone) to harder surfaces (e.g., asphalt or concrete) can be done over time as funding becomes available.



# Trail Surfaces



[THETRAILAHAD.ORG](http://thetrailahead.org)

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