Application for Urban Design Committee Review

Department of Planning and Development Review
900 E. Broad Street, Room 510
Richmond, Virginia 23219 | (804) 646-6335
https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/urban-design-committee

RICHMOND PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PDR

Application Type (select one)

- [x] Location, Character, & Extent
- [ ] Section 17.05
- [ ] Other:
- [ ] Encroachment
- [ ] Design Overlay District

Review Type (select one)

- [x] Conceptual
- [ ] Final

Project Information

Submission Date: April 17, 2025

Project Name: Arthur Ashe Boulevard over CSX Bridge Replacement

Project Address: Approx. 2000 N Arthur Ashe Blvd, Richmond, VA 23230

Brief Project Description (this is not a replacement for the required detailed narrative):
The Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge replacement project proposes to replace an existing multi-modal bridge structure that provides a critical connection over the CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) railroad at the City's crossroads with the eastern seaboard interstate highway corridor. The existing bridge is structurally deficient, requiring the recent installation of emergency temporary supports, and provides sub-standard vertical clearances over CSXT. The proposed bridge will meet all CSXT current requirements.

Applicant Information (a City representative must be the applicant, with an exception for encroachments)

Name: Yongping Wang
Email: Yongping.Wang@rva.gov
City Agency: Department of Public Works
Phone: (804) 646-2467
Main Contact (if different from Applicant): Gary Johnson
Company: Timmons Group
Phone: 804-200-6351
Email: gary.johnson@timmons.com

Submittal Deadlines
All applications and support materials must be filed no later than 21 days prior to the scheduled meeting of the Urban Design Committee (UDC). Please see the schedule on page 3 as actual deadlines are adjusted due to City holidays. **Late or incomplete submissions will be deferred to the next meeting.**

Application
It is important that the applicant discuss the proposal with appropriate City agencies, Zoning Administration staff, and area civic associations and residents prior to filing the application with the UDC. Applications should be emailed to the Urban Design Committee Secretary, Ray Roakes, at Raymond.roakes@rva.gov.

Background
The UDC is an 11 member committee created by City Council in 1968 whose purpose is to advise the City Planning Commission (CPC) on the design of projects on City property or right-of-way. The UDC provides advice of an aesthetic nature in connection with the performance of the duties of the Commission under Sections 17.05, 17.06, and 17.07 of the City Charter. The UDC also advises the Department of Public Works in regards to private encroachments in the public right-of-way.

Application for Urban Design Committee Review

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Land Use Administration
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PDR

Submission Requirements

- An electronic copy (PDF) of all application materials, which can be emailed, or delivered by FTP or USB.
- Plan sheets should be electronically scaled to be 11" x 17" if printed.
- All applications must include the attached application form and the support materials listed below, as applicable to the project, based on Review Type.

It is strongly recommended to request the Zoning Administration to review a project's compliance with the City Zoning Code prior to application to the UDC.

Conceptual Review:

- A detailed project narrative which includes the following: project purpose, background, and context, details of community outreach and copies of distributed materials if applicable, project budget and funding sources, description of construction program and estimated construction start date.
- A site plan for the project indicating site characteristics which include: building footprints, parking areas, pedestrian routes, recreation areas, open areas, and areas of future expansion.
- A set of floor plans and elevations, as detailed as possible. Precedent images if applicable.
- A landscaping plan which shows the general location and character of plant materials and notes any existing tree to be removed.

Final Review:

- A detailed project narrative which includes the following: project purpose, background, and context, details of community outreach and copies of distributed materials if applicable, project budget and funding sources, description of construction program, and estimated construction start date.
- A site plan for the project indicating site characteristics which include: building footprints, parking areas, pedestrian routes, recreation areas, open areas, and areas of future expansion.
- A set of floor plans and elevations, as detailed as possible. Elevations should show directly adjacent development.
- A landscaping plan that includes a complete plant schedule, the precise location of all plant materials, and a landscape maintenance analysis. The plant schedule must show number, size and type of each planting proposed. If existing trees are to be removed, their size, type, and location must be noted on the landscape plan.
- The location of all lighting units should be noted on a site plan, including wall-mounted, site, and parking lot lighting. Other site details such as benches, trash containers, and special paving materials should also be located. Include specification sheets for each item.
- Samples of all proposed exterior building materials, including but not limited to brick, mortar, shingles, siding, glass, paint, and stain colors. When an actual sample cannot be provided, a product information sheet that shows the item or a photo of an existing item may be substituted.

Review and Processing

- Once an application is received, it is reviewed by Staff, who compiles a report that is sent to the UDC.
- A copy of the report and the meeting agenda will be sent to the applicant prior to the meeting.
- At the UDC meeting, the applicant or a representative should be present or the application may be deferred to the next regularly scheduled meeting. It is also strongly suggested that a representative of the City Agency which will have final responsibility for the item be present.
- Once the UDC recommends action on the application, it is automatically placed on the agenda for the next City Planning Commission (CPC) meeting. Exceptions to this are encroachment applications, recommendations for which are forwarded to the Department of Public Works.
- At the Planning Commission meeting, the applicant or a representative should be present, or the application may be deferred to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

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Regular meetings are scheduled on the second Thursday after the first Tuesday of each month at **10:00 a.m. in the 5th floor conference room of City Hall, 900 E. Broad Street**. Special meetings are scheduled as needed.

Meeting Schedule 2025

UDC Meetings	UDC Submission Deadlines	Anticipated Date of Planning Commission Following the UDC Meeting
January 16, 2025	December 19, 2024	January 21, 2025
February 13, 2025	January 16, 2025	February 18, 2025
March 13, 2025	February 13, 2025	March 18, 2025
April 10, 2025	March 20, 2025	April 15, 2025
May 15, 2025	April 17, 2025	May 20, 2025
June 12, 2025	May 15, 2025	June 17, 2025
July 10, 2025	June 19, 2025	July 15, 2025
August 14, 2025	July 17, 2025	August 19, 2025
September 11, 2025	August 14, 2025	September 16, 2025
October 16, 2025	September 18, 2025	October 21, 2025
November 13, 2025	October 16, 2025	November 18, 2025
December 11, 2025	November 13, 2025	December 16, 2025

The Richmond Urban Design Committee is an 11 member advisory committee created by City Council in 1968. Its purpose is to advise the City Planning Commission on the design of City projects. The Urban Design Committee reviews projects for appropriateness in "location, character, and extent" and for consistency with the City's Master Plan and forwards recommendations to the City Planning Commission. The Urban Design Committee also advises the Department of Public Works in regards to private encroachments in the public right-of-way.

For more information, please contact the Urban Design Committee Secretary, Ray Roakes, at (804) 646-6335 and raymond.roakes@rva.gov.

SUPPORTING MATERIAL
ARTHUR ASHE BOULEVARD BRIDGE
CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Project, Purpose, Background, and Context

The Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge replacement project proposes to replace an existing multimodal bridge structure in the City of Richmond, Virginia (RVA), that provides a critical connection over the CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) railroad at the City's crossroads with the eastern seaboard interstate highway corridor. The existing bridge is structurally deficient, requiring the recent installation of emergency temporary supports, and provides sub-standard vertical clearances over CSXT. The roadway is named in honor of the exemplary life of Arthur Ashe Jr., who is considered one of Richmond's brightest beacons for his accomplishments in the world of sports and relentless pursuits of civil and human rights, Arthur Ashe Boulevard (Route 161) provides an important link between the urban and commercial centers of the City to the regional transportation network, including interstate highways I-95 and I-64.

Arthur Ashe Boulevard is an urban principal arterial on the National Highway System (NHS) that carries an annual average daily traffic volume of 26,000 vehicles traffic daily. The current bridge structure (Virgina Department of Transportation (VDOT) Str. 127-1853, Fed ID 21531) supports four traffic lanes and existing sidewalks in both directions. The regional 2020 Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan identifies the roadway as part of the route for enhanced transit and a future expanded high frequency bus network. The roadway also carries high volumes of pedestrians and bicycles through commercial and mixed-use areas, much of which are planned for redevelopment.

The existing Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge spans approximately 275 feet over two active and one abandoned railway lines operated and maintained by CSXT. It is the only grade-separated crossing of the railway within the area and the nearest adjacent at-grade crossing is over three miles away on Hermitage Road. An additional line for high-speed passenger rail as well as an additional freight line are planned along this corridor. The project location is just north of the former Richmond Broad Street Station, which was the southern terminus of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad. During prior years, up to eight passenger and freight tracks passed below the Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge for passenger and freight services.

The original bridge was constructed in 1889, rebuilt in 1912, and lengthened in 1918 to accommodate additional tracks. In 1944, it was lengthened again and widened to accommodate additional tracks and increased roadway capacity. The City of Richmond removed and replaced deteriorating portions of the reinforced concrete on the bridge in 1985; however, most of the bridge is nearly 80 years old, with some components of the existing structure being over 110 years old. The current bridge's deck and superstructure conditions are rated in fair condition, while the substructure is currently rated poor. In 2019, the City of Richmond renamed the Boulevard, a historic road through the City of Richmond, to Arthur Ashe Boulevard to honor the tennis great and humanitarian that was born in Richmond. In the same year, a regularly scheduled bridge inspection revealed an emergency situation of a steel girder, which necessitated an emergency repair to shore up a failed bearing seat and to ensure safe passage to the traveling public

The proposed bridge will raise the road approximately 7 feet to accommodate the vertical clearance requirements of CSXT while also meeting their horizontal clearance requirements. To meet the horizontal clearance requirements, the existing four span bridge will be replaced with a 2-span bridge.

Working in collaboration with the City Engineer, City Transportation Engineer, and City Bridge Engineer, the design team worked to balance the need to throughput of vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists with the desire for placemaking and to deliver a unique and attractive structure. Two vehicular traffic lanes in each direction will be provided, along with a Shared Use Path on the west side of the structure and a wide sidewalk on the east side of the structure. Benches and canopies are added to add to the placemaking of the area.

One lane in each direction, along with pedestrian and bicycle access, will be provided throughout the construction duration.

Pedestrian Amenities

The pedestrian facilities will include new concrete sidewalks and street trees that lead from the Diamond District and Scott's Addition to the new bridge. Pedestrian overlooks will be placed on both sides of the approach to the bridge allowing users to pull off the main sidewalk for a respite. The overlooks will have custom benches and planter that will be oriented to views of the Diamond District and Scott's Addition. Once on the bridge pedestrians will be separated from vehicular traffic by a concrete barrier, guardrail and precast concrete planters. The concrete planters will be filled with hardy, low maintenance, ornamental plants and will be irrigated by an automatic irrigation system. Benches will be integrated into the concrete planters and will orient users to views of the surrounding cityscape. Overhead metal shade structures will provide opportunities for shade along the bridge walkways. The design of the shade structures will have an industrial character recalling the history of industry in the area. In the evening the shade structures will be highlighted with integral LED lighting. The focal point of the bridge will be the central overhead gateway that spans the width of the bridge. Like the shade structures the design of the gateway will have an industrial character with a framed opening that can hold signage as determined by the city.

Community outreach

A Community Meeting was held on June 11, 2025, at the Science Museum of Virginia. This event was well attended, and the public was given the opportunity to comment, both in-person on paper and electronically. The boards from that event are included with this submittal. A Formal Public Hearing slated in December 2025.

Project budget and funding sources

The project budget is approximately $38 million. The initial funding sources is from a Federal Highway Administration RAISE grant. Other contributing sources include CSXT and City funds.

Construction program

The project is on schedule for starting construction procurement in March of 2026 and award of a construction contract in August of 2026.

Estimated construction start date

Actual construction is slated to start in the Fall of 2026 and is estimated to take 24 months.

Plans

Timmons Group submitted 30% plans to the City for review on March 25, 2025. It has been reviewed technically by the City and FHWA. Comments and responses have been compiled.

Arthur Ashe Boulevard Bridge

Urban Design Committee Review

June 19, 2025

Project for:

Arthur Ashe Boulevard BRIDGE PROJECT

Project by:

TIMMONS GROUP

Table of Contents

1 Existing Conditions

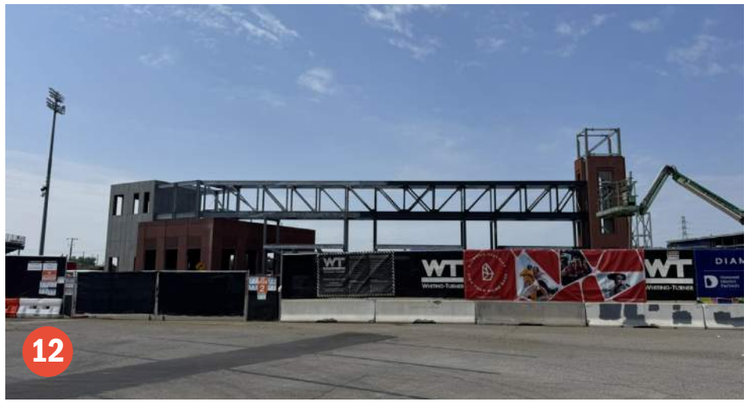
- Existing Site Key Map
- Site Photos
- Site Context and Connectivity Map

Site Photos

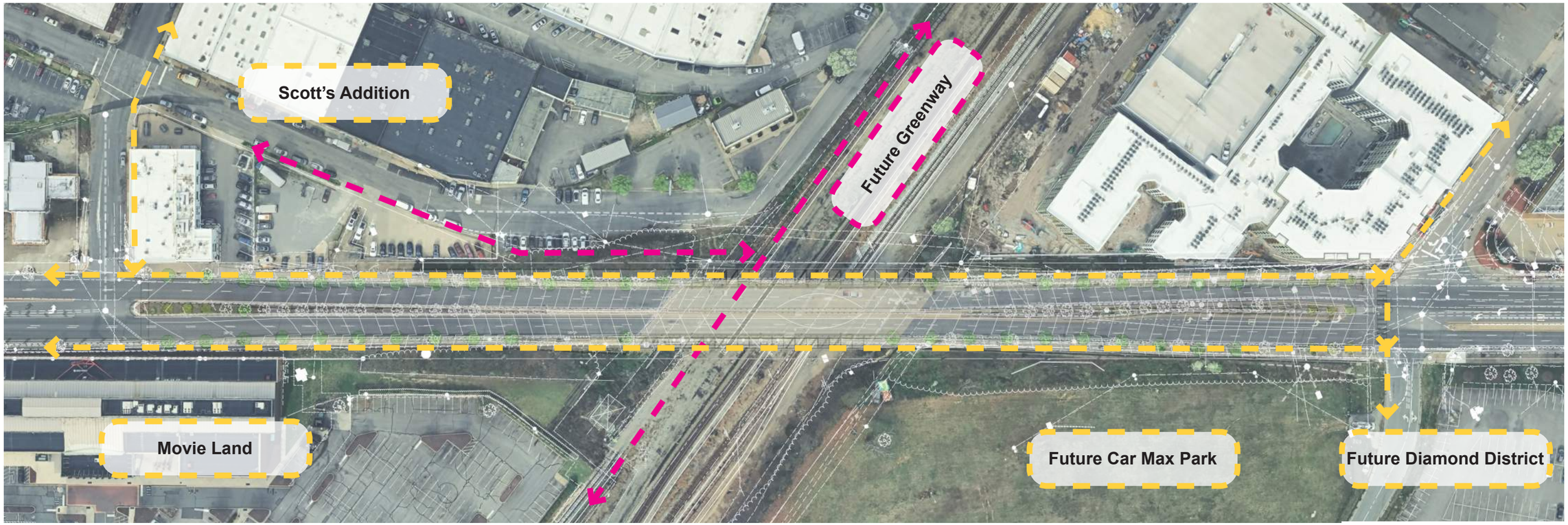
Key Map

Site Photos

Key Map



Site Context and Connectivity



Note: The future greenway connection is not a part of this plan but us instrumental in supporting connectivity around Scott's Addition.

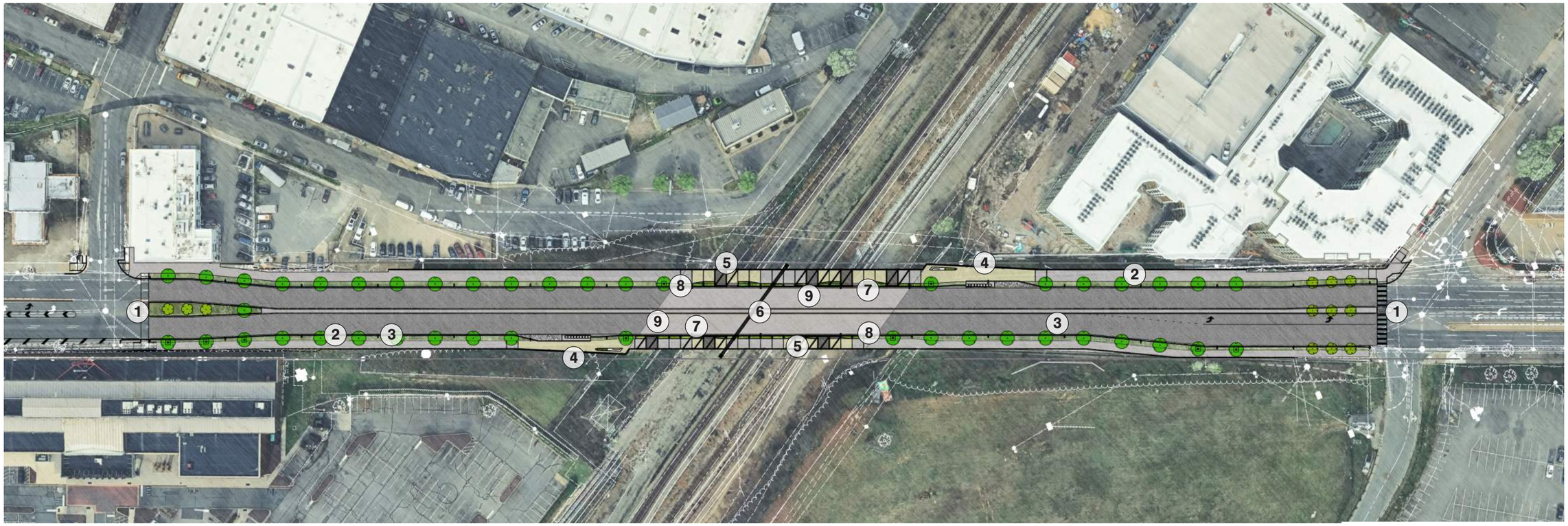
SCALE 1"=50'
0 25' 50'

2 Proposed Bridge Improvement Plans

- Precedent Imagery
- Site Plan
- Renderings
- Site Structures
- Site Details
- Gateway Alternatives
- Planting Plan
- Plant Selection
- Lighting Plan
- Light Fixture Selection

Precedent Imagery

Site Plan

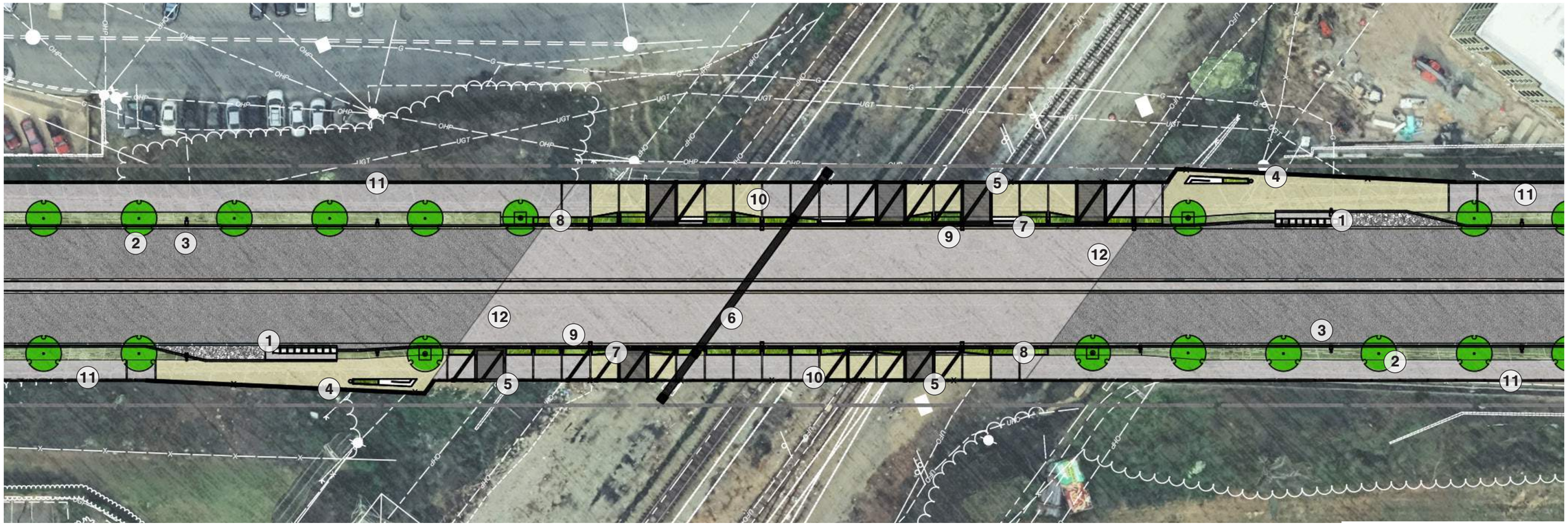


LEGEND

1. Limit of Roadway Improvements
2. Street Trees
3. Street Lighting
4. Pedestrian Overlook (With Bench Seating)
5. Pedestrian Shade / Overhead Structures
6. Bridge Gateway Structure
7. Bench Seating (On Bridge)
8. Raised Planters (On Bridge)
9. Bridge Lighting

SCALE 1"=50'
0 25' 50'

Bridge Plan



LEGEND

1. Crash Attenuator
2. Street Trees
3. Street Lighting
4. Pedestrian Overlook (With Bench Seating)
5. Pedestrian Shade / Overhead Structures
6. Bridge Gateway Structure
7. Bench Seating (On Bridge)
8. Raised Planters (On Bridge)
9. Bridge Lighting
10. Alternate Color Concrete (To Define Spaces)
11. Sidewalk
12. Vehicle Travel Lanes

SCALE 1"=20'
0 10' 20'

Bridge Rendering | Aerial View

Bridge Rendering | Pedestrian View

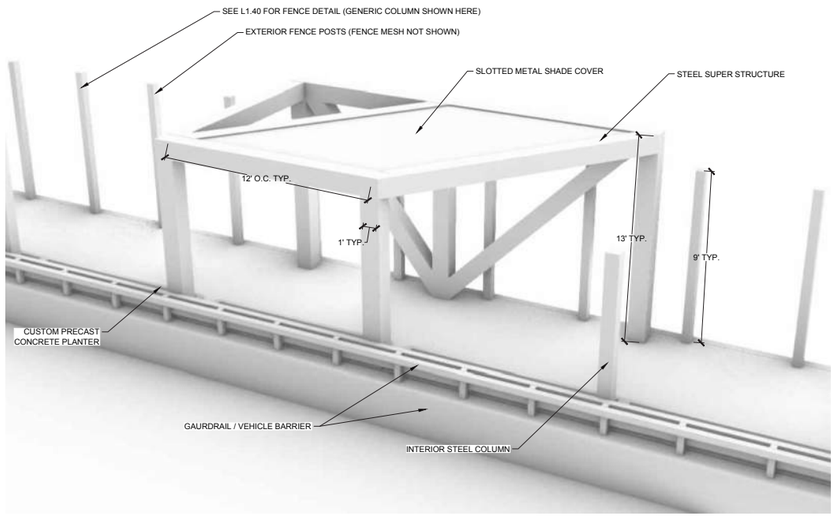
Bridge Rendering | Pedestrian View

Bridge Rendering | Pedestrian View

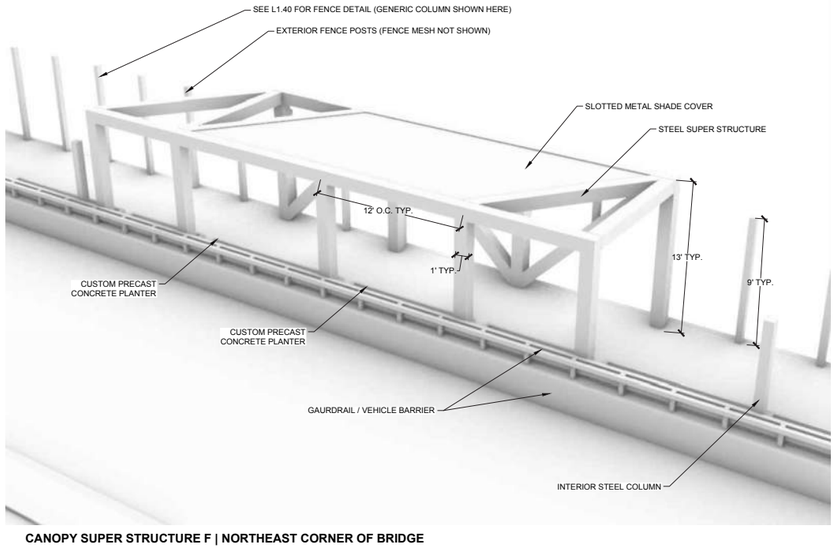
Bridge Rendering | Vehicle View

Bridge Rendering | Vehicle View

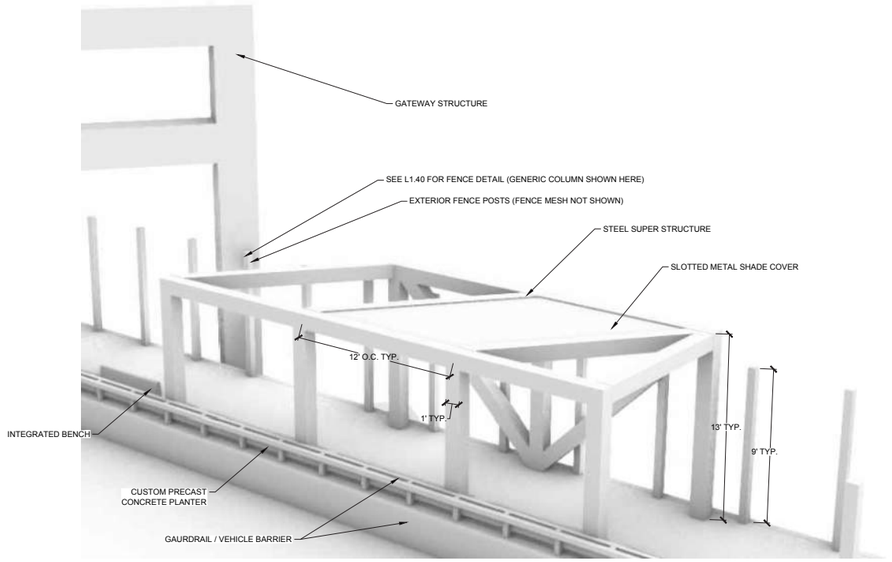
Shade / Super Structure Details



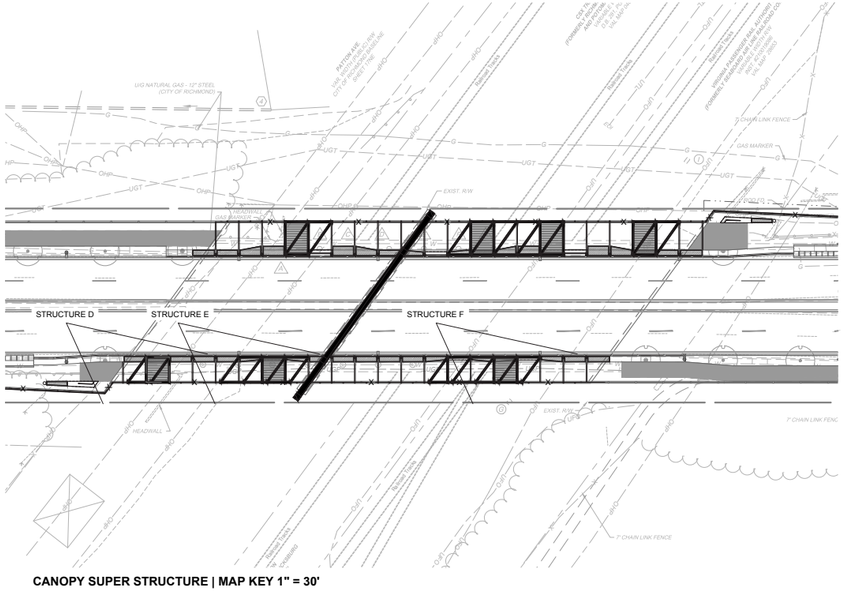
CANOPY SUPER STRUCTURE D | SOUTHEAST CORNER OF BRIDGE



CANOPY SUPER STRUCTURE F | NORTHEAST CORNER OF BRIDGE

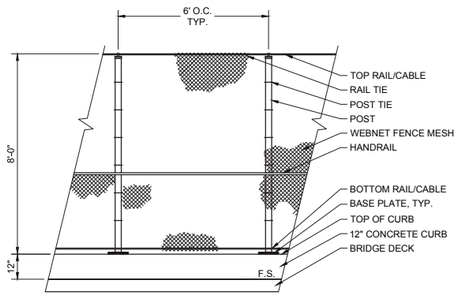


CANOPY SUPER STRUCTURE E | CENTER EAST SIDE OF BRIDGE



CANOPY SUPER STRUCTURE | MAP KEY 1" = 30'

Fence and Paving Details

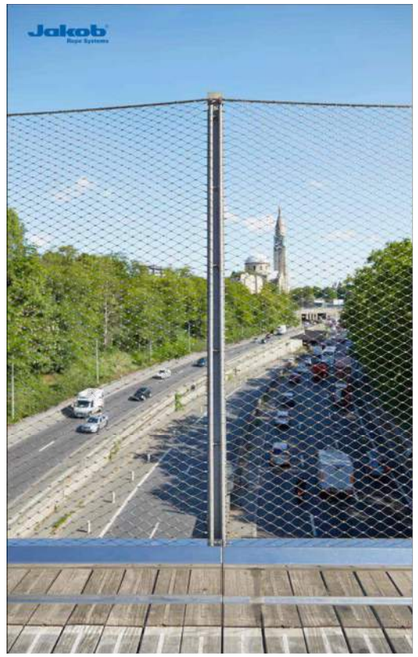


5 BARRIER FENCE - ELEVATION

3/8" = 1'-0"

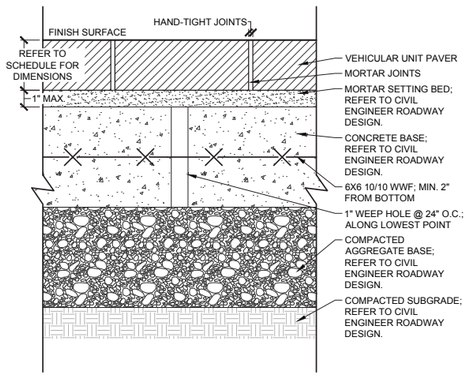
6 CONCRETE FINISH (PAINT OR WASH)

NTS



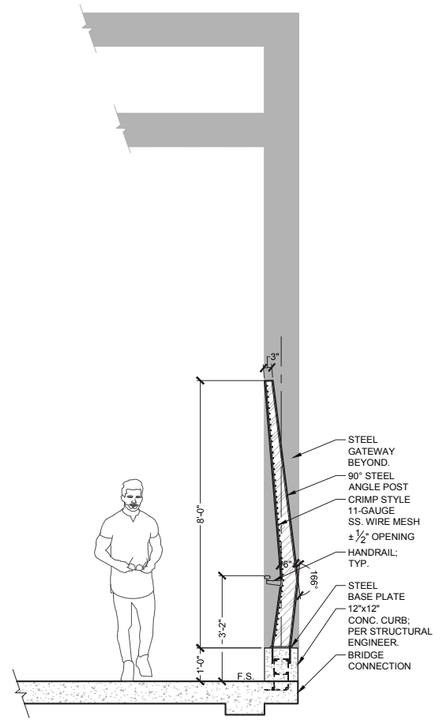
3 BRIDGE BARRIER FENCE - DESIGN INTENT

NTS



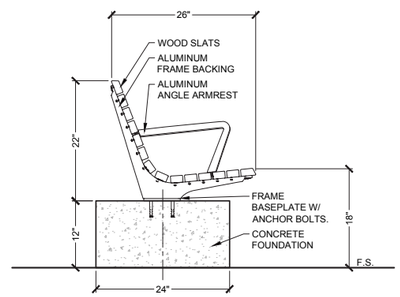
4 VEHICULAR COBBLE PAVER MORTAR SET ON RIGID BASE

3" = 1'-0"



1 BARRIER FENCE

1/2" = 1'-0"



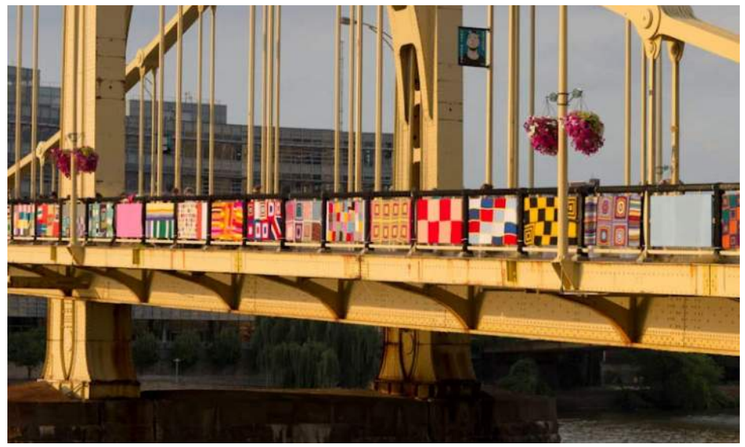
NOTE : SEE DETAIL 2/L3.10 FOR BENCH CUT SHEET

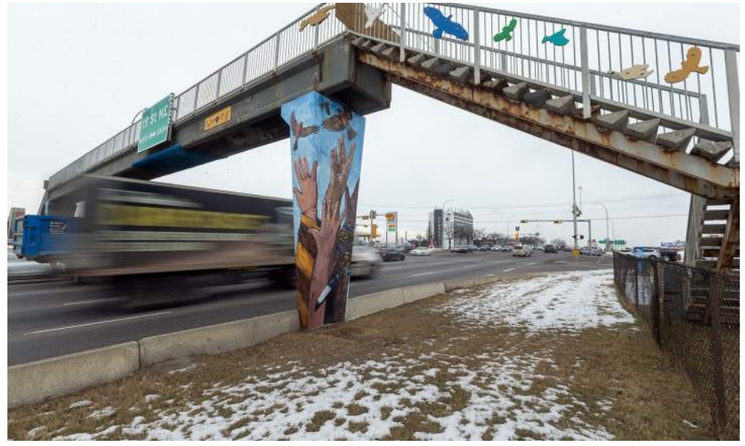
2 WOOD SLAT BENCH - WALL MOUNT

1" = 1'-0"

Gateway Options

Option 1 : “Welcome to Scott’s Addition” Signage
(“Hard” Physical Sign or Interchangeble Fabric as Determined by City)

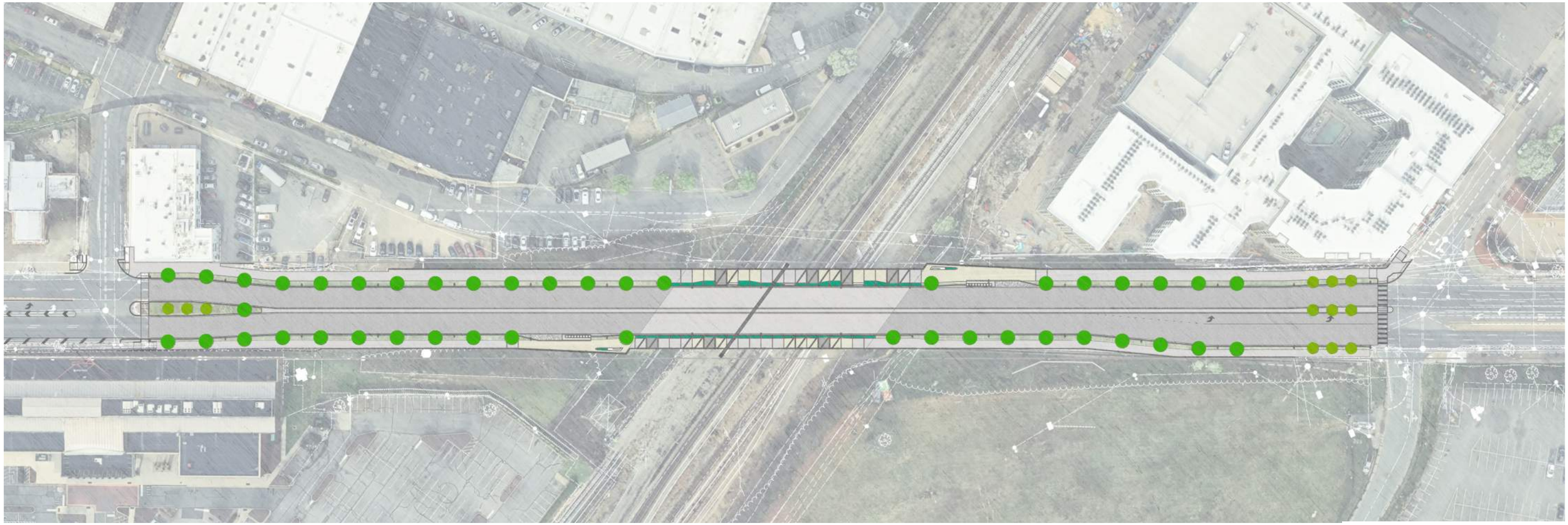




Option 2 : Integrated Public Art
(City-Led Competition)

Option 2 : Integrated Sturctural Truss
(To Reflect Verticle Bridge Design)

Site Planting Plan

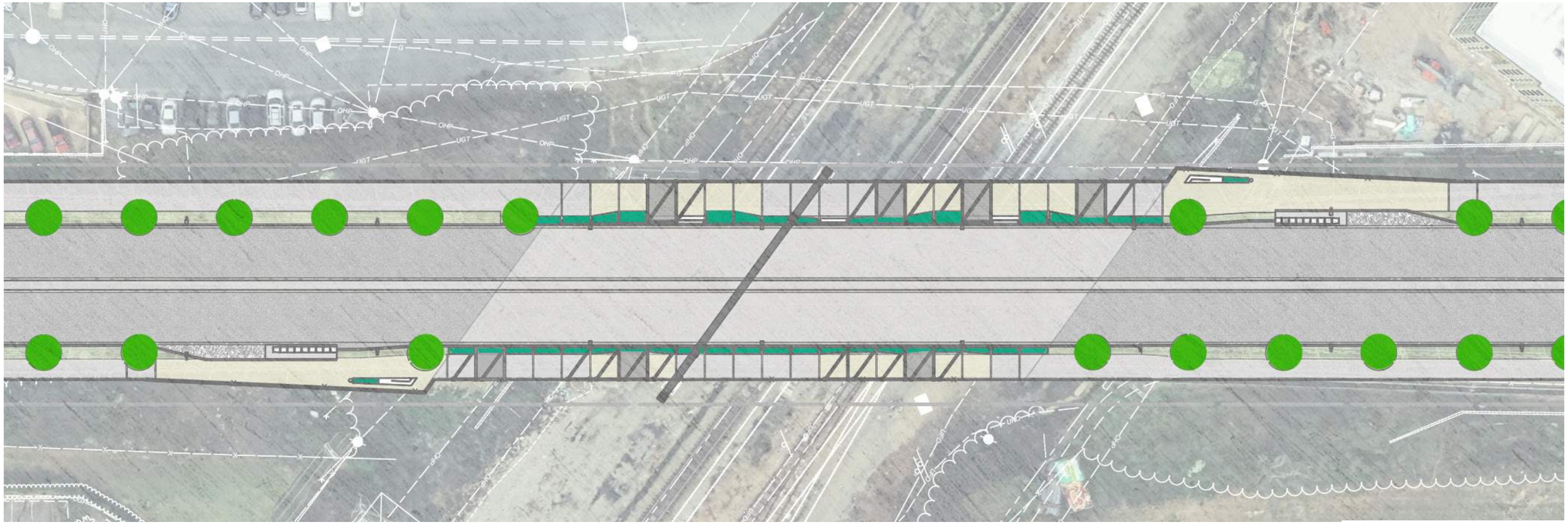


SCALE 1"=50'
0 25' 50'

LEGEND

- **Large Canopy Street Trees** (43)
- **Medium Canopy Street Trees** (12)
- **Raised Planters** (1,021 SF)

Bridge Planting Plan



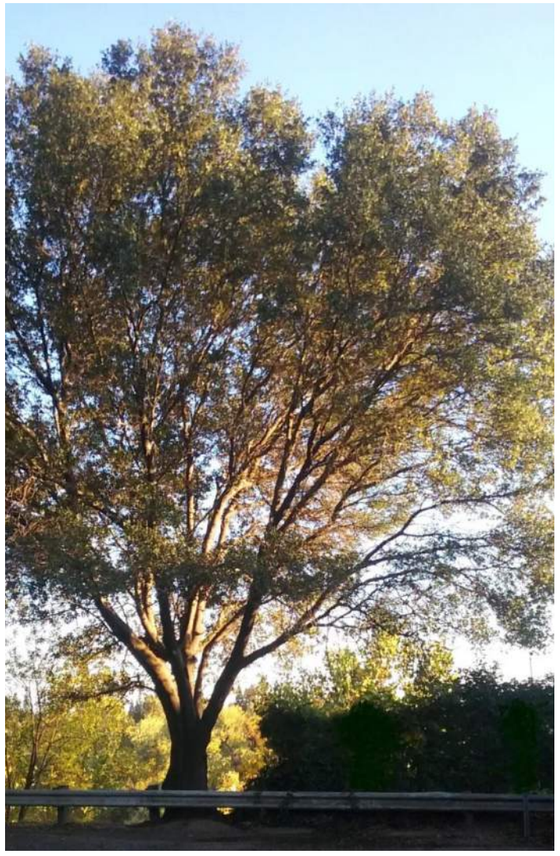
LEGEND

- **Large Canopy Street Trees** (43)
- **Medium Canopy Street Trees** (12)
- **Raised Planters** (1,021 SF)

SCALE 1"=20'
0 10' 20'

Street Trees

Littleleaf Linden / Tilia cordata



Live Oak / Quercus virginiana

Thornless Honey Locust / Gleditsia triancanthos ‘Skyline’

Eastern Redubud / Cercis candensis

Raised Planters

Pennsylvania Sedge / Carex pennslynanicaiana

Northern Sea Oats / Chasmanthium latifolium

Purple Lovegrass / Eragrostis spectabilis

Switch Grass / Panicum virgatum

Black-eyed Susan / Rudbeckia hirta

Golden Alexander / Zizia aurea

Foam Flower /Tiarella cordifolia

Blue vervain /Verbena hastata

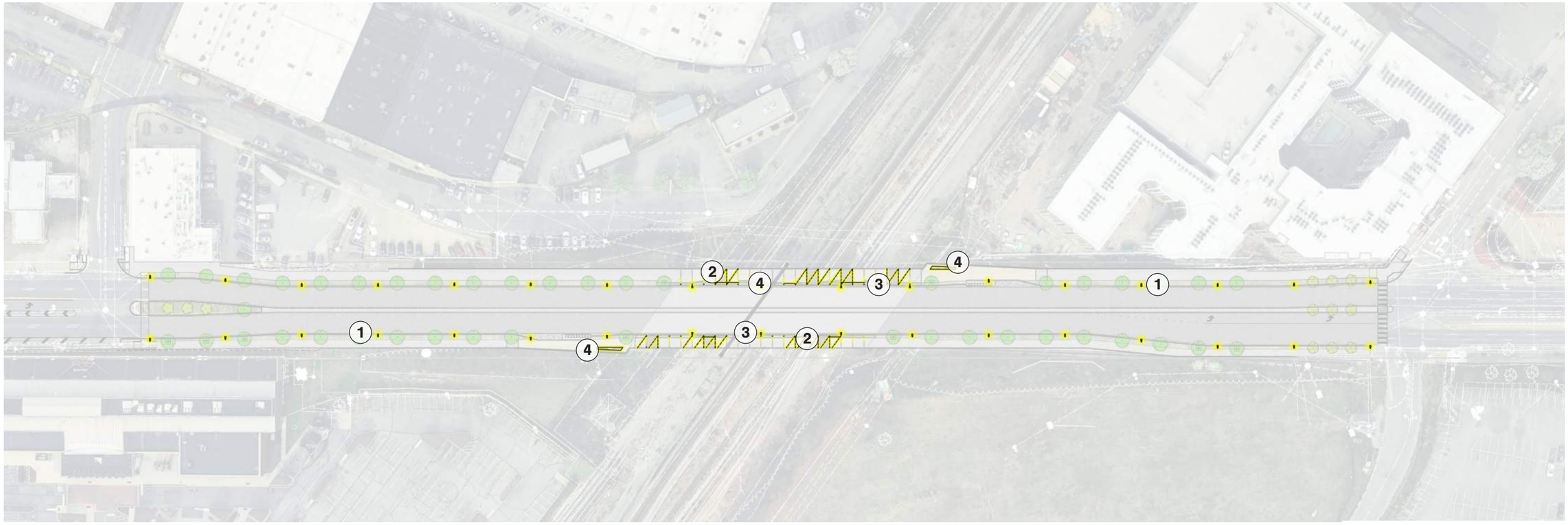
Sedge / Ascolepis capensis

Lyrelead Sage / Salvia lyrata

Blue Wild Indigo / Baptisia australis

Common Yarrow / Achillea millefolium

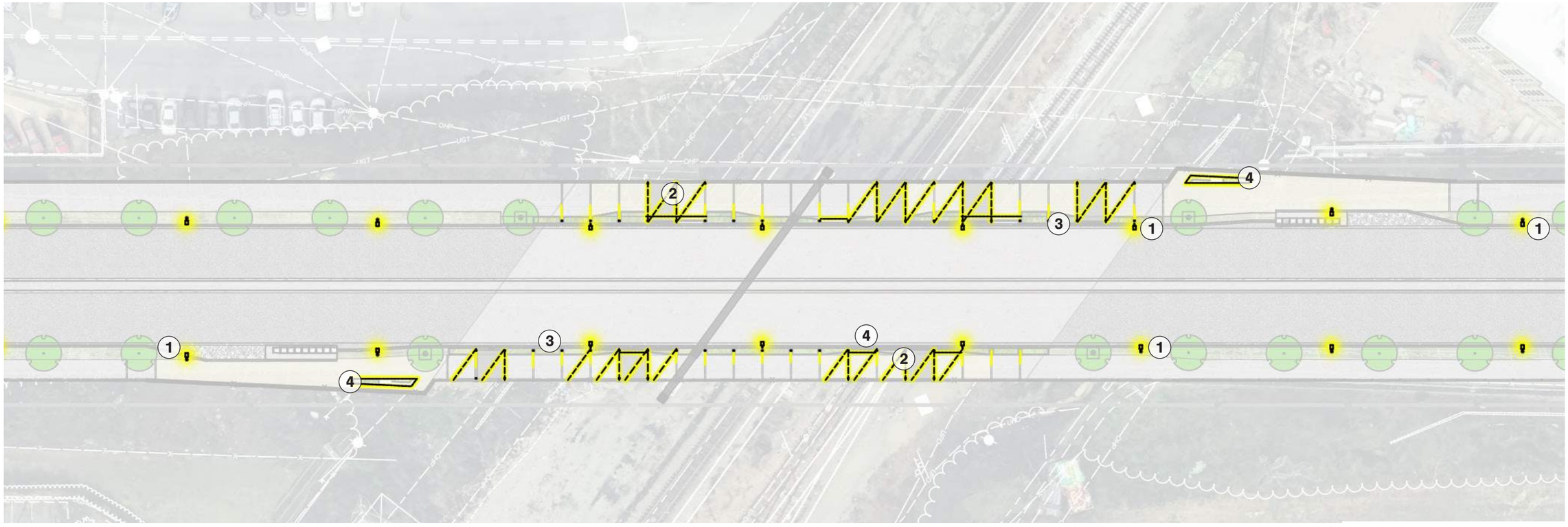
Site Lighting Plan



LEGEND

1. Street Lighting
2. Integrated Overhead Structure Lighting
3. Column Sidewalk Accent Lighting
4. Integrated Bench Lighting

Bridge Lighting Plan



LEGEND

1. Street Lighting
2. Integrated Overhead Structure Lighting
3. Column Sidewalk Accent Lighting
4. Integrated Bench Lighting

Light Fixtures

Street Lighting

Integrated Bench / Planter Lighting

Integrated Overhead Structure Lighting

Column Sidewalk Accent Lighting

Column Sidewalk Integrated Accent Lighting
(Optional)

Typical Lighting Placement

3 Community Engagement

Community Engagement

Community Feedback

- Strong support for its goals of improving connectivity, safety, and access.

- Residents valued the project's ability to connect the Diamond District and Scott's Addition, enhance walkability, and create safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Enthusiasm for the shared-use path and multi modal access, but many expressed a preference for dedicated, protected bike and pedestrian lanes.

- Requests for more shade was common for both comfort and to reduce heat retention.

- Some residents felt the bridge design appeared too industrial or modern and encouraged incorporating elements that better reflect Richmond's character and identity.

A Community Meeting was held on June 11, 2025, at the Science Museum of Virginia. This event was well attended, and the public was given the opportunity to comment, both in-person on paper and through a QR code electronically. The boards from that event are included with this submittal. A Formal Public Hearing is slated in December 2025.

A feedback summary and synthesis of key takeaways is forthcoming after the comment period closes on June 22th, 2025.

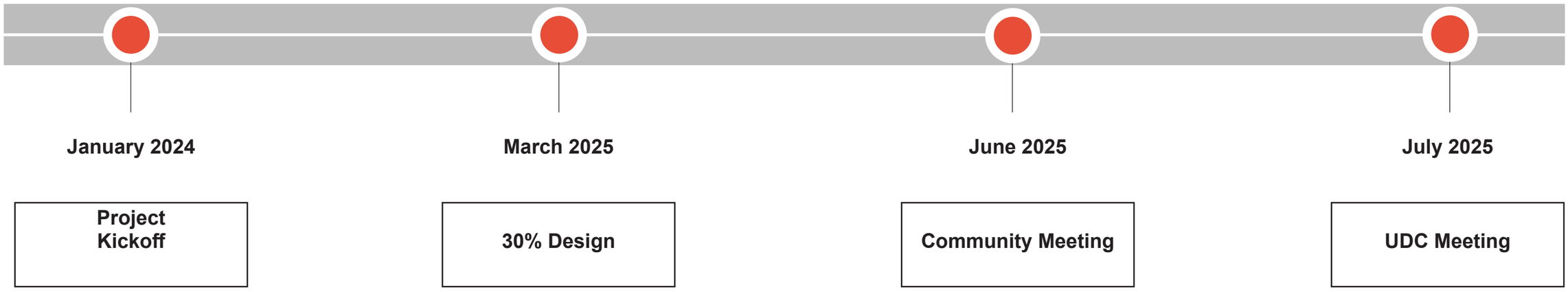
Community Engagement






4 Project Schedule

Phase 1 Project Schedule



SCHEDULE NOTES:
Construction schedule is dependent on the project receiving sufficient funds for Phase 1 development. The UDC will be updated and notified of any schedule variance if impacted by funding efforts.