

MERIDEN LINEAR TRAILS STUDY

PREPARED FOR:

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS,
THE CITY OF MERIDEN

APRIL 5, 2012

PREPARED BY:
STANTEC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.



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Executive Summary

Overview

The Meriden Linear Trails Study was prepared to develop a plan of conceptual improvement recommendations and strategies that would address identified needs and deficiencies of the current trail system in Meriden. The study effort and its recommendations were primarily focused on a review of the current trail status in Meriden; the development of a comprehensive trail system which will provide interconnections between City neighborhoods, parks, schools and business districts; and consistency with City and Regional goals and plans.

Process

The process for the study included detailed data collection and review of all available City and Regional documentation, including municipal GIS data, community resources, existing and proposed City and regional trail routes, the City of Meriden Plan of Conservation and Development and other relevant information. Initial work sessions were held with the City of Meriden and SCRCOG representatives to review existing trail systems together with initial route criteria and defined City needs. Subsequent to the completion of data collection, several field investigations were completed to obtain and document physical inventory and potential routes and opportunities. Recommendations included the identifying constraints and potential improvements. Once all physical inventory was completed, additional work sessions were held to review potential routes considering opportunities, constraints and City needs and other evaluation criteria (ROW, environmental, cultural and institutional access, etc.). Subsequent to obtaining initial stakeholder input, and conducting work sessions with City representatives, trail routes were further refined.

Public Involvement

One of the critical elements of the study was engaging the community and soliciting public input during the development process. An initial meeting was held prior to any refined routes being suggested to state the goals of the project as well as obtain stakeholder input on potential routes and community concerns and/or priorities. Subsequent to trail development, a second public outreach session was held to further provide the community with updates on routing, linkages, details, typical sections and recommendations.

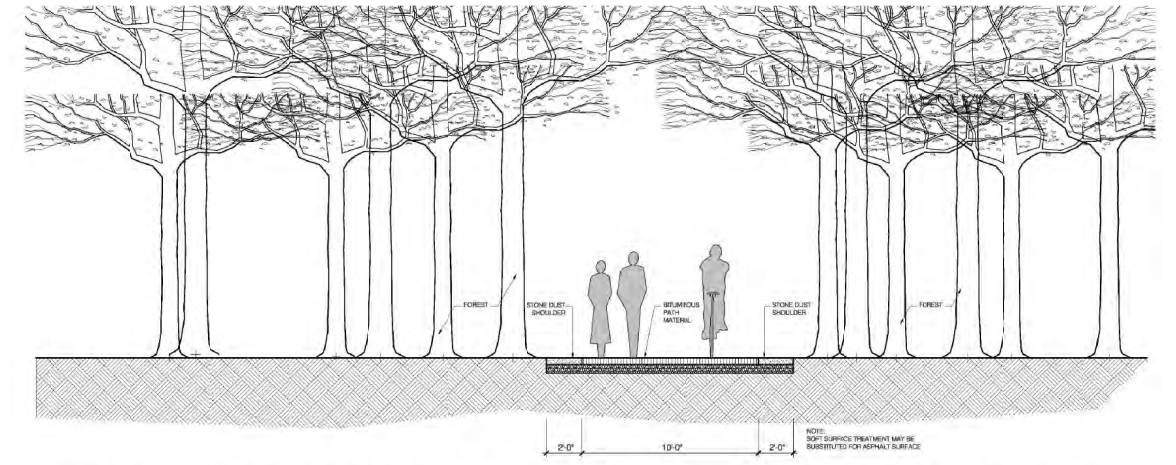
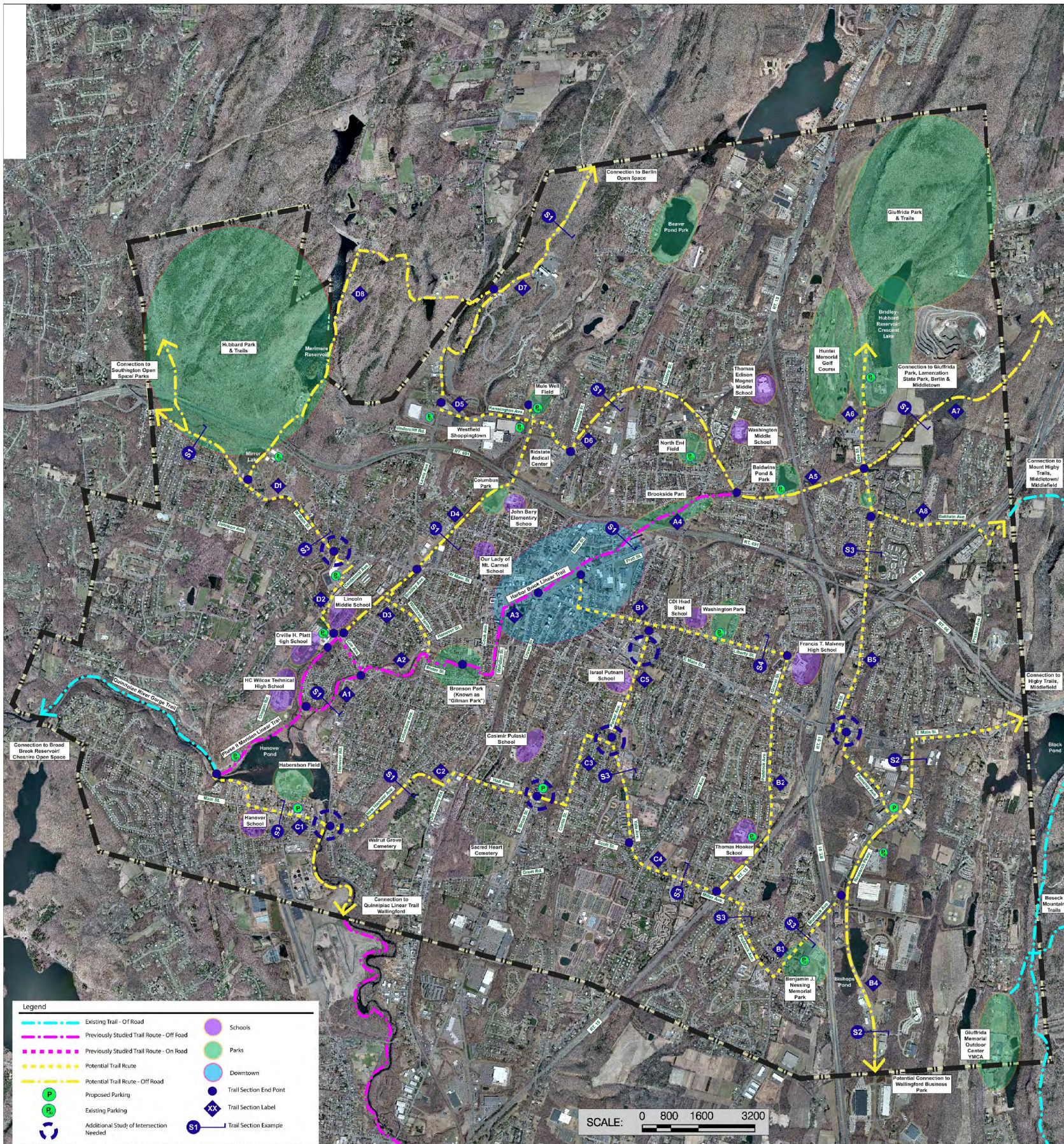
Recommendations

Recommendations for trail routing and identification of reasonable trail segments as well as details and typical cross sections were finalized and incorporated into an annotated graphic plan entitled “Meriden Linear Trails Study - Preferred Master Plan” dated April 5, 2012 to provide the City and SCRCOG with a trails master plan upon which to base future trail work. This plan addresses the preferred routing of future trail segments, typical segment sections and details, access points and potential parking for trail uses, and linkages to internal and external trails and resources.

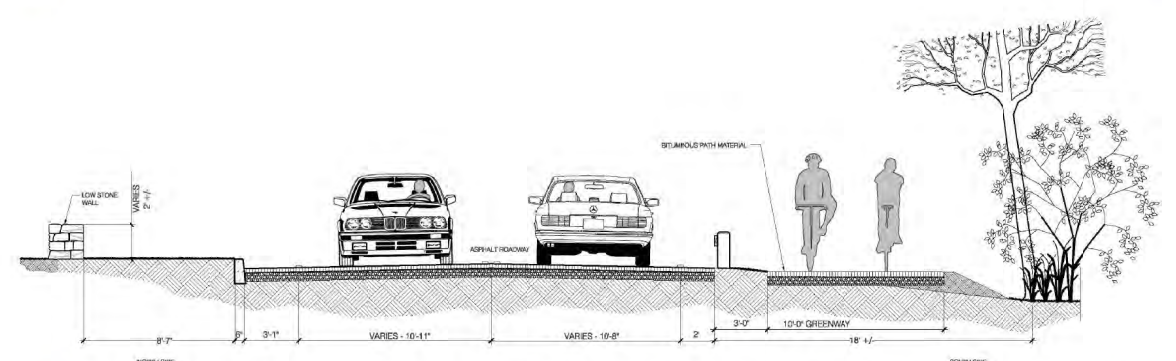
Future work to be completed which is beyond the scope of this study includes assessing specific weighted criteria and construction cost estimating to further define potential phasing of trail segment design and construction. This additional work will allow the City of Meriden to implement the recommended trail segments and realize its goal of a comprehensive trail system that will improve transportation opportunities for Meriden and surrounding communities.

Acknowledgements

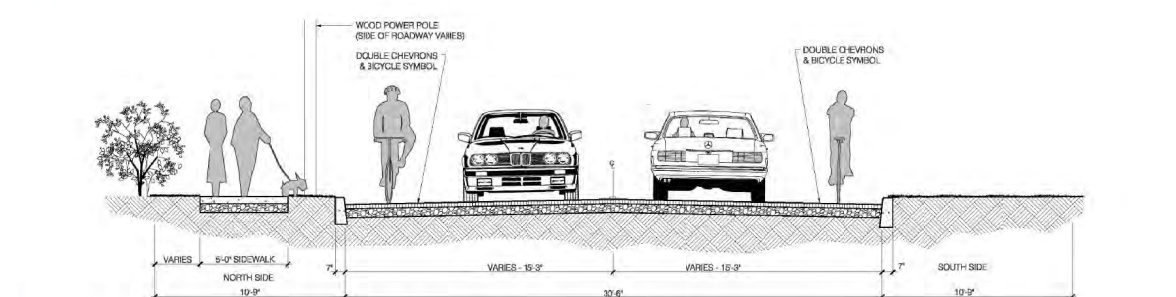
- South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)
 - Stephen B. Dudley, P.E., Transportation Planner
- City of Meriden
 - Robert J. Bass, P.E., Director of Public Works
 - Howard Weissberg, P.E., PTOE, Associate City Engineer
- Meriden Linear Trail Advisory Committee
 - Joseph Zajac , MLTAC Chairman, Transit District Administrator



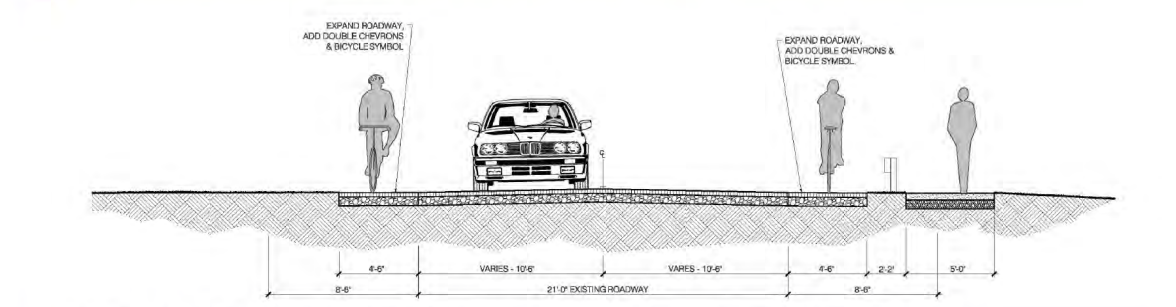
S1 PROPOSED BITUMINOUS CONCRETE (ASPHALT) GREENWAY PAVEMENT - WOODLAND AREAS



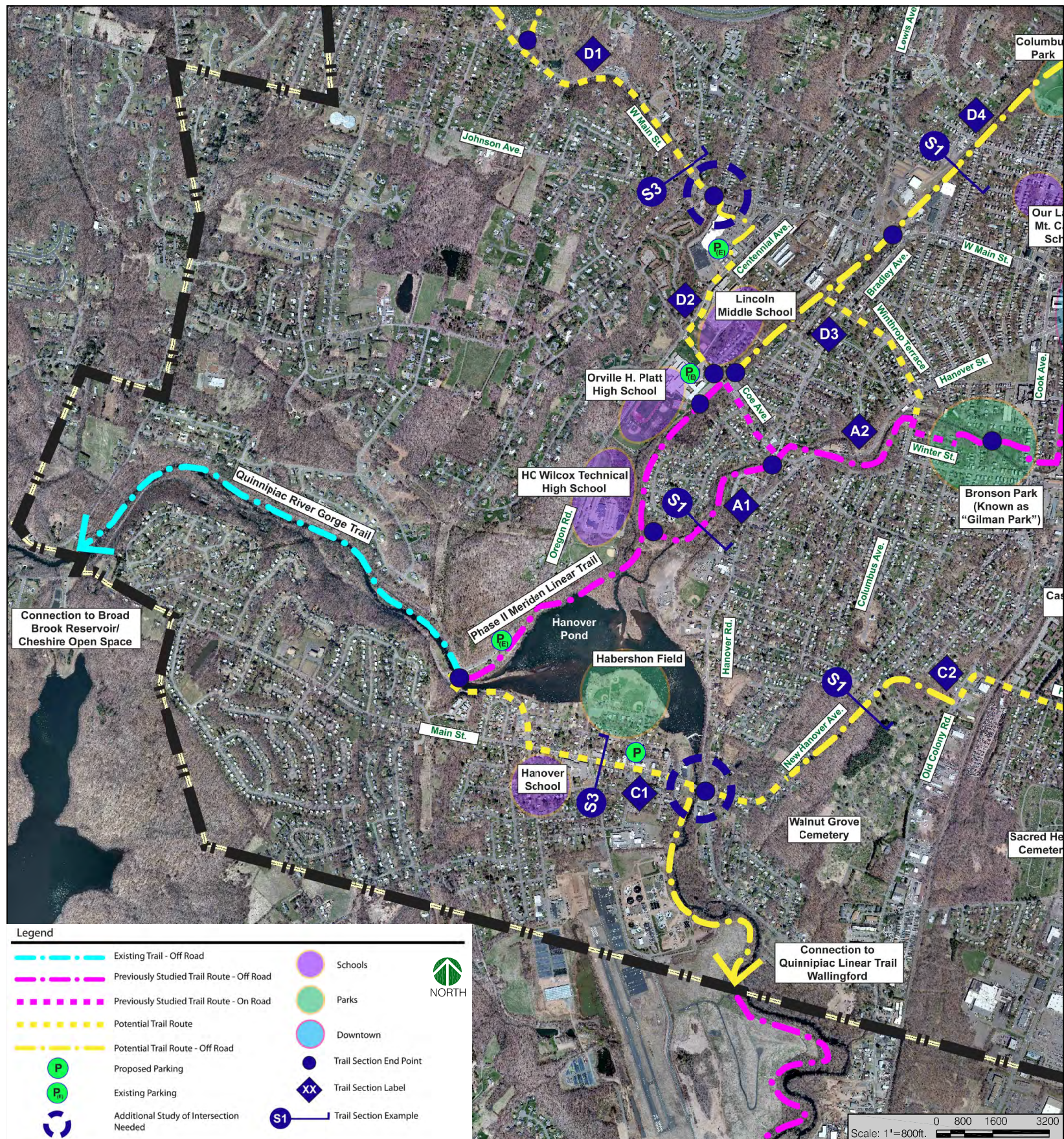
S2 PROPOSED BITUMINOUS CONCRETE (ASPHALT) GREENWAY PAVEMENT AND LINE MARKINGS



S3 PROPOSED CHEVRON & BIKE SYMBOL (SHARROW) MARKINGS

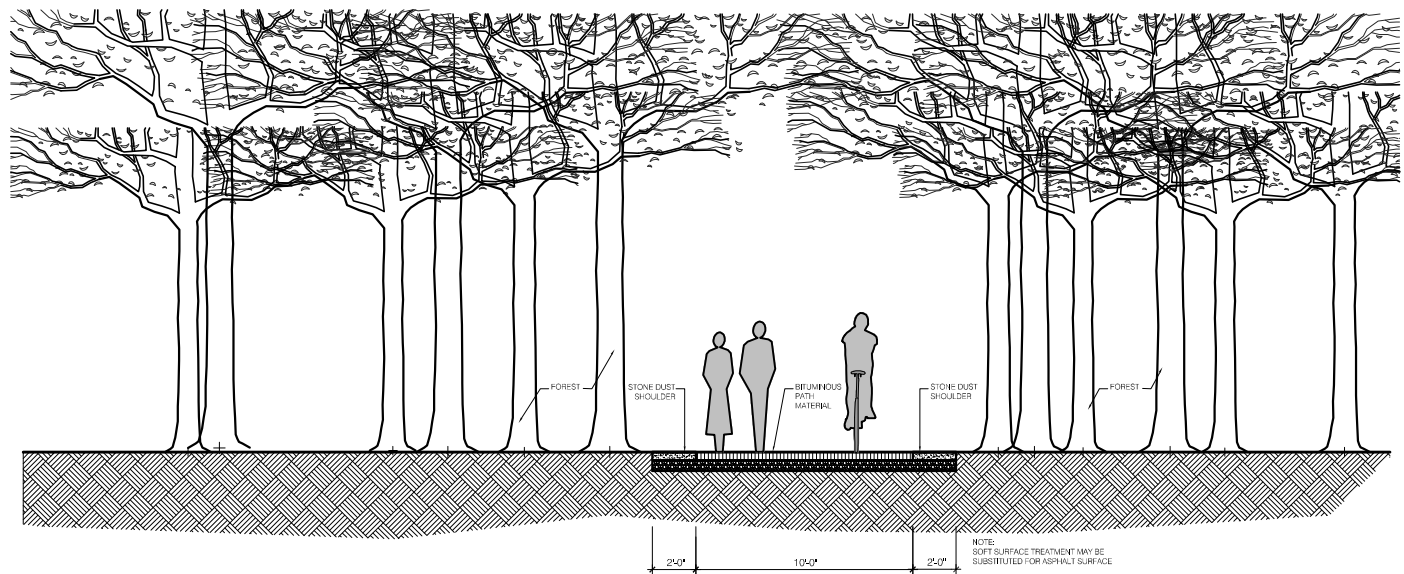


S4 PROPOSED BICYCLE LANE AND BICYCLE SYMBOL & ARROW MARKINGS

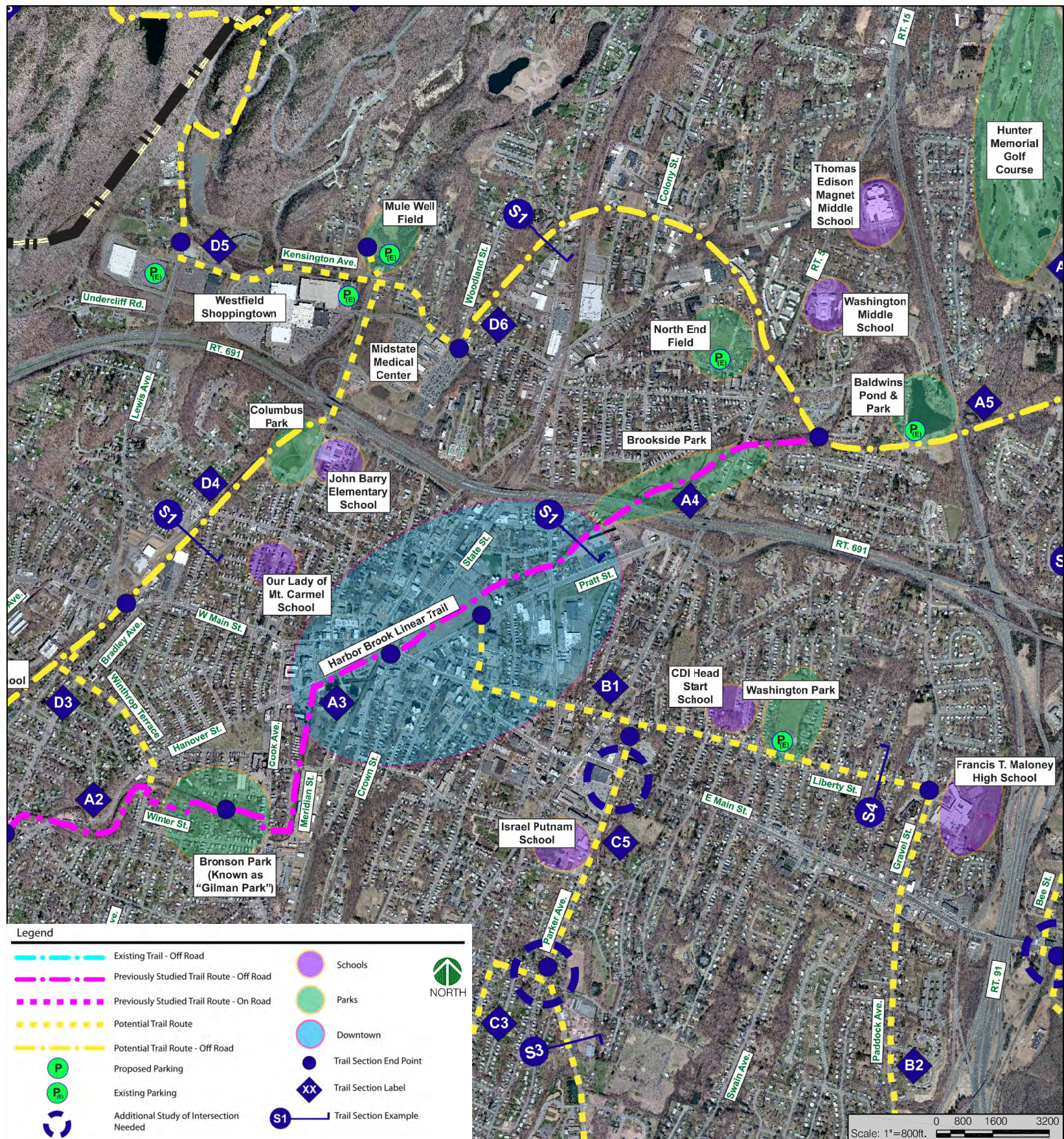


A1 - Harbor Brook Linear Trail: This 0.5-mile segment will run along Harbor Brook and offer an off-road trail experience with scenic views of the water and surrounding woodland.

A2 - Harbor Brook Linear Trail: This 1.1-mile-long trail is primarily an off-road trail with a short on-road section along Coe Avenue and Hanover Street. The trail is intended to service Meriden's residential neighborhoods along Coe Avenue, Hanover Street and Columbus Avenue. The trail will offer views of the Harbor Brook and serve to connect the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail section to the existing Bronson Park.

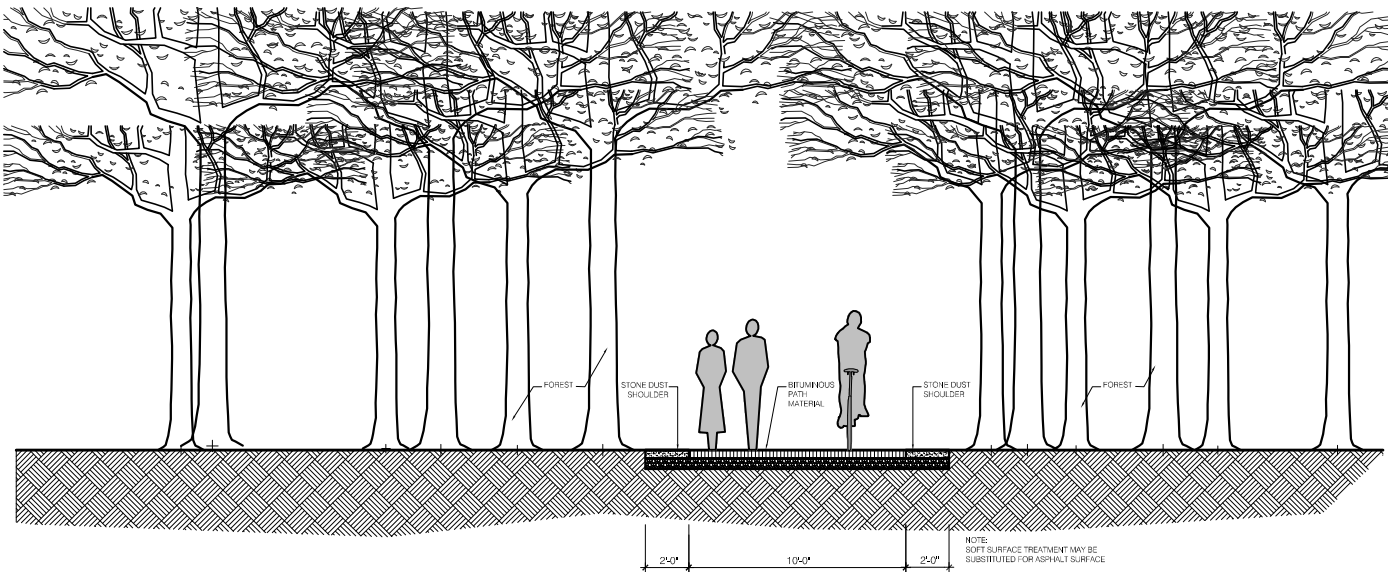


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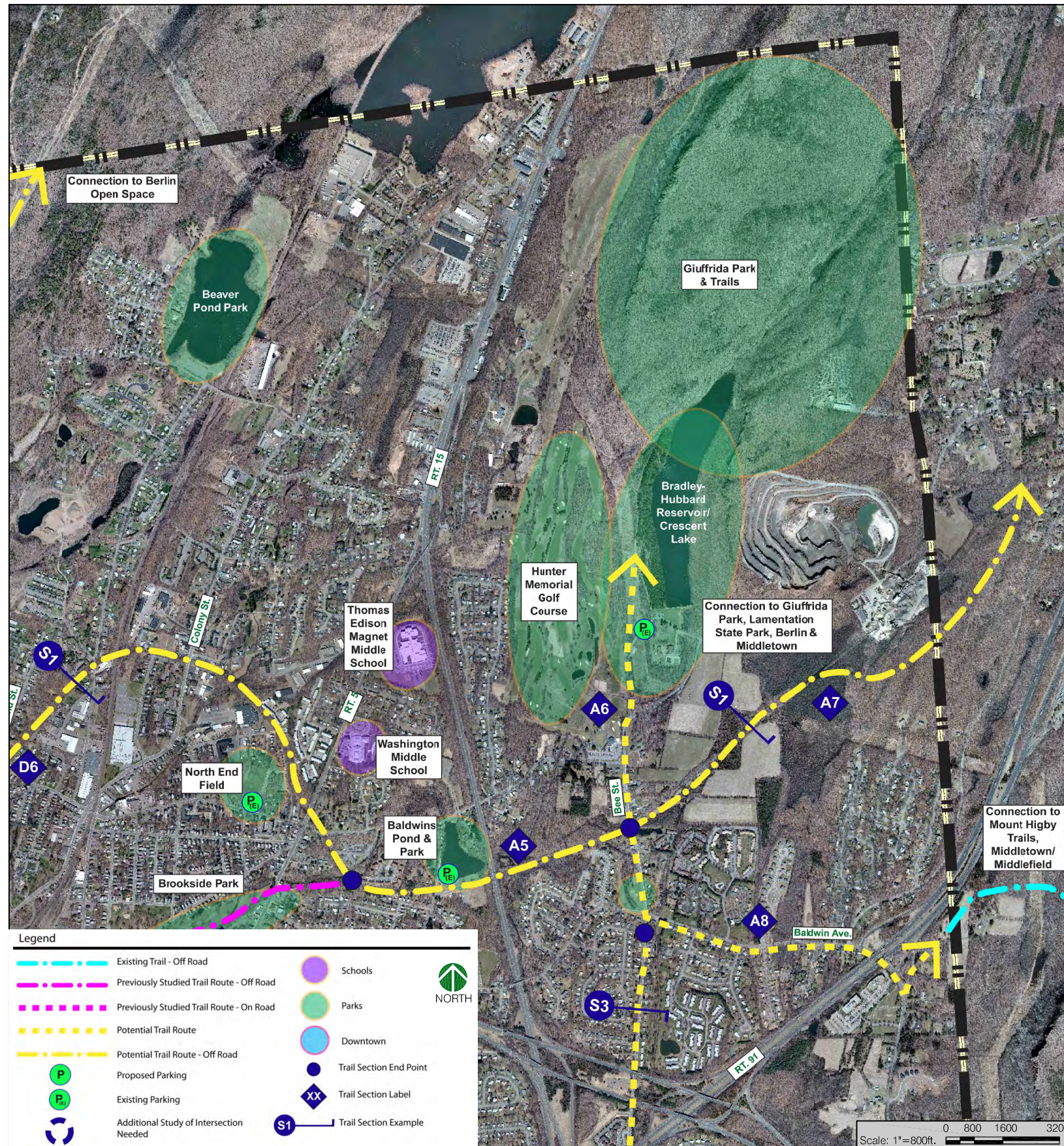


A3 - Harbor Brook Linear Trail: This 0.9-mile-long trail is an on-road and off-road section that connects Bronson Park to Meriden's downtown HUB site. On-road sections are expected to include a sidewalk for pedestrians and a shared bike lane with sharrows. The trail is currently set to terminate at East Main Street.

A4 - Harbor Brook Linear Trail: This 1.3-mile-long trail is mainly an off-road section. It is planned that the trail will move through the HUB site and Meriden's downtown neighborhood using land along Harbor Brook. The trail will make its way north to Brookside Park and will terminate at the existing old railroad corridor. This trail will service Meriden's downtown and residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of Brookside Park.



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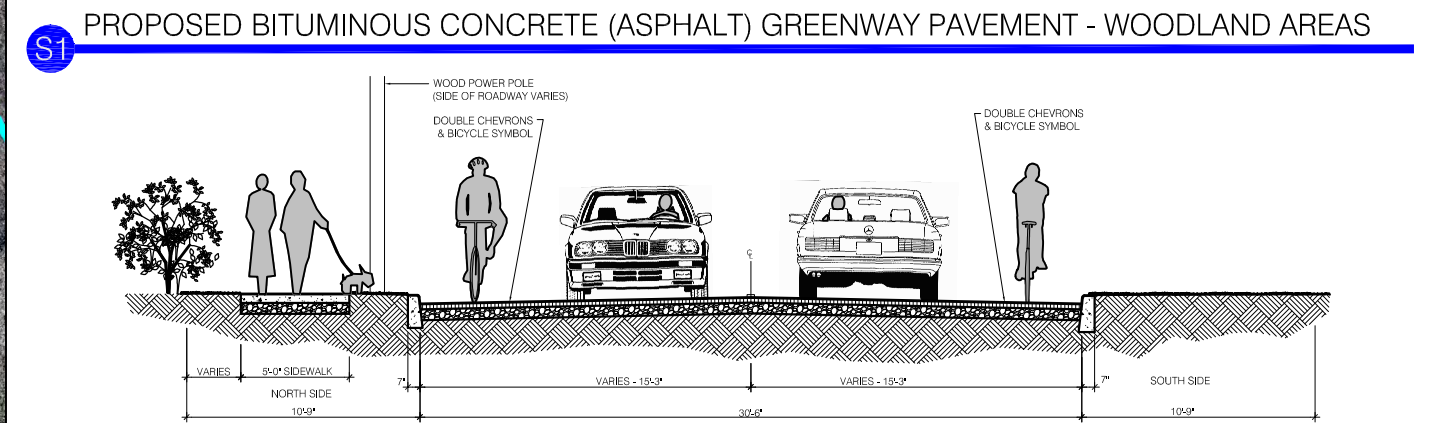
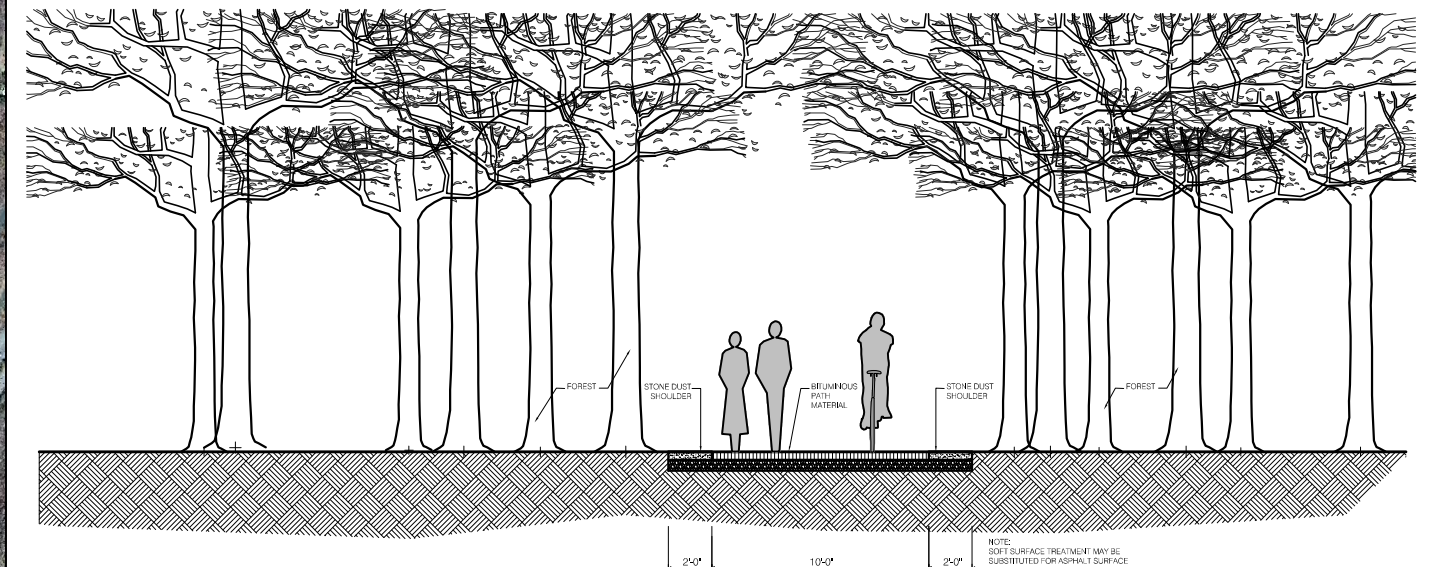


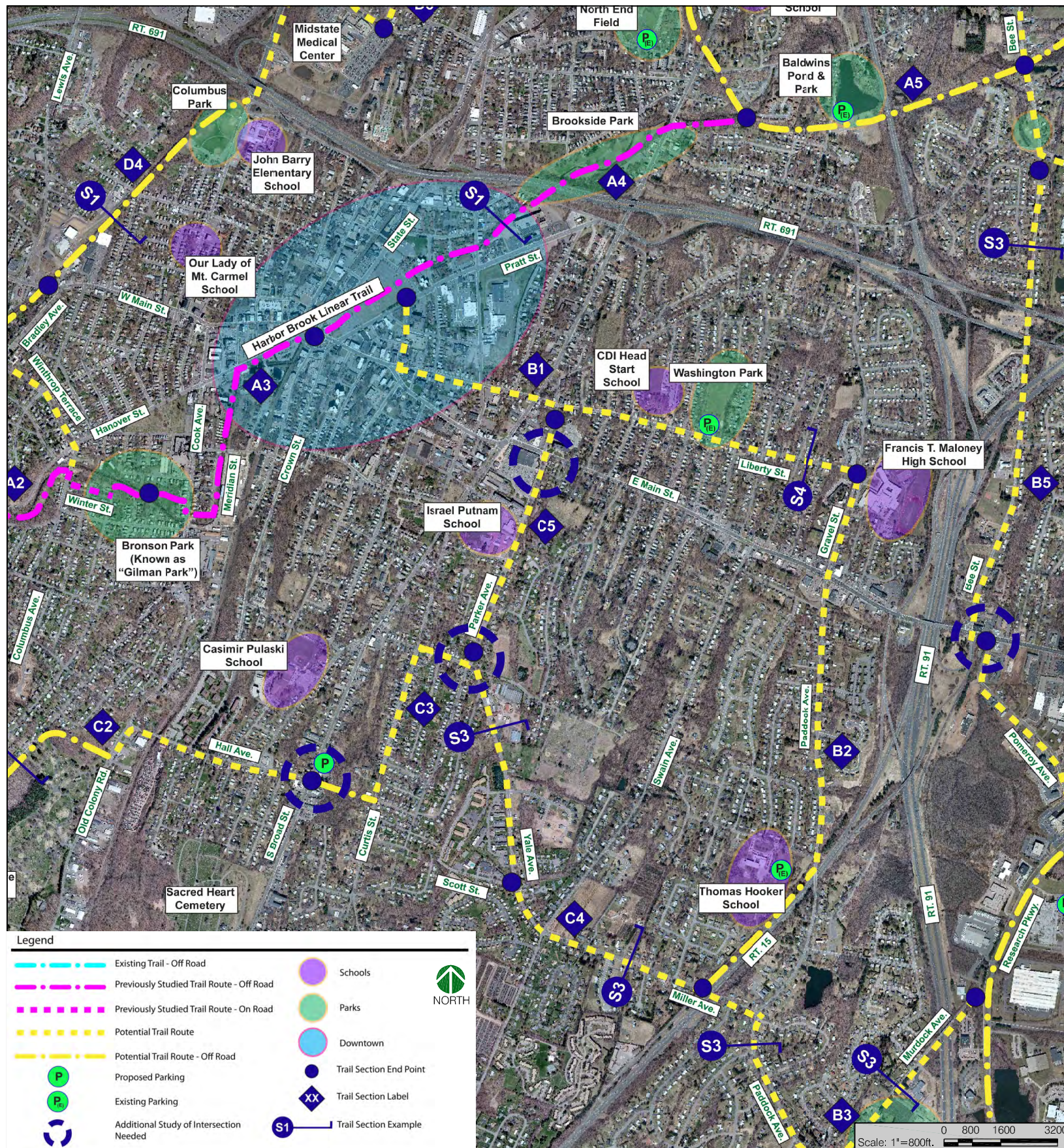
A5 - This 0.75-mile segment can be characterized as a Rails-to-Trails segment as the trail corridor is on a historic rail line. This segment is completely off-road and will offer connections to Baldwins Pond & Park, the Harbor Brook Linear Trail and Meriden's eastern-most neighborhoods. This trail includes a pass under the Route 15 overpass, and it will terminate at Bee Street.

A6 - This 0.35-mile trail offers a northern connection along Bee Street to Giuffrida Park and its existing hiking trails. These trails connect to the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, which is designated as not only a non-motorized, hiking trail system per Connecticut State Statute Section 23-10a, but the entire system is also designated as a Connecticut State Greenway. This 0.35-mile trail will be on-road, containing sharrows for bikes and a sidewalk for pedestrians.

A7 - This is a 1.0-mile segment that extends from Bee Street north east along the historic railroad corridor. This trail will offer an off-road experience. Further study is needed to establish at what point this trail will terminate as the old railroad bed currently runs directly into the Suzio York Hill quarry.

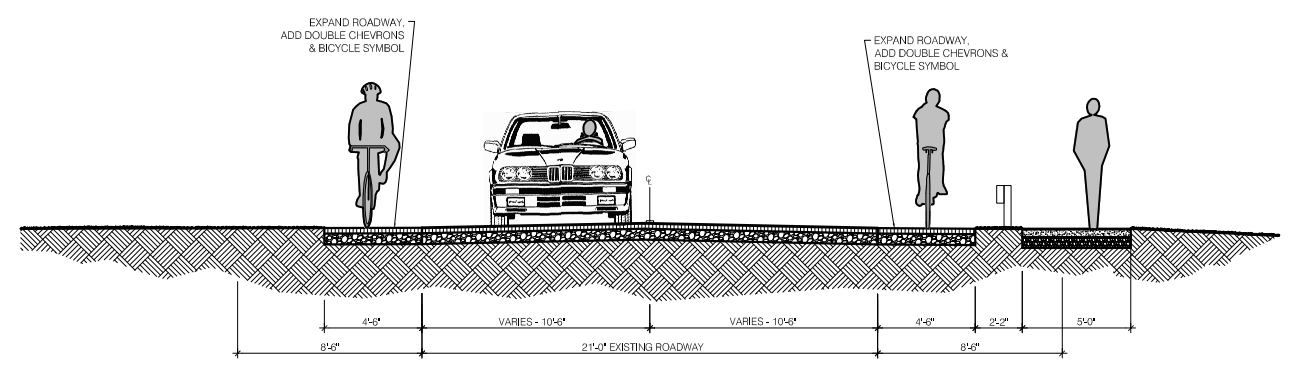
A8 - This 1.25-mile segment will begin on Bee Street and run south before turning east onto Baldwin Avenue. The trail will offer on-road bike lanes, bike sharrows and some off-road pathway sections. It runs through residential neighborhoods and offers connections to the Mount Higby trails.



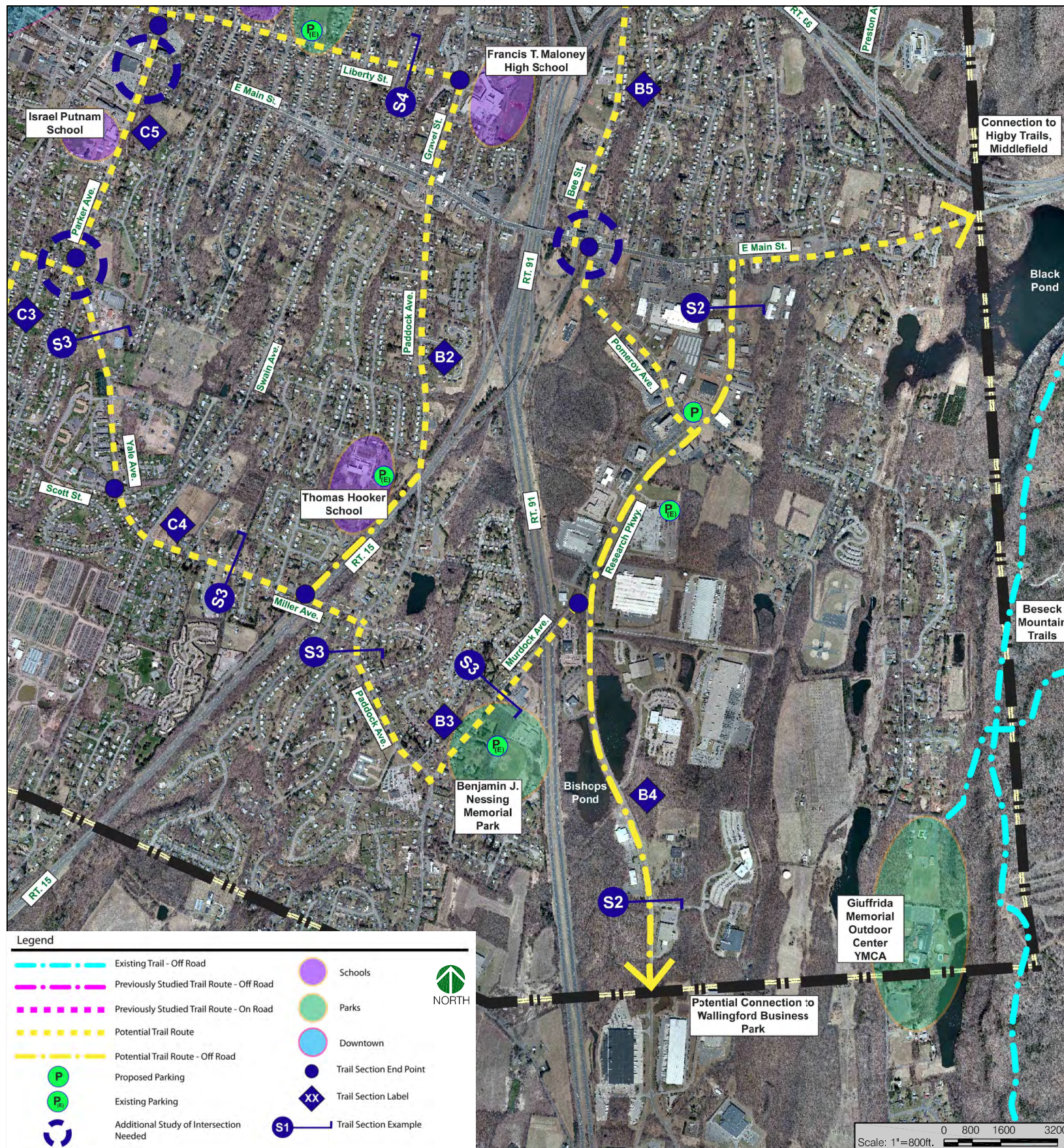


B1 - This 1.4-mile trail segment runs along Liberty Street. It is anticipated that pedestrians will use the existing new sidewalks and bikers will be on-road in either a designated bike lane or on a sharrow-marked street. Liberty Street is steep, and it is expected that some sections of the bikeway/pathway will not meet ADA requirements based on the existing grades. This segment will serve the downtown neighborhood and offer connections to the HUB site as well as the CDI Head Start School, Francis T. Maloney High School and Washington Park.

B2 - This is a 1.4-mile trail segment that runs bikes on-road with sharrows along Gravel Street and Paddock Avenue. The trail has an off-road section along Route 15 and terminates at Miller Avenue. Connections include Thomas Hooker School and Francis T. Maloney High School.

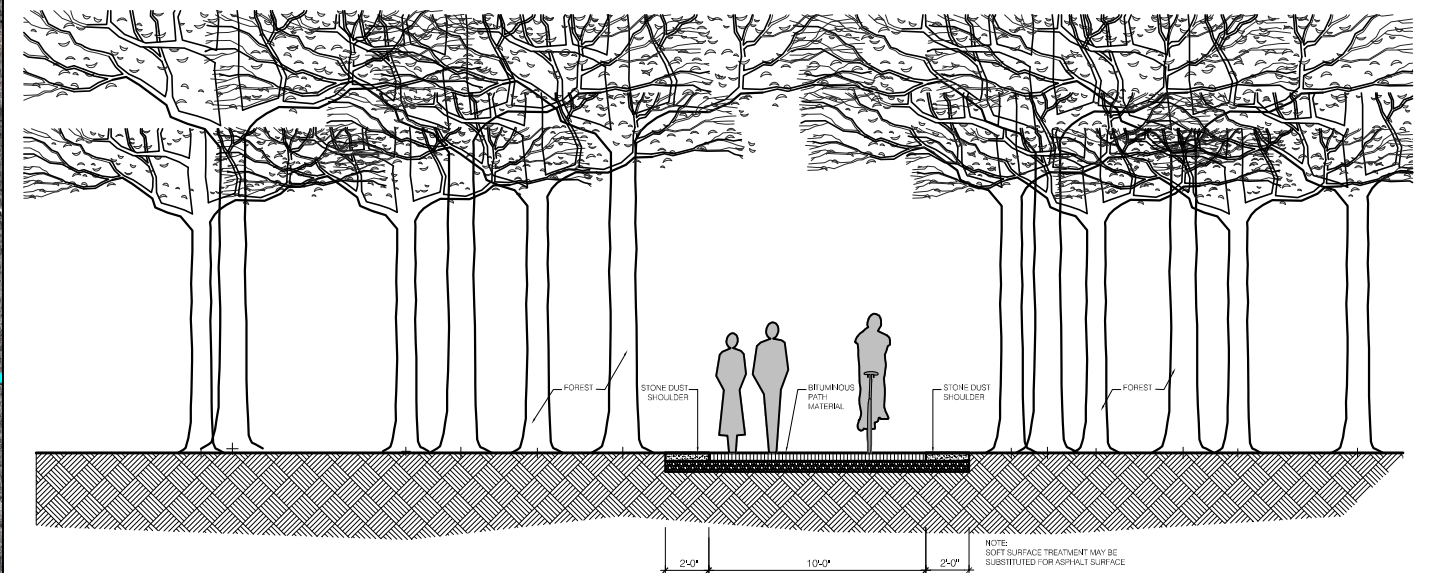


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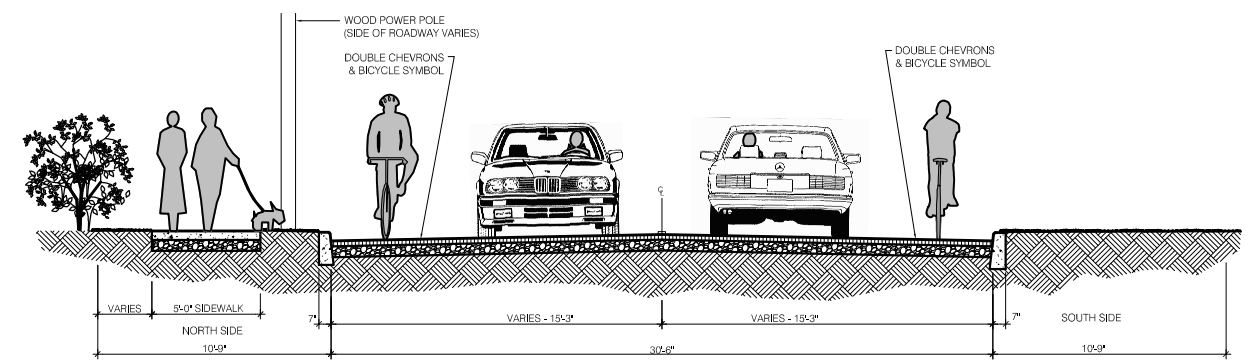


B3 - This 1.3-mile segment along Miller Avenue, Paddock Avenue and Murdock Avenue is a bikes on-road section. Painted sharrows will be used for bikers and sidewalks constructed for pedestrians in areas where there are currently no sidewalks. This segment will offer trail access for Meriden's south east neighborhoods. A key trail challenge will be the narrow Route 15 underpass.

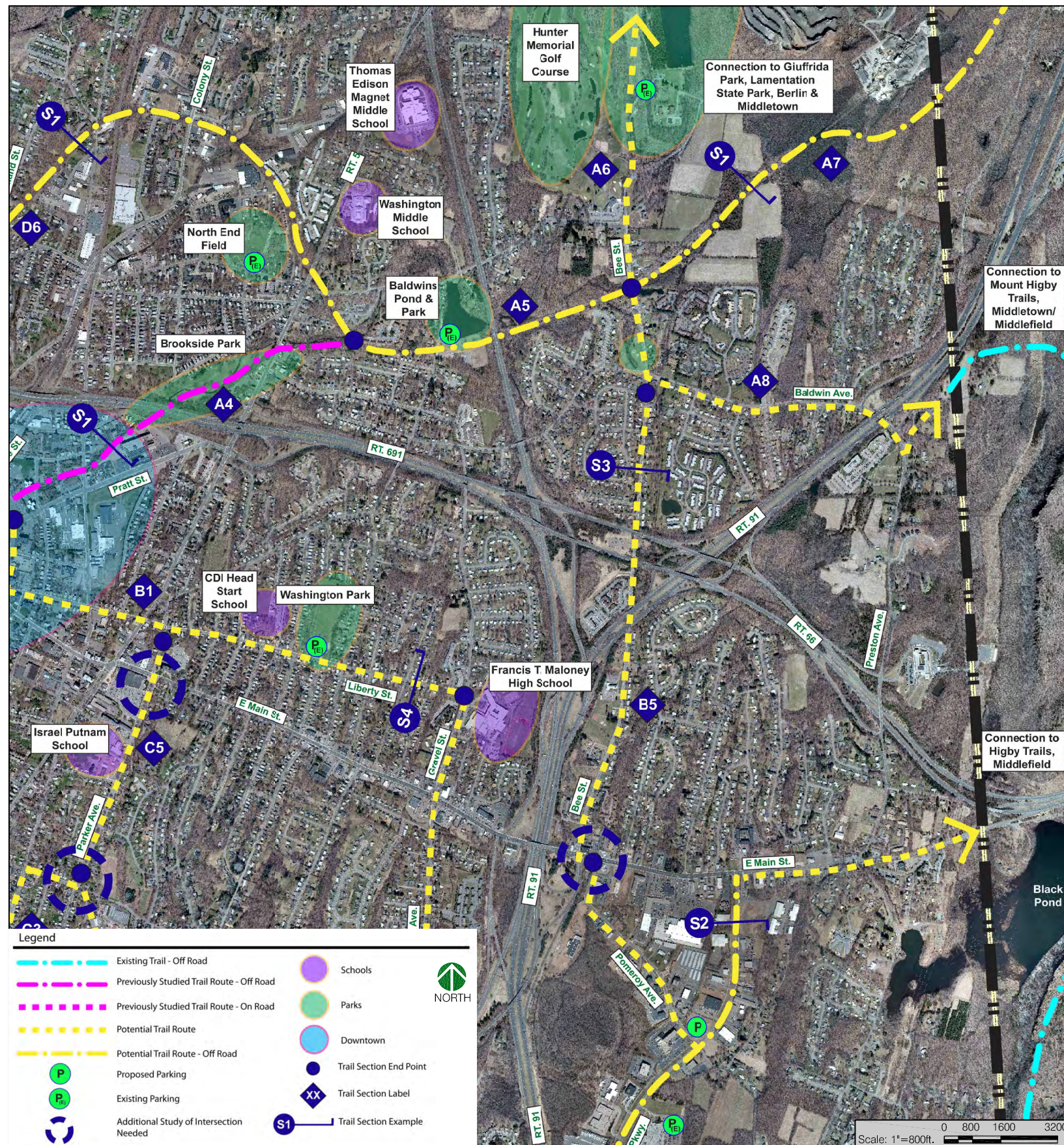
B4 - This 3.5-mile trail segment runs along Research Parkway and services the many businesses and industries along this section in Meriden. It is intended that the trail will be entirely off-road along Research Parkway, using the City ROW land. The Pomeroy Avenue and East Main Street sections will be on-road with sharrows. This segment will establish a strong connection from East Main Street to the Wallingford town line. The intersection of East Main Street and Bee Street may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.



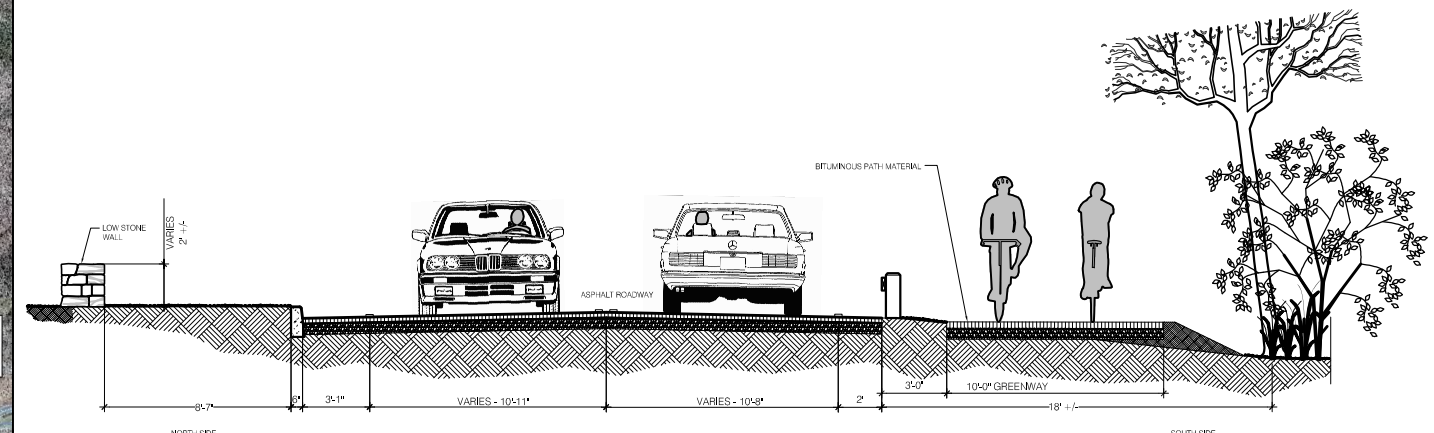
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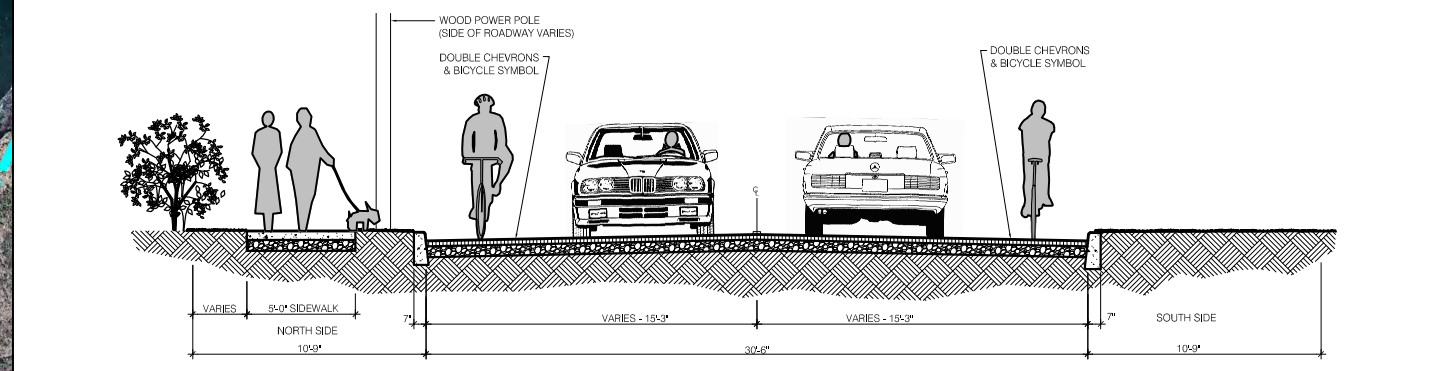
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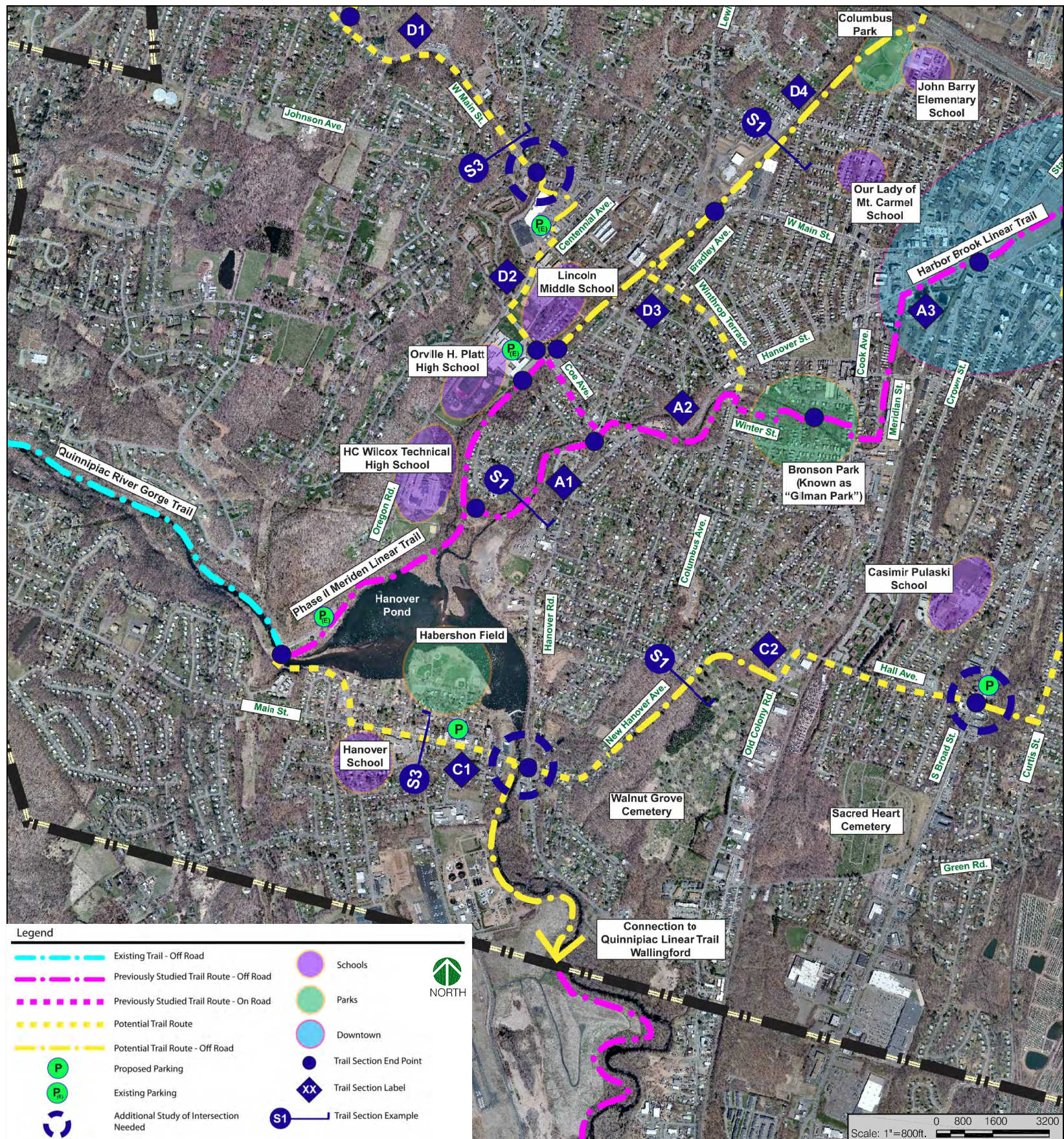
B5 - This 1.4 miles of trail along Bee Street will be an on-road section for bikes, and a sidewalk will be provided for pedestrians. Some sections of roadway may prove wide enough for a bike lane. Other sections will provide sharrow marking for bikes. This stretch of trail connects Meriden's north eastern trails and neighborhoods to East Main Street's local businesses and Research Parkway's Bishops Pond.



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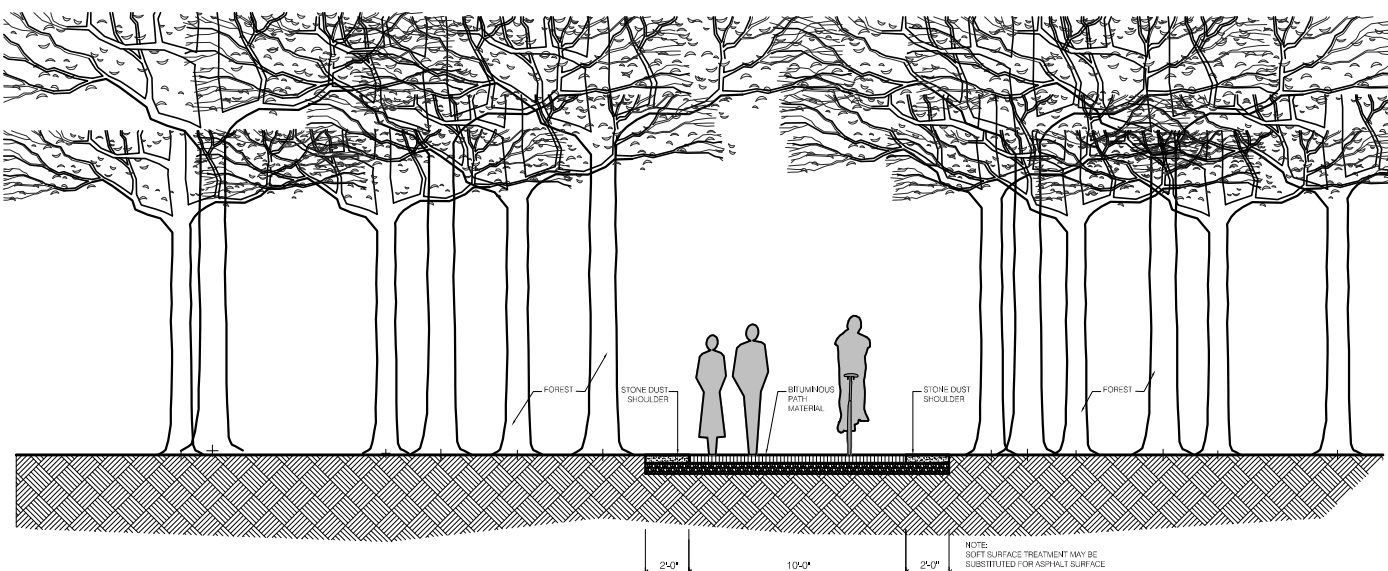


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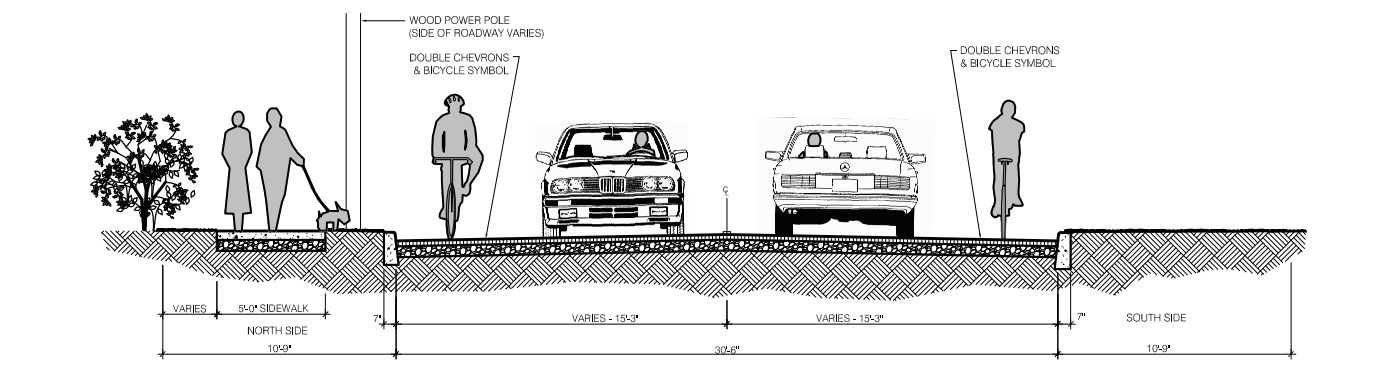


C1 - This approximately 1.5 miles of trail begins on River Road where the current Quinnipiac River Gorge Trail ends at the Red Bridge. The trail will be sharrows on-road and follow Main Street, South Meriden, before going off-road to follow the Quinnipiac River, terminating at the Meriden town line. This trail will serve as an important connection between the existing Quinnipiac River Gorge Trail and the planned Wallingford Quinnipiac Linear Trail section. Anticipated challenges to this trail section include the very narrow ROW and steep slopes along River Road and Hanover Pond.

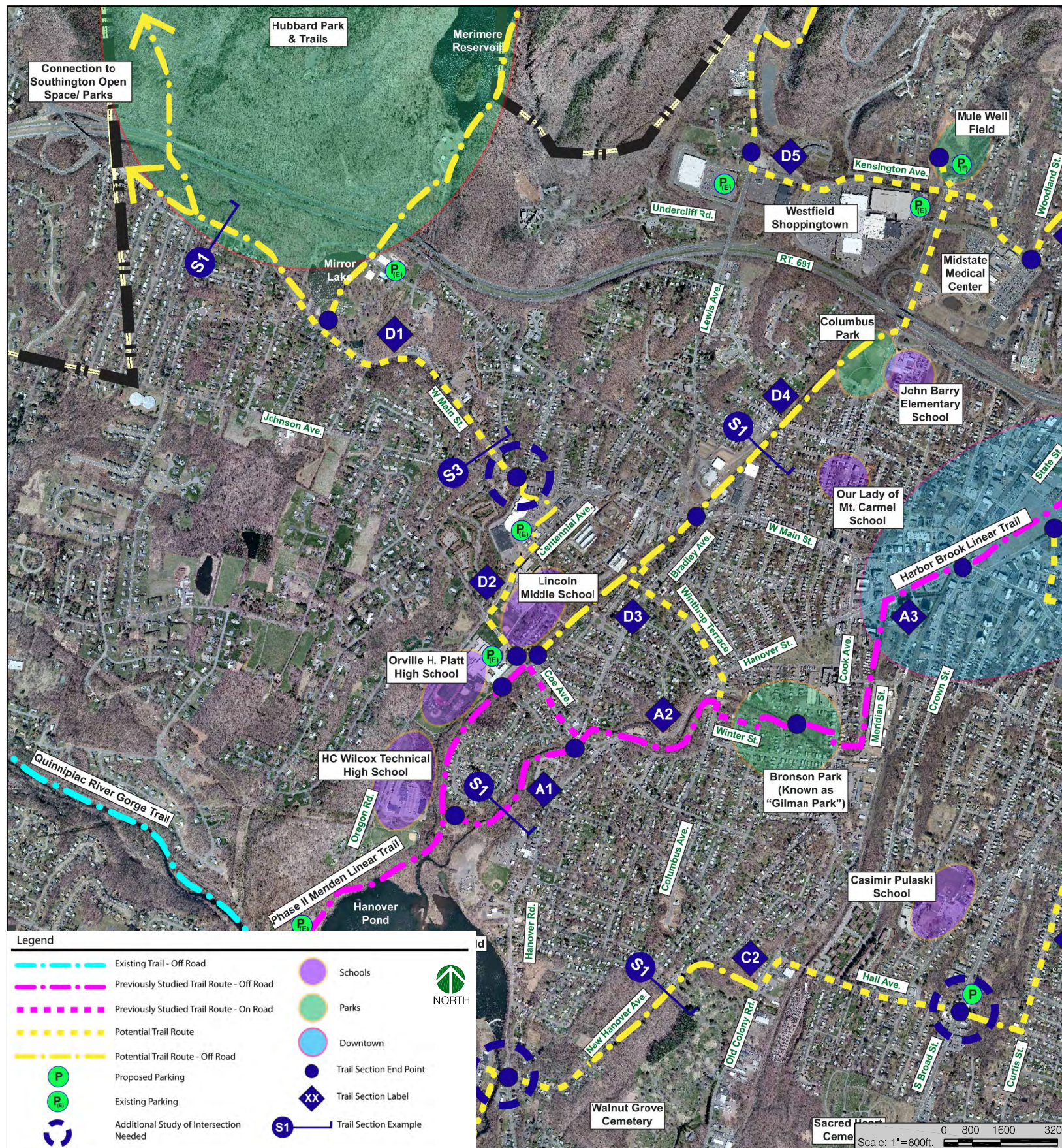
C2 - This approximately 1.4-mile segment begins as an on-road sharrow section with sidewalks along New Hanover Avenue. The trail then becomes an off-road trail utilizing Walnut Grove Cemetery property and connects through to Hall Avenue before termination at South Broad Street. This trail section will offer a connection between Meriden's south central neighborhoods to the Hanover Pond & Park area. There is also a potential connection of the Casimir Pulaski School. The intersection at New Hanover Avenue and Hanover Road may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.



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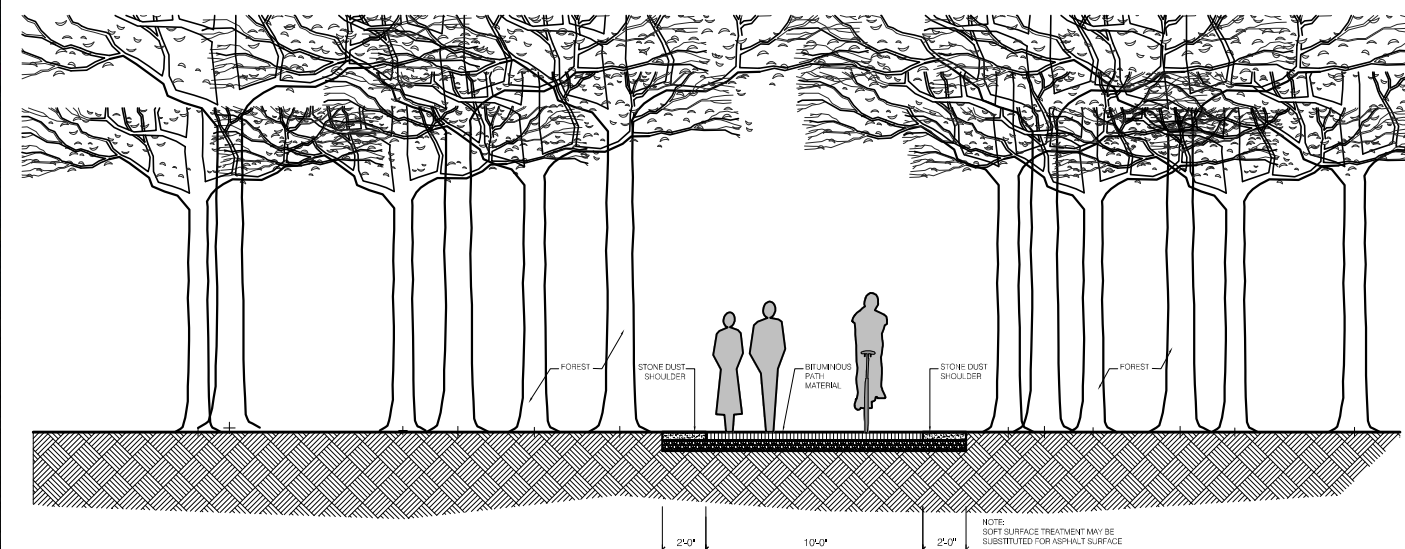


D1- This 1.5 miles of trail will be off-road along West Main Street on Hubbard Park property and then continue on-road, south to the Johnson Avenue intersection. Key connections include a beginning corridor between Meriden's western neighborhood/Hubbard Park with Downtown, Lincoln Middle School, Orville H. Platt High School, and HC Wilcox Technical High School, as well as the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail segment.

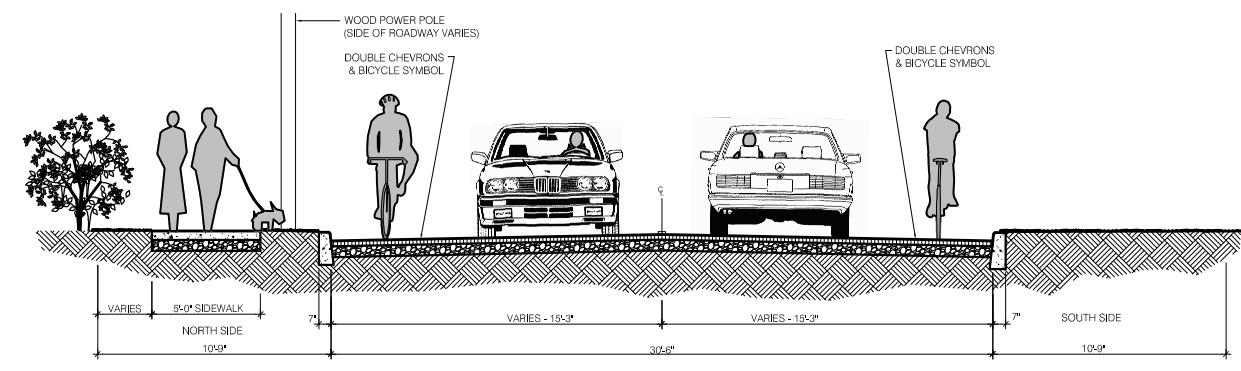
D2 - This 0.5 miles of trail will serve as a connection between D1 and D3, as well as connecting to the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail. The trail will act as an on-road section through the Centennial Plaza Shopping Center parking lot. The trail's exact location through the parking lot will need further study to ensure the safety of bikers and pedestrians as they pass through and connect to Centennial Avenue and continue on to Coe Avenue. The intersection crossing at West Main Street and Johnson Avenue may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.

D3 - This is a 1.25-mile segment that utilizes an off-road existing railroad bed. The on-road sharrow-marked section of the trail will be along Winthrop Terrace. This trail will offer an extension to the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail, connections to schools, the Downtown area and the planned Harbor Brook Linear Trail.

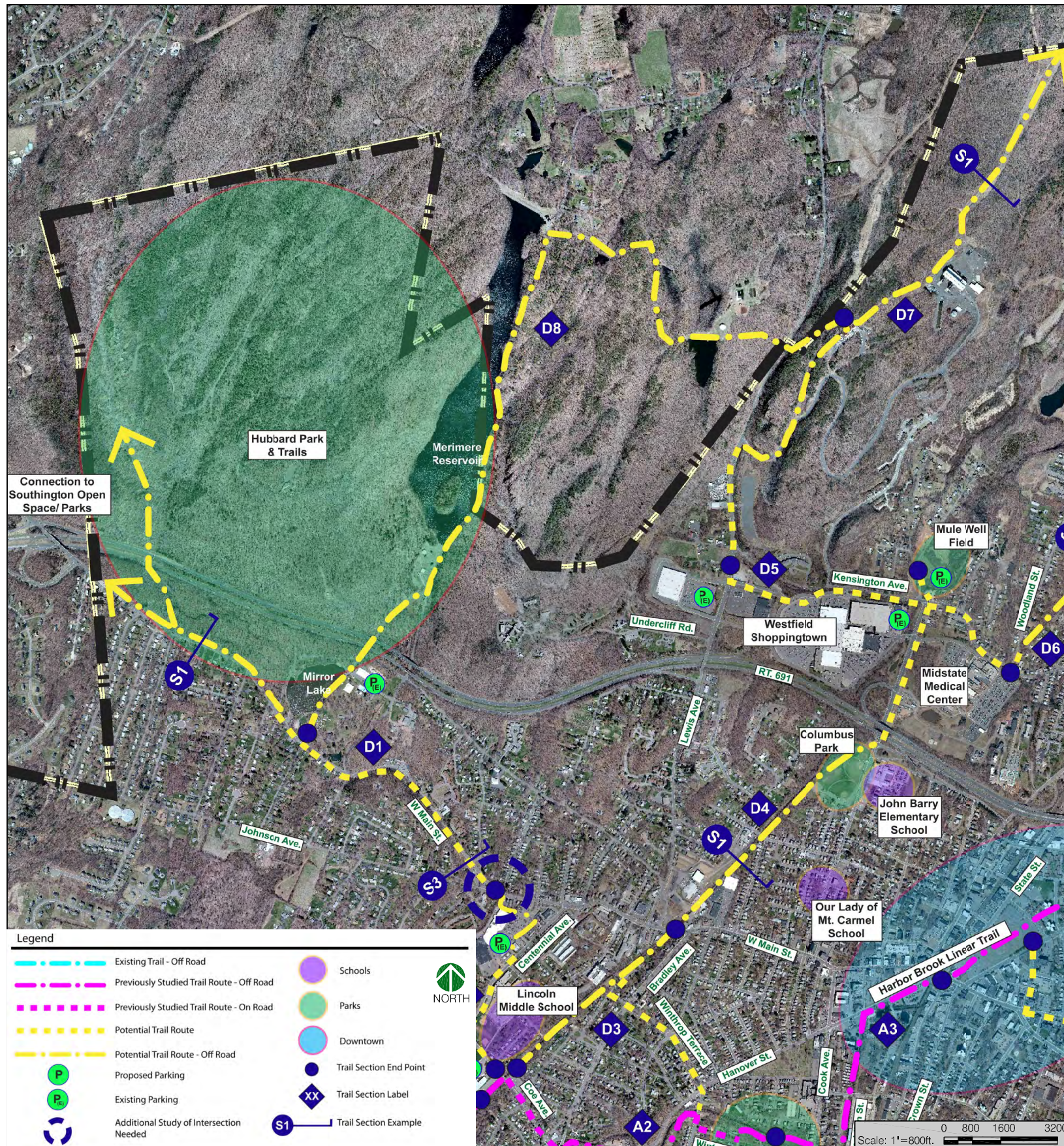
D4 - This segment of trail, running 1.3 miles, serves to bridge the gap between D3 and Meriden's schools and Downtown area to Meriden's northern-most neighborhoods, parks and trails. This trail is mainly an off-road trail on a pre-existing historic railroad ROW. Once the trail passes under Interstate 691, it will be an on-road sharrow-marked trail for bikes with a sidewalk for pedestrians.



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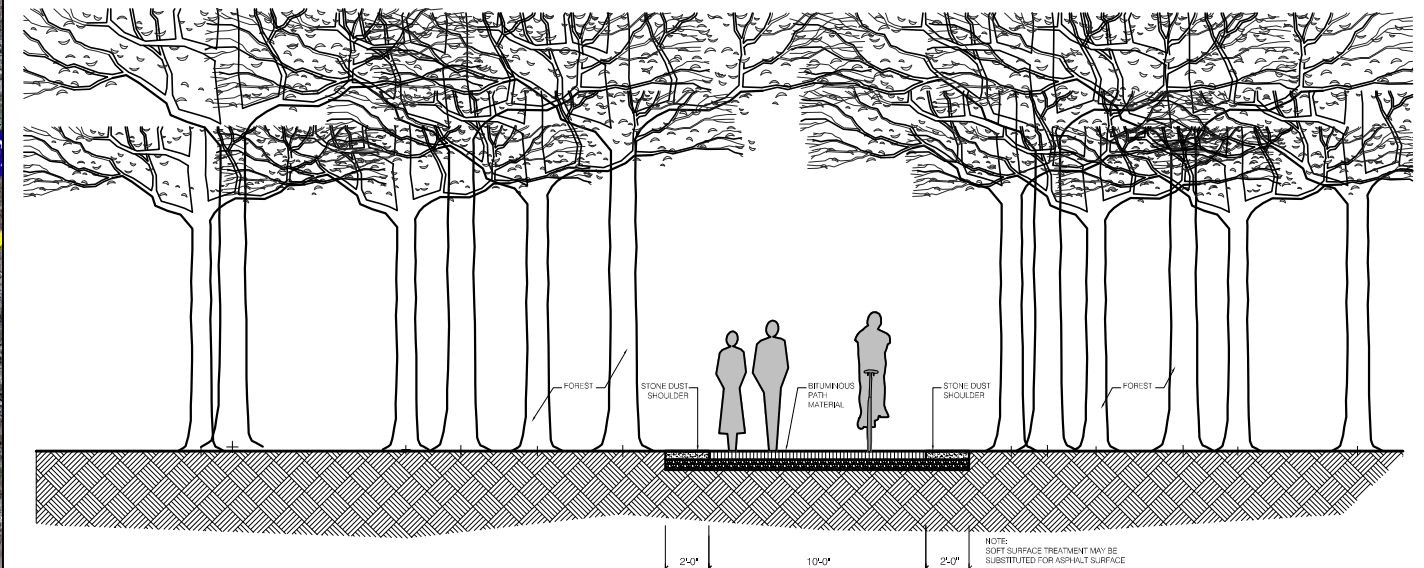


D5 - This 0.9-mile segment serves to connect segments D7 and D6 with D4. While the current plan outlines an all on-road trail, the eastern portion of Kensington Avenue may offer an opportunity for an off-road segment on Midstate Medical Center property.

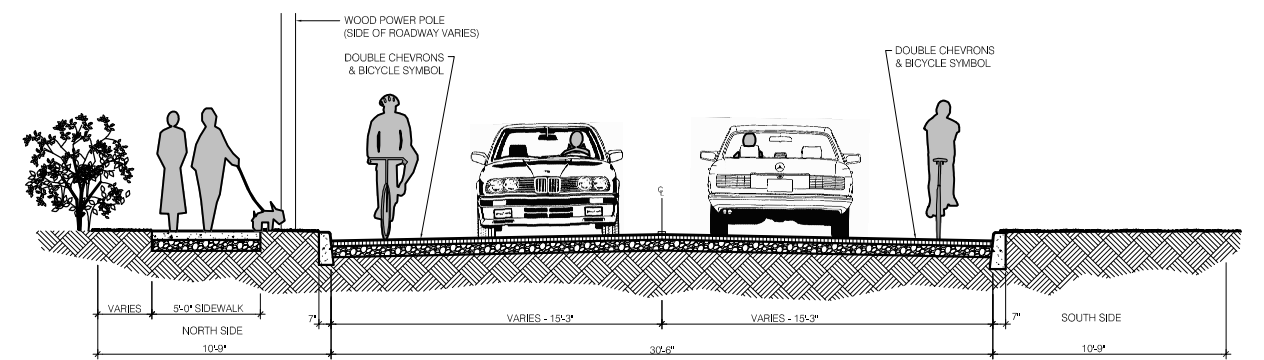
D6 - This is a 1.5-mile trail segment that is all off-road on pre-existing historic railroad ROW. This trail offers a valuable scenic connection to the Harbor Brook Linear Trail as well as potential connection to nearby parks and schools. (See page 5 for complete trail segment length.)

D7 - This 1.8-mile trail stretches north from D5 to the Meriden/Berlin town line. This trail may not be ADA accessible based on the probable grades encountered in the off-road section of the trail. This trail will also connect to the D8 trail segment into Hubbard Park.

D8 - This 2.6-mile section of off-road trail serves as an extension of the Hubbard Park trails and a connection to other trails in D7 and to the Town of Berlin. The trail will be the standard 10-ft. wide trail.



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DESCRIPTION OF ROUTE SEGMENTS

ROUTE A

A1 - Harbor Brook Linear Trail: This 0.5-mile segment will run along Harbor Brook and offer an off-road trail experience with scenic views of the water and surrounding woodland.

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A8 - This 1.25-mile segment will begin on Bee Street and run south before turning east onto Baldwin Avenue. The trail will offer on-road bike lanes, bike sharrows and some off-road pathway sections. It runs through residential neighborhoods and offers connections to the Mount Higby trails.

ROUTE B

B1 - This 1.4-mile trail segment runs along Liberty Street. It is anticipated that pedestrians will use the existing new sidewalks and bikers will be on-road in either a designated bike lane or on a sharrow-marked street. Liberty Street is steep, and it is expected that some sections of the bikeway/pathway will not meet ADA requirements based on the existing grades. This segment will serve the downtown neighborhood and offer connections to the HUB site as well as the CDI Head Start School, Francis T. Maloney High School and Washington Park.

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ROUTE C

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C2 - This approximately 1.4-mile segment begins as an on-road sharrow section with sidewalks along New Hanover Avenue. The trail then becomes an off-road trail utilizing Walnut Grove Cemetery property and connects through to Hall Avenue before termination at South Broad Street. This trail section will offer a connection between Meriden's south central neighborhoods to the Hanover Pond & Park area. There is also a potential connection of the Casimir Pulaski School. The intersection at New Hanover Avenue and Hanover Road may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.

C3 - This is a 1.3-mile section of trail that will have on-road sharrows with a sidewalk for pedestrians. The street crossing at South Broad Street, at Hall Avenue and the intersection of Yale Avenue and Ann Street may need potential improvements and will require further investigation. This section of trail services the surrounding neighborhood and offers a valuable east-west connection between the other planned trail segments.

C4 - The relatively short 0.6 miles of trail proposed for this section serves as an extension of either trail segment B2, B3 or C3. The trail can be on-road sharrows for bikes with a sidewalk for pedestrians. Further review of both Yale Avenue and Miller Avenue may see opportunities to have complete off-road trail sections in some areas, pending ROW analysis and community support.

C5 - This 0.75 miles of trail along Parker Avenue is a sharrow-marked section for bikes while pedestrians will use the pre-existing sidewalks. This key segment helps link Meriden's southern neighborhoods and trail sections with the Downtown. The intersection of Parker Avenue and East Main Street may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.

ROUTE D

D1 - This 1.5 miles of trail will be off-road along West Main Street on Hubbard Park property and then continue on-road, south to the Johnson Avenue intersection. Key connections include a beginning corridor between Meriden's western neighborhood/Hubbard Park with Downtown, Lincoln Middle School, Oville H. Platt High School, and HC Wilcox Technical High School, as well as the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail segment.

D2 - This 0.5 miles of trail will serve as a connection between D1 and D3, as well as connecting to the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail. The trail will act as an on-road section through the Centennial Plaza Shopping Center parking lot. The trail's exact location through the parking lot will need further study to ensure the safety of bikers and pedestrians as they pass through and connect to Centennial Avenue and continue on to Coe Avenue. The intersection crossing at West Main Street and Johnson Avenue may need potential improvements and will require further investigation.

D3 - This is a 1.25-mile segment that utilizes an off-road existing railroad bed. The on-road sharrow-marked section of the trail will be along Winthrop Terrace. This trail will offer an extension to the Phase II Meriden Linear Trail, connections to schools, the Downtown area and the planned Harbor Brook Linear Trail.

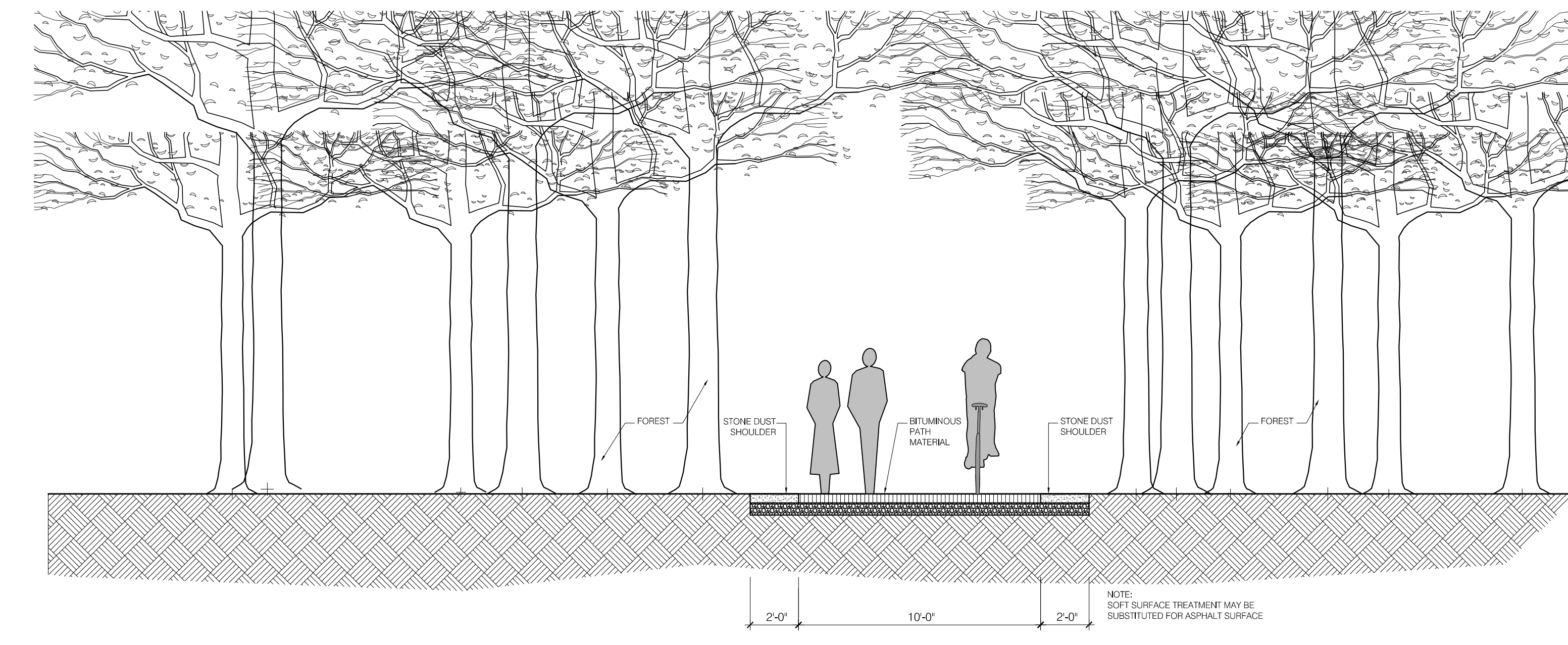
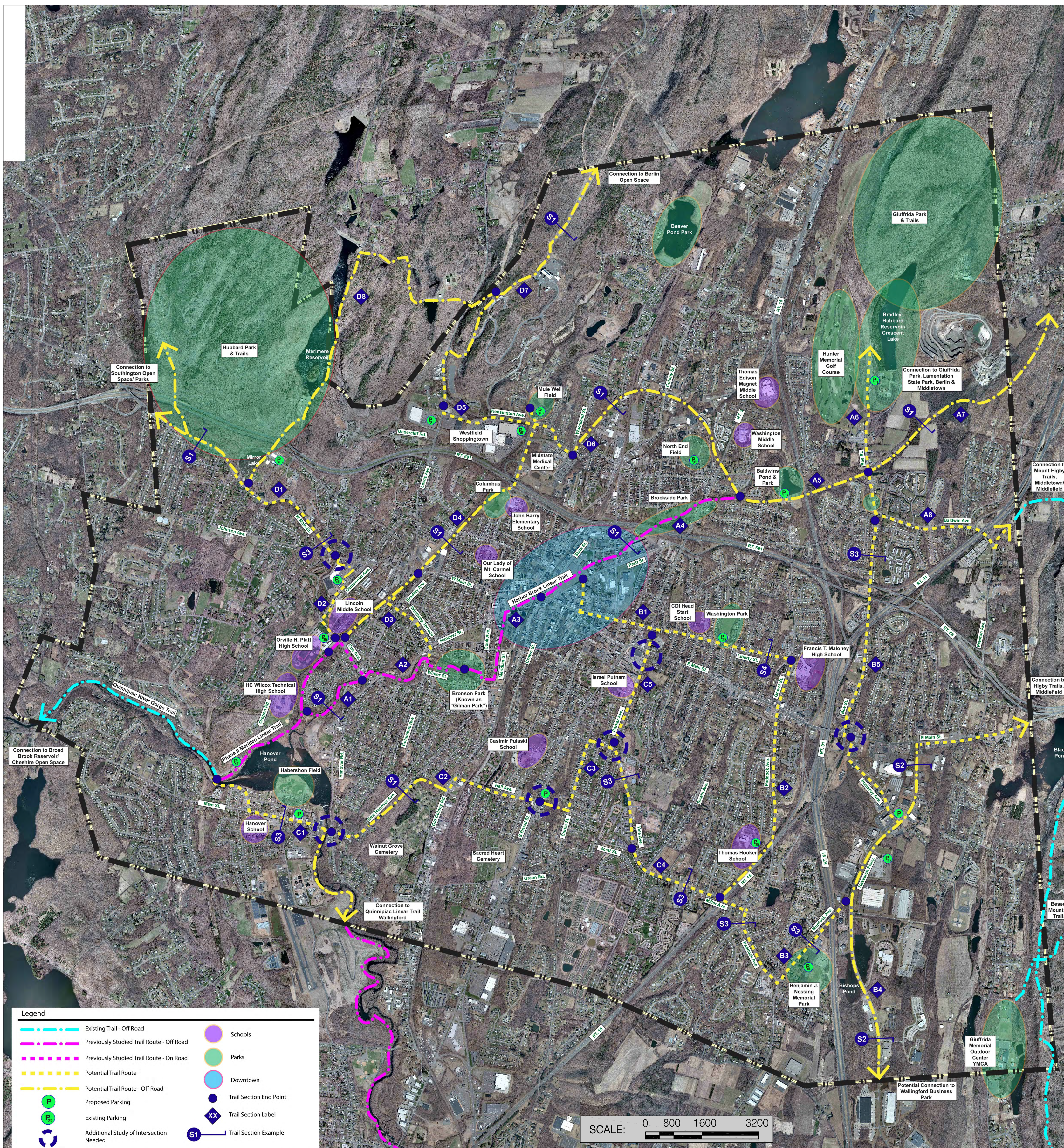
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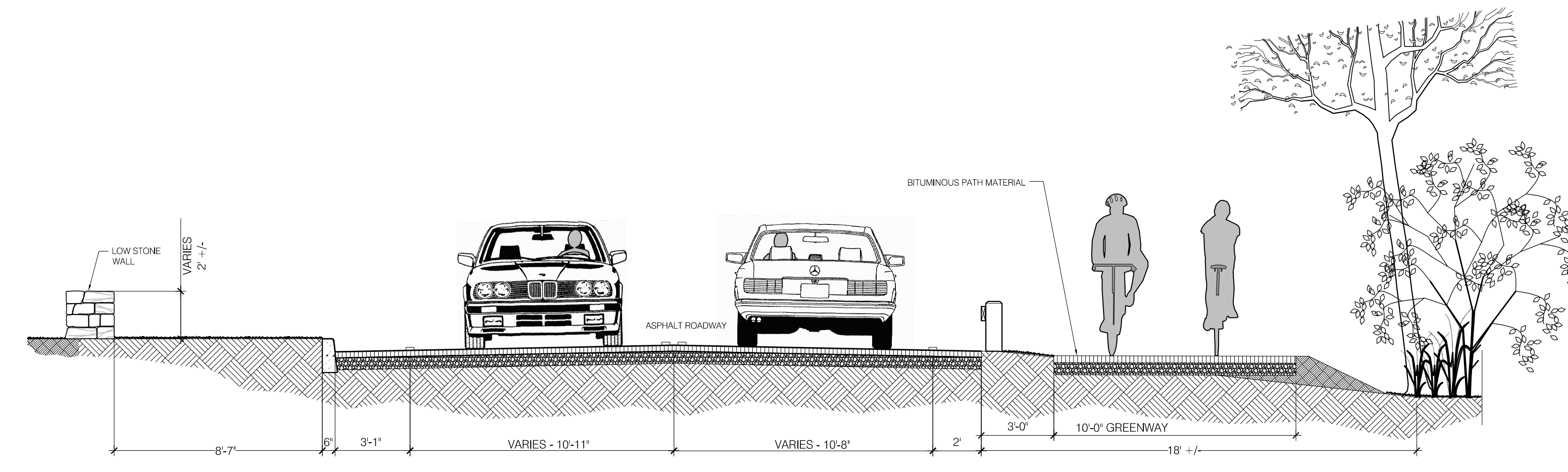
D6 - This is a 1.5-mile trail segment that is all off-road on pre-existing historic railroad ROW. This trail offers a valuable connection to the Harbor Brook Linear Trail as well as potential connection to nearby parks and schools.

D7 - This 1.8-mile trail stretches north from D5 to the Meriden/Berlin town line. This trail may not be ADA accessible based on the probable grades encountered in the off-road section of the trail. This trail will also connect to the D8 trail segment into Hubbard Park.

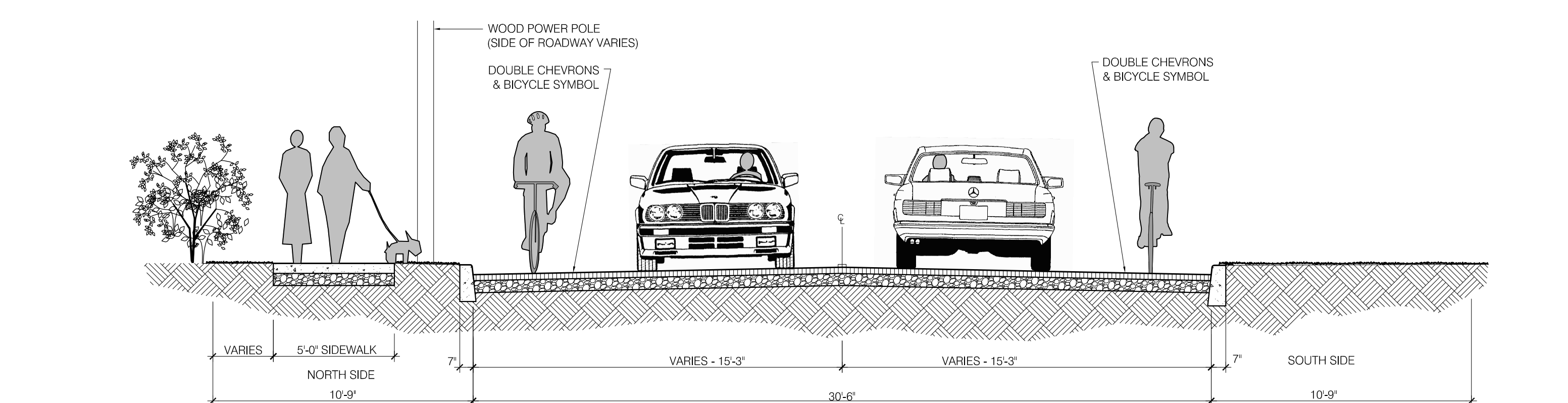
D8 - This 2.6-mile section of off-road trail serves as an extension of the Hubbard Park trails and a connection to other trails in D7 and to the Town of Berlin. The trail will be the standard 10-ft. wide trail.



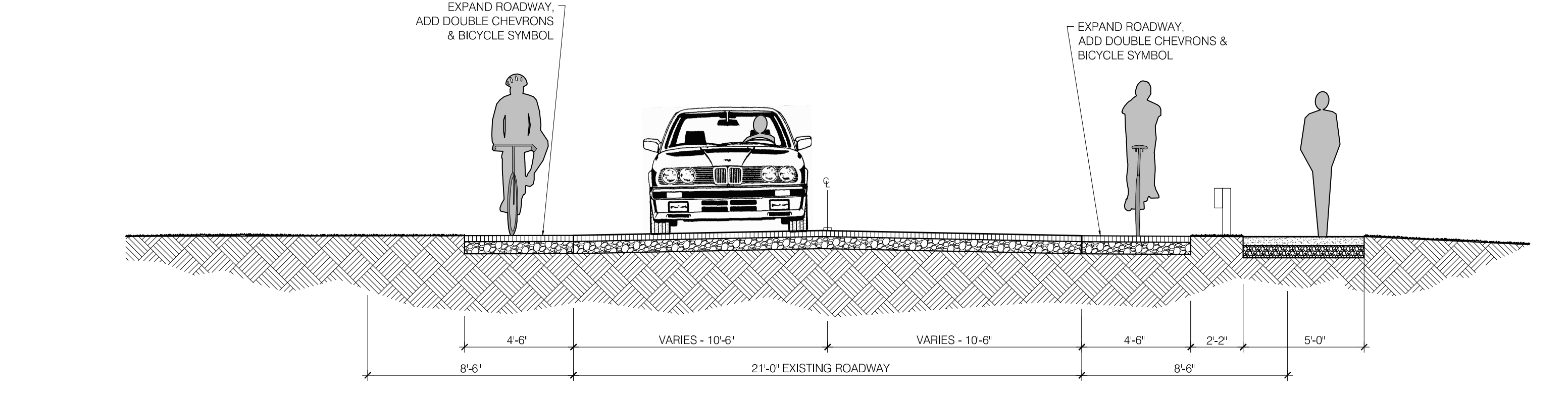
S1 PROPOSED BITUMINOUS CONCRETE (ASPHALT) GREENWAY PAVEMENT - WOODLAND AREAS



S2 PROPOSED BITUMINOUS CONCRETE (ASPHALT) GREENWAY PAVEMENT AND LINE MARKINGS



S3 PROPOSED CHEVRON & BIKE SYMBOL (SHARROW) MARKINGS



S4 PROPOSED BICYCLE LANE AND BICYCLE SYMBOL & ARROW MARKINGS