

John Husar I&M Canal Trail Existing Conditions Report

September 2018



Village of
JUSTICE, Illinois

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary** 1
 - Visions and Goals2
 - Existing Conditions2
 - Preliminary Corridor Findings2
 - Public Discussions.....3
 - Conclusion3
- Section 1. Visions and Goals** 4
 - Current Plans and Projects4
- Section 2. Existing Conditions** 6
 - Study Area Description and Findings8
 - Select Roadway Characteristics18
 - Select Traffic Data21
 - Study Area Transit21
 - Environmental Information.....22
 - Flood Map Data22
- Section 3. Preliminary Corridor Findings** 23
 - Potential Corridor Alternatives23
 - Public Discussions.....24
- Appendix**.....
 - Aerial Exhibits
 - Typical Existing Condition Sections

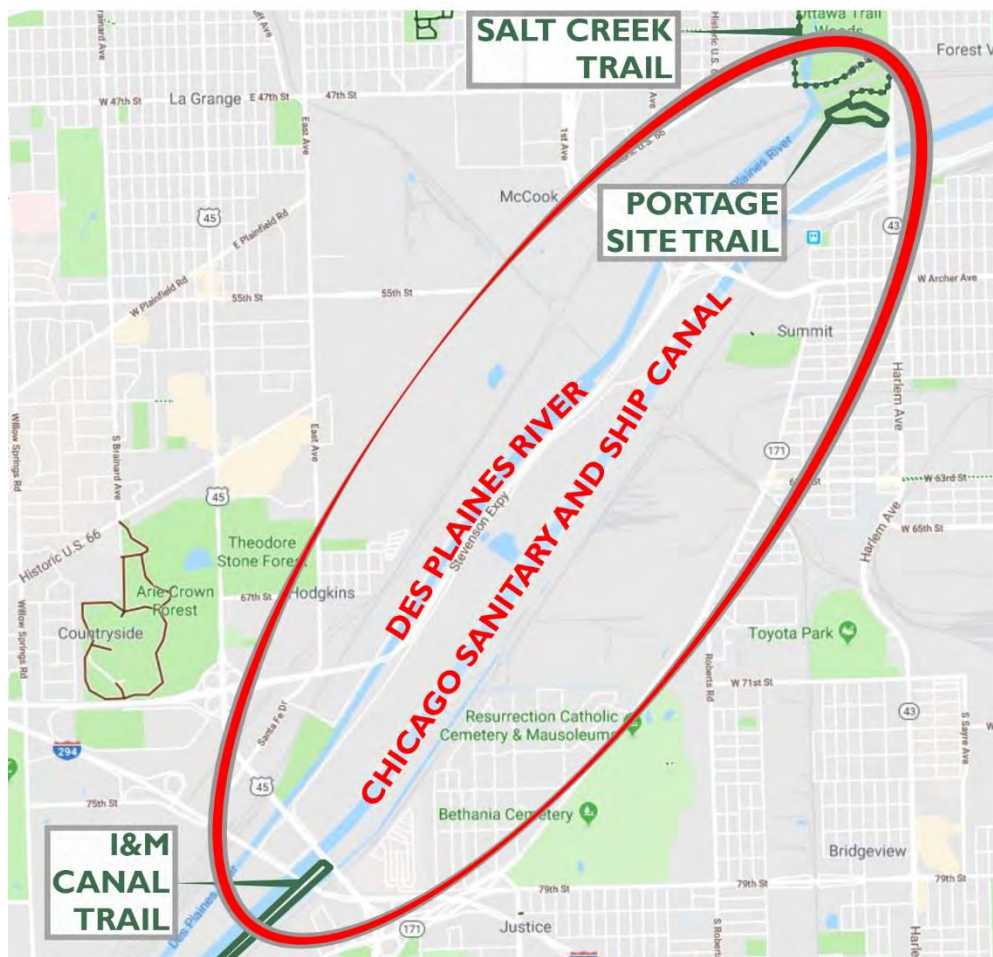


EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

Executive Summary

The *I&M Canal Trail Feasibility Study* is a joint effort between the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the Villages of Justice, Willow Springs, Bedford Park and Summit, and TERRA Engineering Ltd., an engineering consultant group. The purpose of this project is to develop feasible alternatives to connect the existing John Husar I&M Canal Trail to the Salt Creek Trail and provide access to the surrounding municipalities, residents and businesses. This Existing Conditions report provides a foundation of data and information for the *I&M Canal Trail Extension*.

This Report begins with an overview of the existing conditions within the study area, including physical characteristics and history of the study area. The corridor that is being discussed is along the I&M Canal and Archer Avenue from Willow Springs Road to Harlem Avenue.



The following Sections provide description and analysis of the I&M Canal and Archer Avenue residential, commercial, and industrial areas according to the three main components of the I&M Canal Trail Extension:

- Visions and Goals
- Existing Conditions
- Preliminary Corridor Findings
- Public Discussions

This trail extension will close the gap along the Centennial Trail, allowing cyclists and pedestrians to travel uninterrupted from the Illinois River valley northeast and northwest into northern Cook County.

Visions and Goals

Section 1 of the Existing Conditions Report focuses on the Visions and Goals within the I&M Canal Trail Corridor and Archer Avenue residential, commercial and industrial areas. Over 20 years ago a Phase 1 Preliminary Design Report was completed and an alignment was determined, however, the proposed work was never completed. The goal is to reassess and reevaluate the I&M Canal Trail Corridor to determine new trail alternatives that are feasible. The routes will need to have the ability to be sustainable, funded, and agreed upon by the community in order for the construction to happen.

Existing Conditions

Section 2 of the Existing Conditions Reports focuses on the Potential Corridor Alternatives along the I&M Canal and Archer Avenue. This section helps develop an understanding of the surrounding area. Specifically, the existing trails, Centennial Trail, Salt Creek Trail and I&M Canal Trail will be introduced. Also, the large industrial facilities along that canal that can make proposed improvements difficult will be explained. Lastly, the roadway characteristics, history of the study area, and field visit findings will be further discussed.

Preliminary Corridor Findings

Section 3 focuses on transportation access to the study areas. Part of the incentive for the I&M Canal Trail came from residents in the area expressing interest in having a connection to and from the existing I&M Canal Trail and the Salt Creek Trail. This connection will close the gap in

the Centennial Trail and provide for direct connections from the trail to the Villages in the surrounding area, including:

- Village of Justice
- Village of Summit
- Village of Bedford Park
- Village of Willow Springs

The trail will also connect to the historic Portage Woods Site where the Salt Creek Trail begins.

Public Discussions

Within the Public Discussions Section, the comments and information developed throughout coordination and Steering Committee meetings will be discussed. Similarly, looking back at the discussions that took place 20 years ago, this section will discourse lessons learned and alternatives that weren't successful previously, and how they may be improved.

Conclusion

This Existing Conditions Report provides a quantitative and objective analysis of the I&M Canal and Archer Avenue commercial, residential and industrial areas. The analysis seeks to answers the first two of the four main questions asked in any planning process:

1. Where are we?
2. Where can we go?
3. Where do we want to go?
4. How do we get there?

The third and fourth question will be addressed in the *I&M Canal Trail Extensions Feasibility Study* to the Village of Justice and Chicago Metropolitan Agency of Planning. But the foundation for both those documents is found here, in the *Existing Conditions Report*, where we identify where we are and where we can go.

Section 1. Visions and Goals

The goal of the study process, including the ECR and the final report, is to determine a feasible route from the Centennial Trail to the Salt Creek Trail. Ideally, the trail would continue along the I&M Canal bank, within green space, similarly to the existing I&M Canal Trail as it exists south of Lagrange Road. However, with right of way restrictions, the CN Railroad and the limited space along the corridor for bridges, underpasses, and other infrastructure, it is highly likely that some on-street bikeways will need to be used along the trail corridor, including on-street signed bike routes, marked shared lanes, and bike lanes, in order to connect to and complete segments of trail and sidepath. However, the goal is to maintain to the greatest extent possible, trail user's connection to nature and, when that connection is weakened by the need to route trail users to on-street bikeway and pedestrian facilities (through more developed areas), the strong sense of still being on the I&M Canal Trail through branded, high-quality wayfinding signage and pavement markings.

Current Plans and Projects

Summit Active Transportation Plan

This document was written by Active Transportation Alliance based on the Healthy HotSpot Initiative and is a detailed representation of how Summit, Illinois has the potential to update their existing infrastructure to Complete Streets and recommends pedestrian and bicycle focused projects. This report also suggests some policy and program changes for the Village of Summit to encourage more walking and bicycling trips within the community.

Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program

According to the CREATE Program Website: *"It is the collective and shared responsibility of the partners in the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program to maintain and improve the freight gateway to our nation, as well as the world. The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project and Argo Connections (CREATE Project B9) is the preeminent multimodal opportunity to Rebuild America, ensuring preservation and resiliency of one of our nation's most important transportation assets. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), in cooperation with co-applicants the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (CCDOH), and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), is pleased to submit this application for an Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant on behalf of the CREATE Program for improvements to the Chicago Terminal (Terminal). The Terminal is a complex rail hub where six Class I railroads converge. Currently, this hub handles one-fourth of the nation's freight rail traffic and half of all intermodal trains on their journey to market. This application seeks Federal support to leverage significant local public and private funding commitments to fix the most*

complex and congested segment of railroad in North America. CREATE's 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (75th Street CIP) and Argo Connections (B9) comprise a network of inter-related infrastructure improvements that will reduce travel time and expand railroad capacity through the Terminal, resulting in a doubling of corridor capacity and operational benefits that extend beyond the region to a national scale. As a result of reduced congestion and additional capacity to accommodate anticipated growth in freight traffic through the Terminal, the monetized benefits of the 75th Street CIP/B9 Project including travel time, shipping costs, safety, and emissions- will greatly exceed its costs."

Justice Vision Plan

This document lays out policy, design and implementation recommendations for the Village of Justice's 2030 Vision Plan. Based on public input and the findings emerging from the Justice State of the Community Report, the Vision Plan outlines and defines an achievable, shared vision for the Village of Justice, which is forward-looking, focused, and implementable. The plan explains the current physical conditions of the Village, transportation options, and market opportunities. The plan then delves into planning and redevelopment opportunities along with land use frameworks. The combined information led the Village to develop concepts to improve Justice as a whole. The plan's proposed improvements have been incorporated into this Existing Conditions Report, including, most importantly, the recommendation to develop potential trail alternatives to close the gap in the I&M/Centennial Trail.

Justice Transit Improvement Study

The Village of Justice, with assistance from HNTB developed the Transit Improvement Study in August of 2007. The document was formally prepared under contract with the Regional Transportation Authority. The study addresses bus service alternatives, the potential for a Justice Metra Station and various recommendations and implementation actions. The recommendations involved short-term and long-term initiatives as well as potential policy changes for the Village of Justice as it moves forward in advancing Village vision and goals. The overall goal of the study was to aid the Village of Justice in promoting the use of public transportation and providing greater mobility for the community. The study was initiated as part of the Regional Technical Assistance Program which is a program aimed at facilitating local community and economic development, as well as improved access and connections to and nearby transit stations. The Village of Justice is one of the over fifty Chicago-area communities to have received RTA assistance to undertake transit-oriented planning and local transit improvement projects.

Section 2. Existing Conditions

The I&M Canal Trail Corridor study area spreads across 4 municipalities; the Villages of Justice, Summit, Bedford Park, and Willow Springs. Along the canal there are two major industrial businesses; Kinder Morgan Liquid Terminals, and Ingredion Inc. In addition, the study corridor contains Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) properties and facilities, the McCook Reservoir and a ComEd corridor. There are also the waterways that define the corridor: the I&M and the Sanitary and Ship Canals, and the Des Plaines River, as well as multiple rail lines running along and across the corridor. The dominant land uses of the corridor are residential south of 71st Street and industrial north of 71st Street. However, there are numerous commercial establishments along the entire length of the Archer Avenue corridor along with residential neighborhoods east of Archer Avenue in the Villages of Bedford Park and Summit.

The Illinois and Michigan (I&M) Canal was constructed in 1848 to link the Illinois River and Lake Michigan. The canal played a large role in securing Chicago's future since it connected Chicago to both New York and New Orleans. From 1848 to 1900 the canal was a major source of and conduit for commerce. Once railroads came along, the need for passenger – and to a lesser extent, freight - canal boats lessened. Then in 1933, the canal was replaced with the Illinois Waterway, and subsequently in 1955 portions of the canal were buried underneath the Stevenson Expressway. Today, outside of the city and along the proposed trail extension study area, portions of the I&M Canal still exist, and its old tow path has, in many places to the south, become the basis of the I&M Canal Trail.

The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal runs parallel to the historic I&M canal and functions as the main route for ships navigating between the Chicago River and the Des Plaines and Illinois Rivers. In 1964, the I&M Canal was designated a National Historic Landmark and in 1975, the State of Illinois created the I&M Canal State Trail along the original towpath.

The southernmost segment of the Salt Creek Trail would connect to the proposed trail at the Chicago Portage National Historic Site, just off Harlem Avenue, near the confluence of the Des Plaines River and the CSSC. This Salt Creek Greenway Trail – aside from a few gaps - travels approximately 27 miles from the Portage site, north through Brookfield Zoo, to the Busse Woods Forest Preserve in Elk Grove Village. Discontinuous segments in the southern stretches of the trail include the segment from Portage Woods north to Cermak Woods, as well as a short segment of side-path on the north side of Ogden Avenue along the Des Plaines River, east of 1st Avenue. From end to end, the trail connects multiple forest preserves and woodland areas, including the Chicago Portage National Historic Site, at the north end of the project boundaries. The Salt Creek Greenway Trail surface is paved asphalt in some sections, and limestone screening in others.

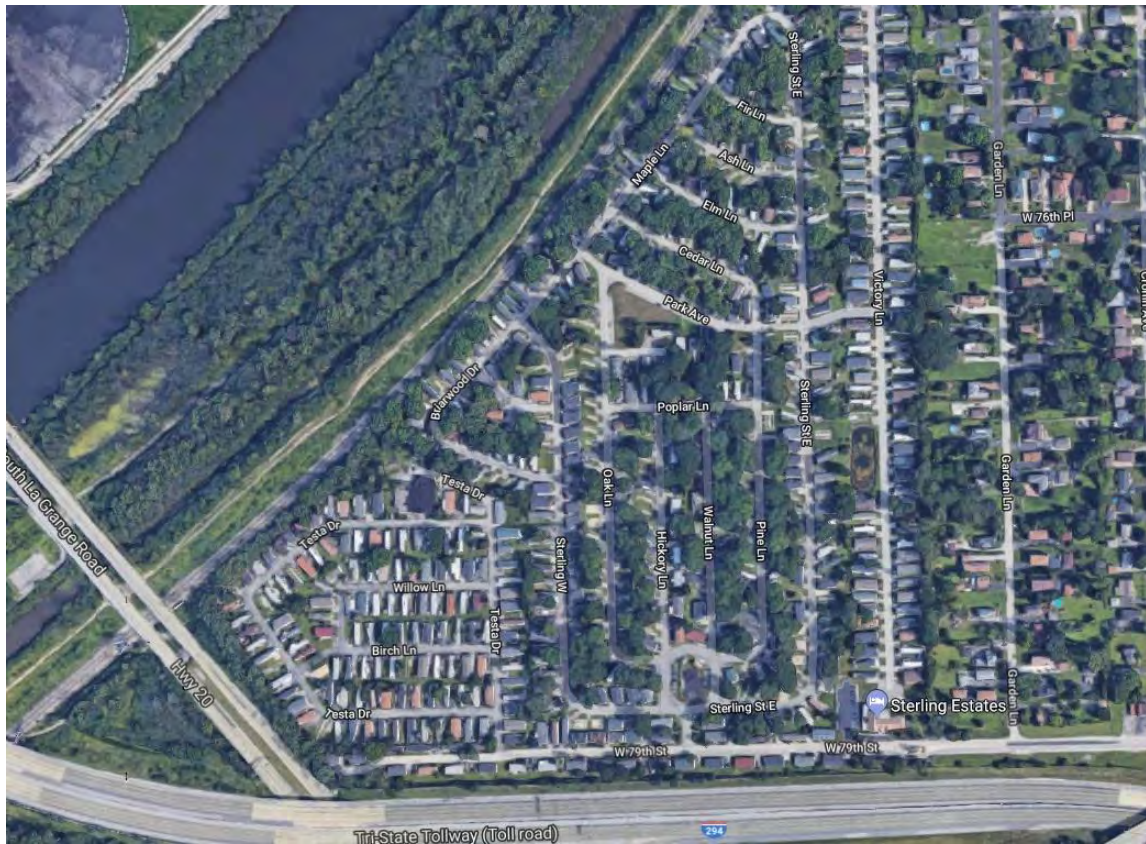
The Illinois' Centennial Trail, which also runs parallel to the I&M / CSS Canal and the Des Plaines River, begins at the Isle a la Cache Museum in Romeoville and heads northeast for approximately 13 miles to Willow Springs Road in Willow Springs. At Route 83 along the Centennial Trail there is a connection point to the John Husar I&M Canal Trail (as well as a connection to the Cal-Sag Trail). At this location trail users must switch to the John Husar I&M Canal Trail to continue northeast past Willow Springs Road. The Centennial Trail resides in this area on a thin strip of land between the Des Plaines River and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. The trail features a historic swing bridge over the Des Plaines River, and provides ideal bird and wildlife viewing through the dense forests lining the waterways. The existing John Husar I&M Canal Trail runs parallel to the Centennial Trail from Route 83 to Willow Springs Road on the south bank of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. Southeast from Romeoville, the Centennial Trail merges with the I&M Canal Trail and continues as the I&M Canal Trail to Joliet and beyond, following the canal southwest into the Illinois River Valley.



Figure 1.1. I&M Canal Trail Corridor

Study Area Description and Findings – Key Elements

- John Husar I&M Canal Trail between Willow Springs Road and LaGrange Road.
The existing trail is an asphalt surface trail consisting of a loop that travels along the northwest side of the old I&M Canal and the southeast side of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. The trail is generally in good condition. In this area, no other possible corridors were identified or judged feasible due to the narrow right-of-way along Archer Avenue and the complex interchange of Archer and LaGrange Road.
- Sterling Estates neighborhood and 79th street within it.
Sterling Estates is a manufactured home community on the south end of the project limits, tucked into the land northeast of the LaGrange Rd./I-294 and hemmed in on the northwest by the CN Rail line and the I&M Canal. This community has narrow, privately owned streets with 20' widths and no permitted on-street parking. 79th Street/Frontage Road is the entrance to the community. It is 32' wide at the entrance and then narrows down to 24' after the first unnamed cross street. On-street parking does not appear to be allowed along any of the community's streets. Use of the private streets within the community would not be an option as a segment of the proposed trail unless an easement is obtained, which would be considered unlikely.



- Tollway (294) ROW

It is important to note that there is a project that is planned and programmed by the Illinois Tollway along the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) in this area that could significantly alter the current right-of-way along 79th Street, which, as noted above, forms the entrance and the southern border of the Sterling Estates neighborhood. As part of the Tollway's plans for improvements to I-294 and the interchange with LaGrange Road and IL-171 (Archer Ave.), additional ROW, in which the proposed trail could be relocated, might be created along the north side of the new Tollway, where 79th St. is currently located. Further coordination with the Tollway is recommended as their plans progress.

- ComEd service drive between the I&M Canal and the CN Railroad where the existing Centennial Trail ends.

The unpaved service drive, which runs northeast from LaGrange Rd., between the CN rail line and the I&M Canal, provides a viable option for a trail. The drive extends from the end of the John Husar I&M Trail northeast all the way to the old Summit Boat Launch. The service road has some major interruptions, such as the Kinder Morgan dock and other facilities and property, which preclude a trail for bicyclists and pedestrians passing directly along the canal. However, these areas can be avoided by using Archer Avenue to bypass these private industrial properties. The service road is located beneath high-voltage ComEd power lines that intersect another ComEd Corridor parallel to Columbia Drive (the main entrance to Kinder Morgan).



- Property at the end of Jocare Drive.

There is an opening at the end of Jocare Drive that could perhaps be utilized for an overpass crossing over the existing CN railroad. However, according to the assessor's



map, there is a narrow strip of land that is privately owned between the railroad tracks and the cul-de-sac. Therefore, an easement would be required to place a trail or bridge structure within this area.

- Blackstone Avenue.

There is a culvert located under the Canadian National (CN) railroad, 1,000 feet south of 71st Street and 300 feet northwest of Blackstone Avenue. This culvert may be adapted to provide access from one side of the tracks to the other side of the tracks. The existing culvert measures at 8'x8' and could potentially be paved and used as a trail underpass. Obviously, drainage would have to be taken into consideration. A new culvert pipe may be required to accommodate drainage under the railroad tracks to allow the existing culvert to be utilized for bicyclists and pedestrians. Also, it appears that the water could be redirected through another culvert pipe that currently passes under the CN Railroad that is located at 71st Street. Detailed hydraulic calculations would be necessary. The location of these two culverts is also a designated floodway, significantly complicating efforts to utilize and modify the culvert.



- Kinder Morgan Property

Kinder Morgan is an approximately 260-acre, private industrial facility located between



the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and Archer Avenue at 8500 W 68th Street in Summit, Illinois. Kinder Morgan is one of the largest energy infrastructure companies in North America. They own pipelines around the country and world that transport natural gas, gasoline, carbon dioxide and more. Due to high-security status and private ownership, it is assumed that the company, as well as Homeland Security regulations, will not allow a trail to encroach on their property.

- ComEd Corridor along the north side of Kinder Morgan.



There is a ComEd corridor running east-west along the north side of Kinder Morgan, parallel to Columbia Drive, that provides ample space for a trail. Depending on soil conditions in the corridor, as well as potential environmental impacts and property ownerships, this strip of land could provide an access route for the trail back west to the I&M Canal corridor

proper. There is also an even narrower corridor alongside the larger ComEd corridor, between an existing Kinder Morgan Fence and the ComEd High Voltage Corridor. This strip of land appears to be owned by Kinder Morgan and has the potential to be leased from Kinder Morgan for the trail, especially since it lies outside the existing fence. It appears that it is currently being maintained (mowed) by Kinder Morgan. This strip of land would provide an ideal straight route, west from Archer, back to the CN railroad, where a bridge would need to be constructed in order to get over the CN railroad and back onto the service road (which here belongs to MWRD).



- MWRD Service Road

This service road, running from Kinder Morgan northeast to the project limit at Harlem (and beyond) is an approximately 12' wide gravel road that is owned by MWRD and has parcels along it leased by various organizations including Kinder Morgan, Corn Products, Ingredion, etc. The service road is currently a gated,



private drive with a large number of padlocks attached to and securing the gate. The gate is located at the Summit Boat Launch site, which the public can access along Lawndale Ave. As stated, the drive extends from the Kinder Morgan facility northeast to the Boat Launch. It then continues beyond the boat launch northeast to Canal Bank

Road near Harlem Avenue, near the northern limit of the study corridor. This section of the roadway is also gated on either end. This section traverses MWRD property currently reserved for corporate use. However, the MWRD has indicated that this parcel will likely become available for leasing.

- Ingredion

Ingredion Inc., another large, approximately 280 acre industrial facility, is also located between the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and Archer Avenue at 6400 Archer Avenue in Bedford Park, Illinois, although the vast majority of their property is located southeast of the CN Railroad, leaving the land between the canal and the rail line open and (potentially) available for



the trail. Ingredion Inc. is a global ingredient solutions provider, turning grains, fruits, vegetables, and other plant materials into other ingredients and biomaterial solutions for food/beverage, paper, brewing and more. As with Kinder Morgan, Ingredion's property would almost certainly be off-limits to a trail for security and safety reasons. However, there may be an opportunity to locate the trail on the MWRD service drive, running parallel to the rail line on the undeveloped land west of the CN Railroad, which is owned by the MWRD but leased (in part) to Ingredion Inc.

- Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Bridge

Where the Indiana Harbor Railroad and the CN Railroad cross at grade, there are a number of spur tracks and connecting tracks. The MWRD service road currently crosses the IHB tracks at an unsignalized, at-grade crossing. However, there is an existing underpass under the IHB



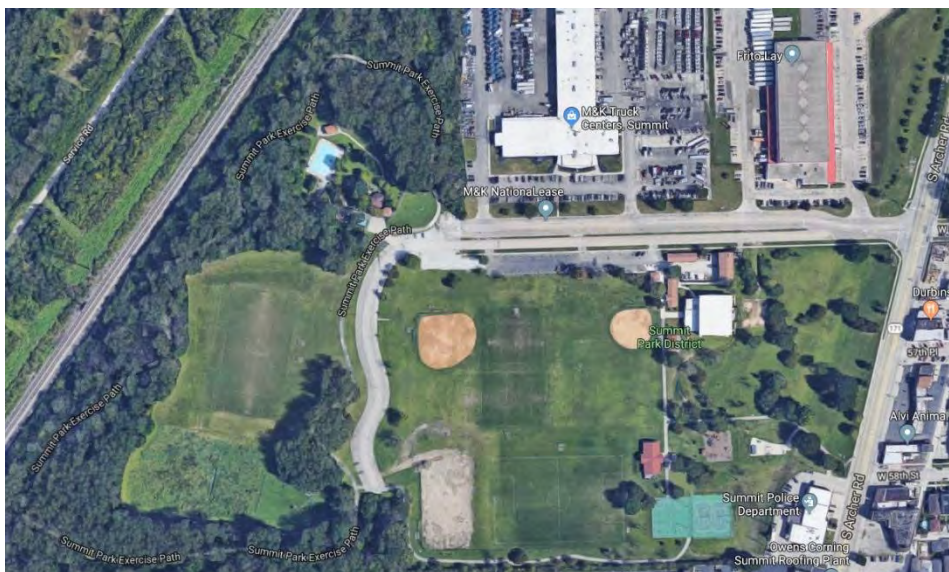
mainline tracks adjacent to the Sanitary and Ship Canal, at the bridge abutments. This area, shown in the photo above, could potentially provide an alignment to safely detour the trail under the IHB railroad instead of adding a signalized at-grade crossing (which likely be difficult if not impossible to obtain from the Railroad). The underpass is currently six feet tall, 14 feet wide and approximately 50 feet long. The silt underneath the bridge would need to be excavated two feet down in order to create the required eight-foot vertical clearance per bike trail standards. Further investigation and coordination would therefore be needed to determine if this a feasible alternate.

- Archer Avenue

Archer Avenue, also known as Illinois Route 171, runs along the project corridor from Willow Springs Road northeast to Harlem Avenue (Route 43). There are currently sidewalks along both sides of Archer Avenue. However, there are gaps or missing segments at scattered locations throughout the length of the roadway between Oak Grove Avenue and 63rd Street. Sidewalks along Archer Ave. – some more than others perhaps - have the potential to be modified to a 10' path.

- Summit Park Exercise Path

Summit Park is located between the CN Railroad and Archer Avenue between 57th and 58th Streets. The Summit Park Exercise Path, located in and just outside the park, is a loop trail that has exercise activities along the route. Happy Tails dog park is also in the park. The Exercise Path, approximately one-mile in length, is paved and is enjoyed by walkers, joggers, and cyclists.





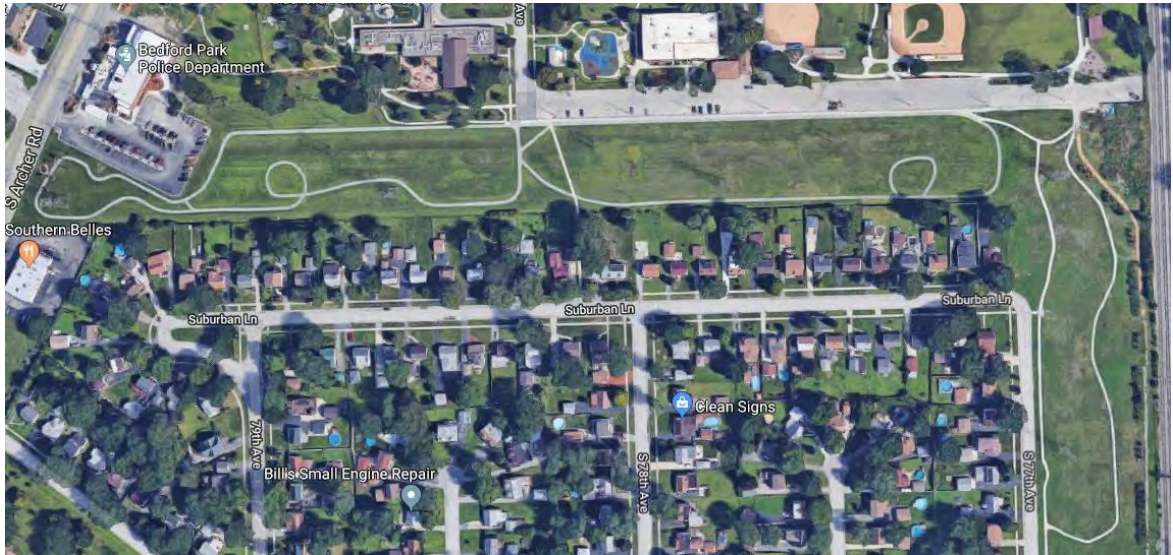
- Lawndale Bridge Approaches

In the past, there was a bridge spanning across the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal referred to as the IL-171 or Lawndale/Lincoln Avenue Bridge. It was eventually demolished and IL-171 was diverted to a new bridge built as part of the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) construction. The abutments of the lost bridge still exist and could be utilized to construct a new bridge across the Canal that would bring the proposed trail to the north side of the Canal. The property along the north side of the canal in this area is owned by the MWRD and reserved for corporate use. However, MWRD may be willing to allow a trail along the south side of their parcel. It should also be noted that to achieve the required clearance above the Canal, the Coast Guard may require that the abutments be raised 3 feet to achieve the required 43-foot vertical clearance.



- Bedford Park Bike Trail/Walking Path

This trail, which is located in the ComEd ROW underneath high-voltage power lines, begins at the Village Hall/Bedford Park Police Department at Archer Avenue and then heads east toward the railroad tracks. From there it continues to the north around the



baseball fields to 65th Street and also south around the Bridgeview Gardens neighborhood. The existing trails could be utilized as part of the main trail or as a spur to provide access to and from the surrounding neighborhoods. However, the path, which is approximately 6-foot wide, is substandard for a two-way shared use path/bikeway.



- Chicago Portage National Historic Site

The Chicago Portage National Historic Site is located at 4800 South Harlem Avenue in Lyons Illinois, north of the Stevenson Expressway (I-55). The Chicago Portage is called the “birthplace” of Chicago and the historic connection, or portage, connecting the Great Lakes and the Mississippi is preserved at this location. This Portage Site was revealed to Marquette and Jolliet in 1673 by the Native Americans. The explorers are said to have immediately realized that the portage was an ideal location for a short canal to be cut, which by connecting two major watersheds, would help to create vital transportation and trade connections. Nearly 160 years later the 97-mile-long I&M Canal was dug, and Chicago grew exponentially from then on.



- Canadian National Railroad

The Canadian National Railway Company (CN) is a Canadian Class I freight railway, serving Canada and the United States. Within the project limits, the CN Railroad runs parallel to the Comed Service Road and MWRD Service Road and follows the I&M Canal from Lagrange Road to Harlem Avenue. There are two main tracks within the project limits. However, at Kinder Morgan and Ingredion Inc. there are 3-4 tracks. The right-of-way is 100 feet. In addition to CN’s freight trains, the tracks carry a Metra commuter line, the Heritage Corridor, and Amtrak’s Lincoln Service line, running from Chicago’s Union Station to St. Louis. The project corridor has one Metra/Amtrak Station in Summit at the north end of South Center Avenue.

- Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad

The Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Railroad is an independent railroad that is owned by Conrail Shared Assets Operations and Canadian Pacific Railway. The railway starts in Franklin Park, Illinois and travels southeast to Hammond, Indiana. Within the project limits the IHB railroad intersects the CN railroad between Ingredion Inc. and Kinder Morgan. There are primarily two tracks, however between the two business there are as many as twelve tracks, acting as a minor rail yard. The right-of-way is 100 feet wide.

Select Roadway Characteristics

Due to the location of the major industrial sites fronting the Sanitary and Ship Canal, thereby blocking the potential use of the I&M Canal corridor as a trail location, it will be necessary to route the trail alignment within existing roadway right-of-way. Streets and roadways were identified as possible trail locations within the limits of the corridor. A description of identified streets and roadways follows.

Archer Avenue runs parallel to the I&M canal about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the southeast. It also runs parallel to the Canadian National (CN) Railroad from Willow Springs Road to Harlem Avenue (IL Route 43).

Archer Avenue is classified as a minor arterial under state jurisdiction. It is a four-lane, two-way street with an average of 12' lanes in each direction, curb and gutter throughout and an enclosed drainage system. Southwest of LaGrange Road, the roadway consists of one through lane in each direction. The posted speed limit is 45 mph from Lagrange Road to Roberts road, 35 mph from Roberts Road to 65th Street, 30 mph between 65th Street and 59th Street and then becomes 35 mph again until 55th Street. The right-of-way along Archer Avenue is 100 feet wide. Parking is permitted throughout downtown Summit on both sides of the road from 63rd Street to 61st, and then only on the northwest side until 60th Street. The remainder of Archer Avenue from Lagrange Road to 55th Street does not allow parking on either side of the road. Where parking is permitted, the parallel parking lane is 8' wide. The pavement width in these areas varies between 56 and 64 feet. The pavement width in the areas where parking is not permitted is 48 feet.

South LaGrange Road (US Route 45, Highway 12, Highway 20) is classified as an Other Principal Arterial under state jurisdiction. It is a multi-lane divided highway, six-lane, two-way street with an average of three 12' lanes in each direction. There are four-foot shoulders on each side of the traveled way, with curb and gutter located at the outside edge of the shoulder along with an enclosed drainage system. The posted speed limit is 45 mph from the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to Canal Bank Road, where the road functions essentially as a limited access freeway. The right-of-

way along South LaGrange ranges from 165 to 280 feet wide. Parking is not permitted within the above limits. The pavement width in these areas are 41 feet northbound and southbound. There are no sidewalks within the above limits, and curb and gutter on the outer-most lane of each direction.

79th Street is classified as a local road under local jurisdiction. It is a two-lane, two-way street with an average 12'-16' lane in each direction, with curb and gutter. There are no sidewalks, the posted speed limit is 10 mph and, as discussed above, it is partially located in the gated community of Sterling Estates. East of the Sterling Estates entrance, the typical section is two 11' lanes, one in each direction and a 10' shoulder on each side. No parking is allowed on either side, and the speed limit is not posted, thereby it is 30 mph based on state law.

71st Street and Blackstone Avenue are classified as local roads under local jurisdiction. They are two-lane, two-way streets with an average 11' lane in each direction, no curb and gutter. There are no sidewalks and there is no posted speed limit, however, it is assumed the speed limit is 30 mph based on state law.

Within the Arbors Justice neighborhood **Skyline Drive** and **Arbor Lane** are two-lane, two-way street with an average lane width of 11' and 8' wide parallel parking lanes on each side. There are sidewalks on both side of the street and the posted speed limit is 20 mph. The entrance road to Arbors Justice is Heather Trail, a four-lane, two-way street with an average lane width of 12' and no permitted parking. The street has curb and gutter and a sidewalk on either side at the back of curb. All streets in the Arbors Justice neighborhood are local roads under local jurisdiction.

65th Street is a 20-foot-wide, two-lane, two-way road with no permitted parking. The street is lined with curb and gutter, has no sidewalk on the west side, but the Bedford Park walking path/bike trail runs along at the eastern end of the street.

63rd Street is classified as a local road under local jurisdiction. It is a 55-foot-wide, two-lane, two-way road with permitted parallel parking. Pace Bus Routes 62H, 63W, and 307 have stops from Archer Avenue to 76th Avenue. The street has curb and gutter and sidewalks on either side. The average lane width is 20 feet with eight-foot-wide parallel parking on both sides. 63rd Street has a 100-foot right-of-way.

76th Avenue is a 44-foot-wide road with a two-lane, two-way roadway section with parallel parking on each side. The right-of-way is 66 feet wide. There are sidewalks on each side of the street off of the back of curb.

61st Street is a one-way heading westbound from 76th Ave. to Archer Avenue. The street width is 38 feet wide and permits parallel parking on either side of the travel lane. There is parkway and sidewalks on each side, and the right-of-way is 66 feet wide.

60th Place is a one-way heading eastbound from Archer Avenue to 76th Street. The street width is 36 feet wide and permits parallel parking on either side of the travel lane. There is parkway and sidewalks on each side, and the right-of-way is 66 feet wide.

Hanover Street is classified as a local road under local jurisdiction. It is a 30-foot-wide, two-lane, two-way road with permitted parallel parking on the south side of the street. The lanes are 11 feet wide and there is parkway and sidewalk on each side of the road. The speed limit is 20 mph due to the nearby playground and Hanover Park.

Harlem Avenue (Route 43) is classified as an Other Principal Arterial under state jurisdiction. Between I-55 and 53rd Street, Harlem Ave. is a multi-lane divided highway, six-lane, two-way street with an average of three 12' lanes in each direction, curb and gutter throughout and an enclosed drainage system. South of 53rd St., the median, now striped only, becomes a two-way center turn lane. The posted speed limit is 40 mph from West Archer Avenue to the Portage Woods Site. The right-of-way along Harlem Avenue ranges from 110 to 210 feet wide. Parking is not permitted within the above limits. The pavement width on the divided bridge decks over the CN Railroad and Sanitary and Ship Canal is 48 feet on the northbound bridge and 40 feet on the southbound bridge. There is a sidewalk on both sides of Harlem Avenue at the back of curb from Archer Avenue to the Portage Woods site.

Select Traffic Data

The following traffic data is provided for the major roadways within the corridor that were described above. All other streets described above are low volume, residential streets.

Archer Avenue:

Current ADT: **20,800** (at 79th St)-24,700 (at 55th St)

%Trucks: **10-18%**

Harlem Avenue:

Current ADT: **38,900**

%Trucks: **16%**

LaGrange Road:

Current ADT: **80,500**

%Trucks: **14%**

63rd Street:

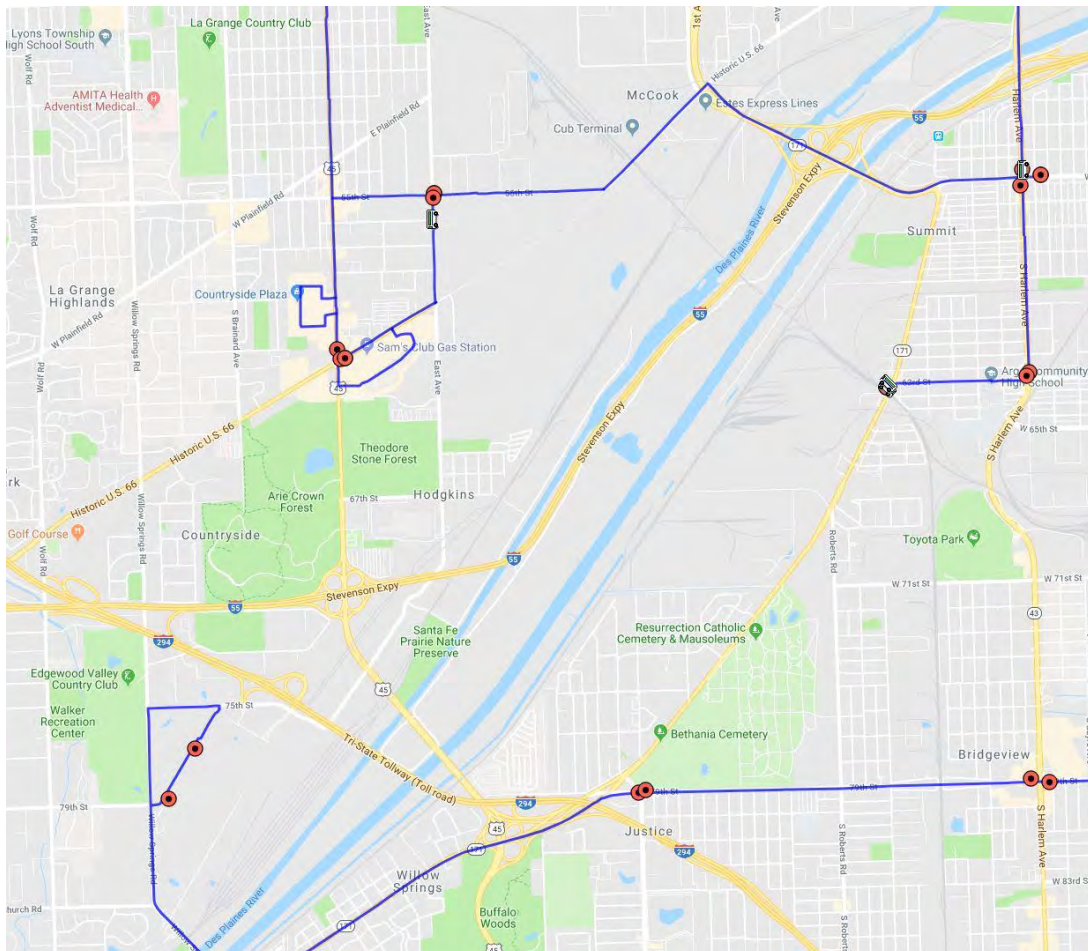
Current ADT: **15,100**

%Trucks: **0%**

Study Area Transit

In addition to the Summit Metra/Amtrak station mentioned above, there is another Metra Station located in Willow Springs along Archer Ave. and the I&M Canal at Willow Springs Road. This Metra station is located approximately 1.5 miles southwest of Lagrange Road which is the southern limits of the proposed trail extension. Within the project limits there is also the previously mentioned Metra station at Summit, near the point at which I-55 crosses over the I&M Canal. There is the potential for a future Metra station in the Village of Justice at the corner of 71st Street and Blackstone Avenue. More information on the potential for a new Metra station in Justice can be found in the Justice Transit Improvement Study (summarized below). The proposed trail extension would service the new station and has the ability to increase the number of boarding's at this location.

There are three Pace bus routes located within the project corridor; 307, 330 and 390. Bus Route 307 – Harlem provides daily service between 63rd/Archer in Summit and the Elmwood Park Village Hall. Route 330 – Mannheim -Lagrange Roads provides daily service between the O'Hare Kiss-n-Fly ATS Station in Chicago and Archer Ave./Harlem Ave. in Summit. Route 390 – Midway CTA – UPS Hodgkins provides weekday service from Midway CTA Orange Line station to UPS Hodgkins facility in Hodgkins via 79th Street.



Preliminary Environmental Information

A field reconnaissance was completed for various potential trail alignments. Large parts – if not the majority - of the various route segments pass through residential neighborhoods, run adjacent to Bethania Cemetery, and/or run along public streets. In these locations, there are no major environmental constraints or concerns.

There were, however, several areas of potential wetlands identified, which may need more formal delineation once alternatives are narrowed down. These areas will be identified on a map in the next major deliverable, the draft Feasibility Study. In addition, the wooded areas were preliminarily investigated, but those areas didn't appear to be of ecological significance.

Perhaps the most significant finding was an Osprey nest on the platform within the ComEd corridor along the I&M Canal, near the CN-IHB rail interchange. The Osprey is state-endangered in Illinois and is also protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act federally. The potential impacts will be addressed further in the Feasibility Study and Environmental Report.

Flood Map Data

The neighborhood in Justice that spans from Sterling Estates at 79th Street to 71st Street and from the I&M Canal to Archer Avenue, has a floodplain located within it. The image shows special flood hazard areas including the Base Flood Elevation (light blue) and the Regulatory Floodplain (red stripes). There are also areas denoted with an orange shade that depict a 0.2% annual chance flood hazard area, and a 1% annual chance flood area with an average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile.



Section 3. Preliminary Corridor Findings

Potential Corridor Alternatives

The conditions described in the previous sections form the basis of the proposed route options. The following alignments or route options have been identified and investigated due to their ability to help complete the I&M Trail within the study limits.

Alternative Routing 1

The first alternative will use the MWRD and ComEd service road between the I&M Canal and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to near 71st Street where there is currently an existing culvert under the CN railroad which could be used as an underpass for the bike trail to get to the Justice residential area along Blackstone Avenue. From the Justice Residential area along 71st Street, the path along the Lipinski Community Center could be used to get to Skyline Drive, Arbor Lane and Heather Trail to exit the neighborhood and enter the Archer Road corridor. Along Archer Road, from Heather Trail to Columbia Drive, there is enough right of way on either side of the road to place an off-street bike path. At Columbia Drive, there is a ComEd High-Voltage corridor that could potentially be used along with a bridge that would be required to get over the existing CN Railroad to access the MWRD Service Road. The Service Road could then be traveled along until the IHB Railroad where the trail could pass under the existing railroad bridge adjacent to the Sanitary and Ship Canal. After traveling under the bridge, the trail can continue along the Service Road under Route 171 to Summit's old Boat Launch location. At this point there are two potential options for the trail to get across the Sanitary and Ship Canal. The first would be to continue along the Service Road to Canal Bank Drive and then up the existing I-55 on ramp up to the Harlem Avenue Bridge. Once on Harlem Avenue a new or a widening of the existing Harlem Avenue bridge over the Sanitary and Ship Canal would be required. On the north side of the bridge, the trail would come down on the other side at Portage Trail leading to the Portage Woods Site. The other option would be to recreate the Lawndale Road Bridge across the Sanitary and Ship Canal where it will connect into Canal Bank Road and travel northeast to Portage Trail and the Portage Woods Site. A third option would be to utilize signed, on-street bike routes along Center Street and Hanover Street to Harlem Avenue.

Alternative Routing 2

Alternative two would consist of developing an overpass along LaGrange Road from the existing I&M Canal Trail over the I&M Canal and the CN Railroad to W 79th Street in Sterling Estates. The trail would then travel on-street through the entrance of the neighborhood to Frontage Road. If the Tri-State Tollway purchases right-of-way from Sterling Estates and removes the homes on the south side of 79th Street, that area may be viable for a trail. Once Frontage Road reaches the Justice Police Department, the trail would jog onto the northwest right-of-way of Archer Avenue. The existing sidewalk along Archer Avenue can be widened to meet trail standards. The trail will

continue along Archer Avenue until the Bedford Park Police Department where the trail could cross Archer Avenue and enter the Bedford Parking walking and biking trail. This existing trail can be utilized around the existing baseball fields and north along 65th Street. Eventually the trail could develop an overpass over the existing sound wall and IHB Railroad and join into 64th Street. The trail would then head north along 76th Avenue on an on-street bike lane to 61st Street (westbound) or 60th Place (eastbound). The trail would then head northeast upon reaching Archer Avenue where the southeast portion of the right-of-way will be expanded for trail users. If a bridge over the noise wall and IHB Railroad wasn't feasible, then an alternative would be to take 65th Street or the open space area out to Archer Avenue, then head northeast to 63rd Street. Existing sidewalks under the IHB bridge could be utilized although the existing width is substandard and would require a design exception. At 63rd Street the roadway is wide enough to create an on-street bike lane to 76th Avenue. 76th Avenue will then similarly be taken until 61st Street or 60th Place. Westbound 61st Street will take the trail back to Archer Avenue where the eastern side of the road will be widened (along with a required widening of the bridge over the railroad near 59th Street) for an off-street bike path up to the intersection with Route 171. At this point, bicyclists will travel across Route 171 to South Center Street on an on-street route leading to the MWRD Service Road. At this point the route alternatives from Option 1 will be used to continue the trail to the Portage Woods Site.

Spurs

Options for Spurs are prominent throughout the proposed trail alternatives. Specifically, South Center Street could be used to connect bicyclists and pedestrians to Hanover Street and the Summit Metra/Amtrak Station. The routes along Archer Avenue take riders through downtown Summit and through many residential areas. A bridge over 66th Street and the IHB Railroad could lead students to Wharton Elementary School and Argo Community High School.

Public Discussions

Current Discussions

To develop corridor alternatives and to truly understand the study area, it was vital to contact the local communities and form a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is comprised of the Mayors from Willow Springs, Justice, Summit, and Bedford Park along with various members of their administrations. The Committee also included representatives from the Southwest and Central Conference of Mayors, National Park Service representatives along with Active Transportation Alliance. Delegates from Illinois Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Cook County Forest Preserves are also members of the Steering Committee.

The first Steering Committee meeting was held on April 20, 2018. TERRA Engineering Ltd., Images Inc. and CMAP introduced the project to the attendees and discussed the role that the members will be playing in determining corridor alternatives, ascertaining feasibility and helping make the decisions on the chosen preferred alternative. TERRA Engineering presented some potential preliminary alternatives that they judged might be feasible and discussed some of their early field investigation findings and potential issues that they identified. The Steering Committee was then asked to describe any issues that they are aware of and suggest any opportunities within the communities along the canal that could be useful. The discussions led to their own suggested route options, primarily tweaks to the routes that TERRA had identified. These routes and the information obtained from this meeting is continuing to help TERRA gain insight on which alternative or segments will be most viable.

A second Steering Committee meeting was held on July 20, 2018 where results of additional field investigations were presented and discussed along with two possible route options, which TERRA had as refinements and amalgams of earlier potential routes, input from the Steering Committee, and further analysis and site investigation. The consensus from this meeting was that both routes should be investigated further with the idea that the main route would be along the I&M Canal (with the exception of the Kinder Morgan property) and the second route could be utilized to provide connections into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Past Discussions (Pre-Feasibility Study Efforts)

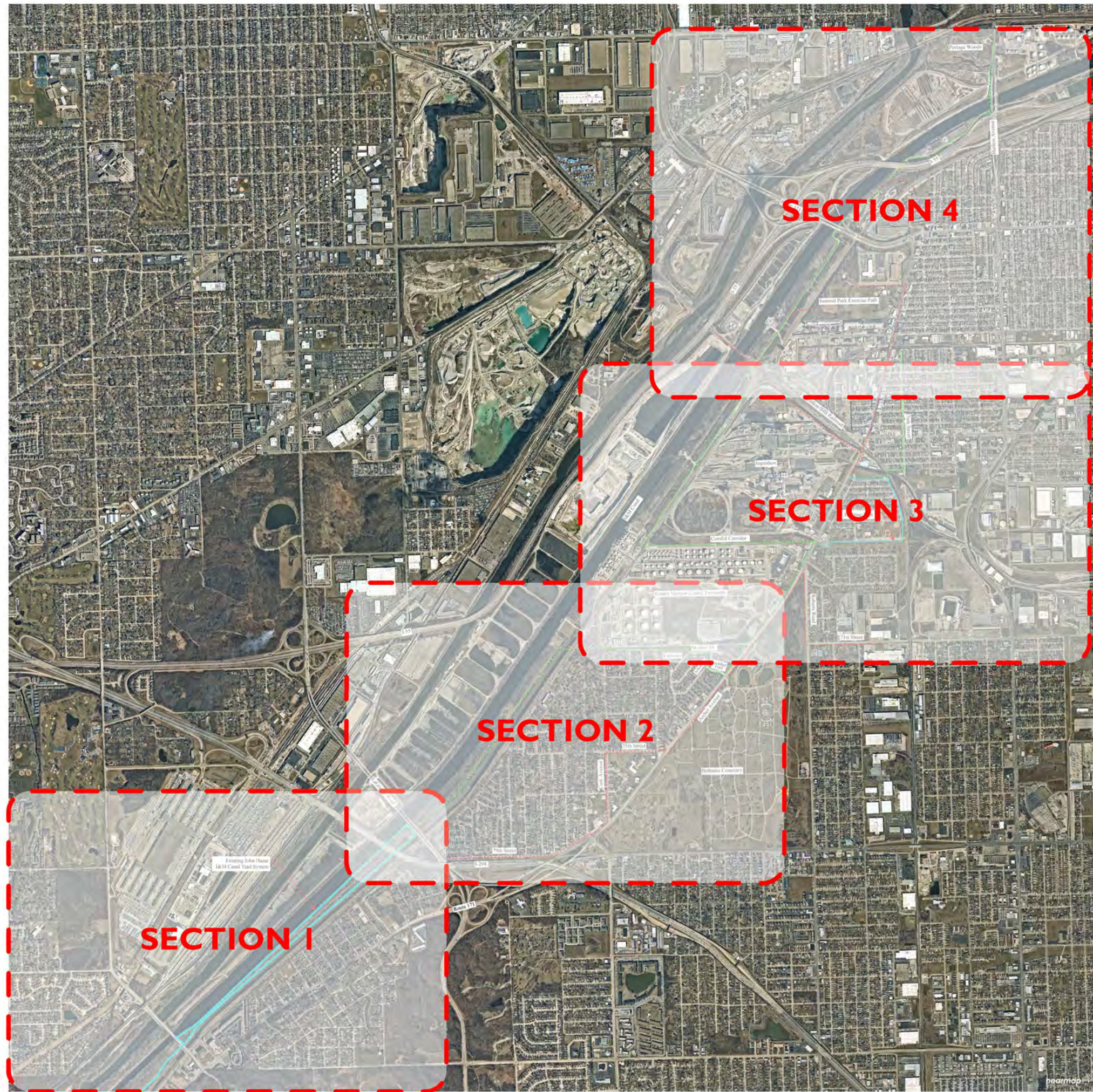
The Centennial Trail project began more than twenty years ago with an agreement between the Forest Preserve District and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to construct a trail following the Des Plaines River corridor from the Cook-Will County border northeast to the Portage Site at Harlem Avenue. A previous firm was awarded Phase I and Phase II contracts to perform the planning and design for the project. Phase I Engineering Studies and a Project Report were prepared for the proposed trail along the corridor that was anticipated by the Forest Preserve and the MWRD. Design Approval was received from IDOT and the FHWA for the chosen alignment almost twenty years ago. The alignment began at the existing trail at the Cook-Will border and followed along the strip of land between the Des Plaines River and the Sanitary and Ship Canal. At Willow Springs Road, the trail crossed over to the north side of the Des Plaines River and continued heading northeast adjacent to the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe rail yard. At I-294, the trail transitioned to an on-street marked bike route along River Road. At the east end of River Road, the trail once again became an off-street path that followed along the north bank of the Des Plaines River. Once reaching the Portage Site, the trail was to cross the Des Plaines River on a new bridge that brought it into the Portage Site where it connected to the end of the Salt Creek Greenway Trail.

There were two important issues that needed to be overcome as part of this proposed alignment. The first was the BNSF rail yard between Willow Springs Road and I-294. It was identified during the Phase I studies that an easement or lease would be necessary from the railroad since it appeared that they owned up to the water's edge of the Des Plaines River. During initial discussions during Phase I, the railroad indicated that they would have no objections to the alignment since it would be located immediately adjacent to the river, away from their facilities. However, during subsequent negotiations, the railroad's requirements were unable to be met by the Forest Preserve.

The second issue was an existing landfill located along the north side of the Des Plaines River between the MWRD site at the east end of River Road and the IHB Railroad. They too owned up to the edge of the river. Therefore, an easement was needed from the landfill to allow the proposed trail to be able to gain elevation to bridge over the IHB Railroad tracks. Once again, during negotiations, the landfill owner's requirements were unable to be met by the Forest Preserve.

Approximately five years ago, there were several meetings including an on-site field review that looked at possible alternate alignments that would avoid the railroad and the landfill but would complete the gap in the trail. With the need at that time for the trail to be located on either MWRD or Forest Preserve property, there was only one other possible alignment. That was to continue the trail northeast from Willow Springs Road on the land between the Des Plaines River and the Sanitary and Ship Canal. This would bring the trail into the MWRD drying beds and the ongoing McCook Reservoir storm water work being performed at the quarry. There were several benefits to this alignment such as the ability to utilize existing underpasses under I-294, LaGrange Road, the IHB railroad tracks, Route 171 and I-55. In addition, no major bridge or structure would be needed for this alignment. However, there was one major drawback to this alignment and it was the ongoing work being performed for the McCook Reservoir. There would be significant conflicts between the heavy equipment being used for the reservoir work and the trail users.

Therefore, although Phase I approval was received for the entire length of the project from the Cook-Will border to the Portage Site, only the segment between the Cook-Will border to Willow Springs Road was constructed. The gap on this regionally significant trail remains to this day.

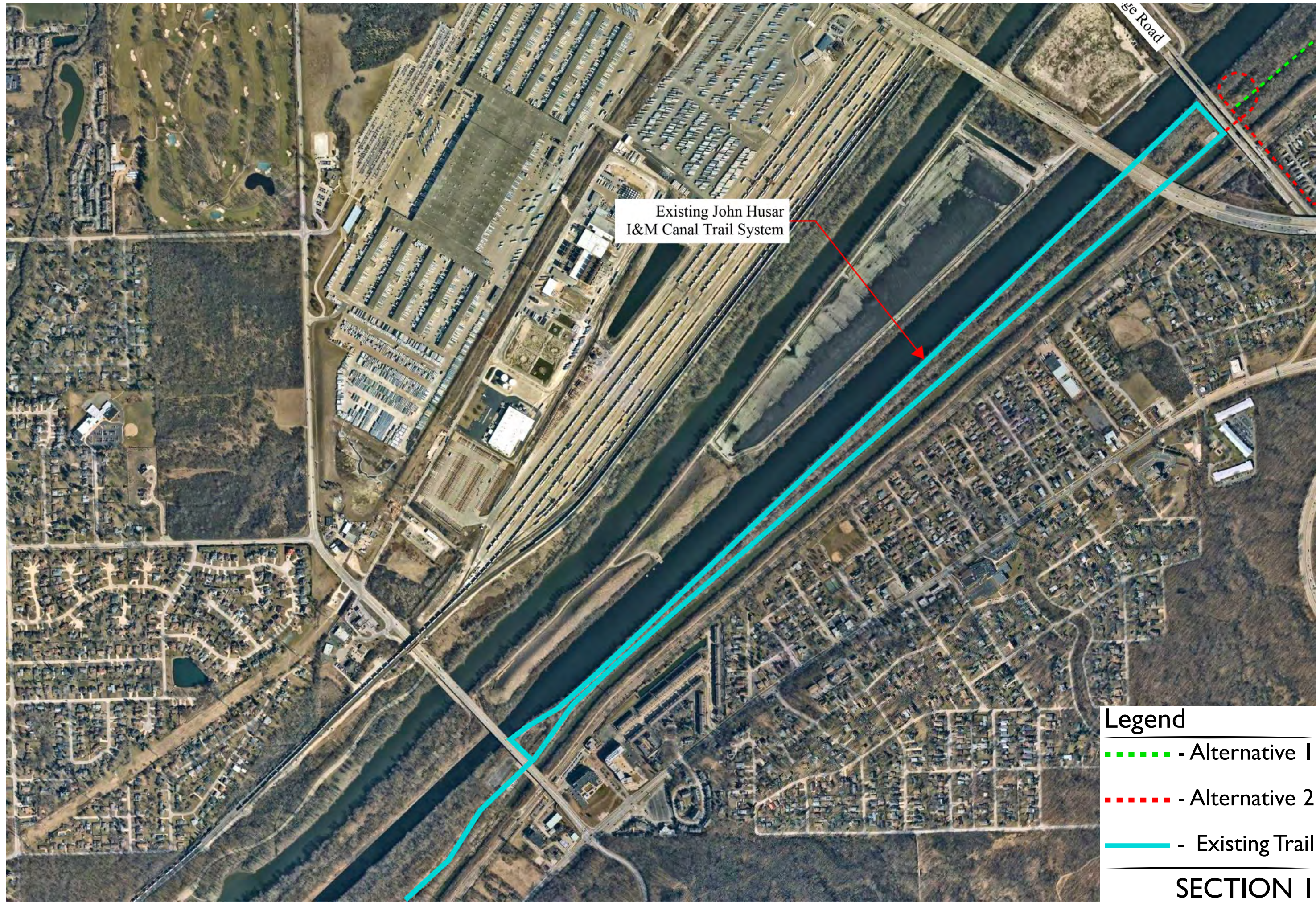


SECTION 4

SECTION 3

SECTION 2

SECTION 1



Existing John Husar
I&M Canal Trail System

- Legend**
- - Alternative 1
 - - Alternative 2
 - - Existing Trail

SECTION I



Kinder Morgan Liquid Terminals

I-55

Skyline Dr.

Arbor Lane

Lipinski

Arbor Ln

Heather Trail

Blackstone Avenue

Archer Avenue

Archer Avenue

75th Street

Bethania Cemetery

Cork Avenue

LaGrange Road

Existing Bike Trail

79th Street

I-294

Tollway - 79th St.

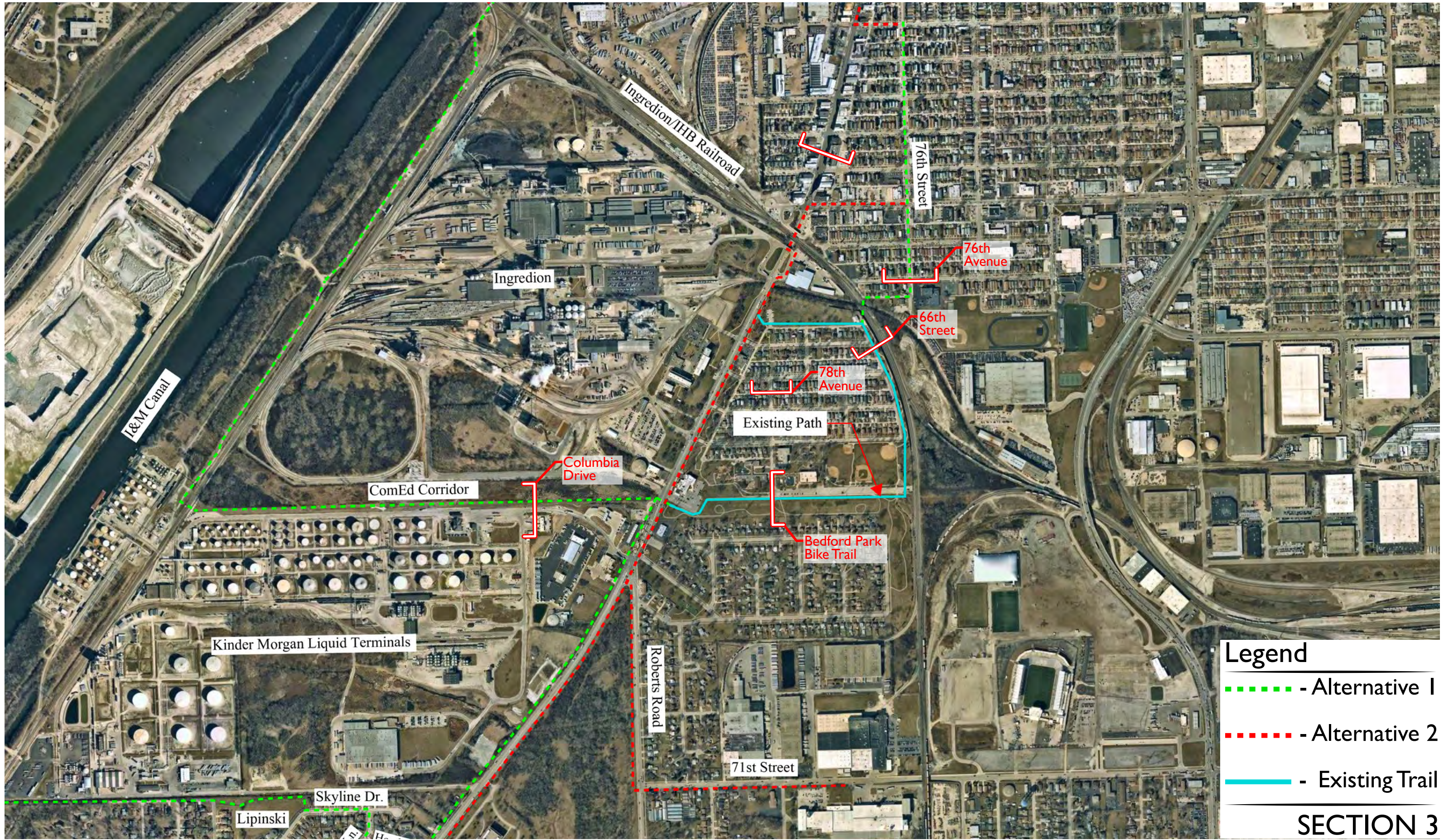
Legend

----- - Alternative 1

----- - Alternative 2

----- - Existing Trail

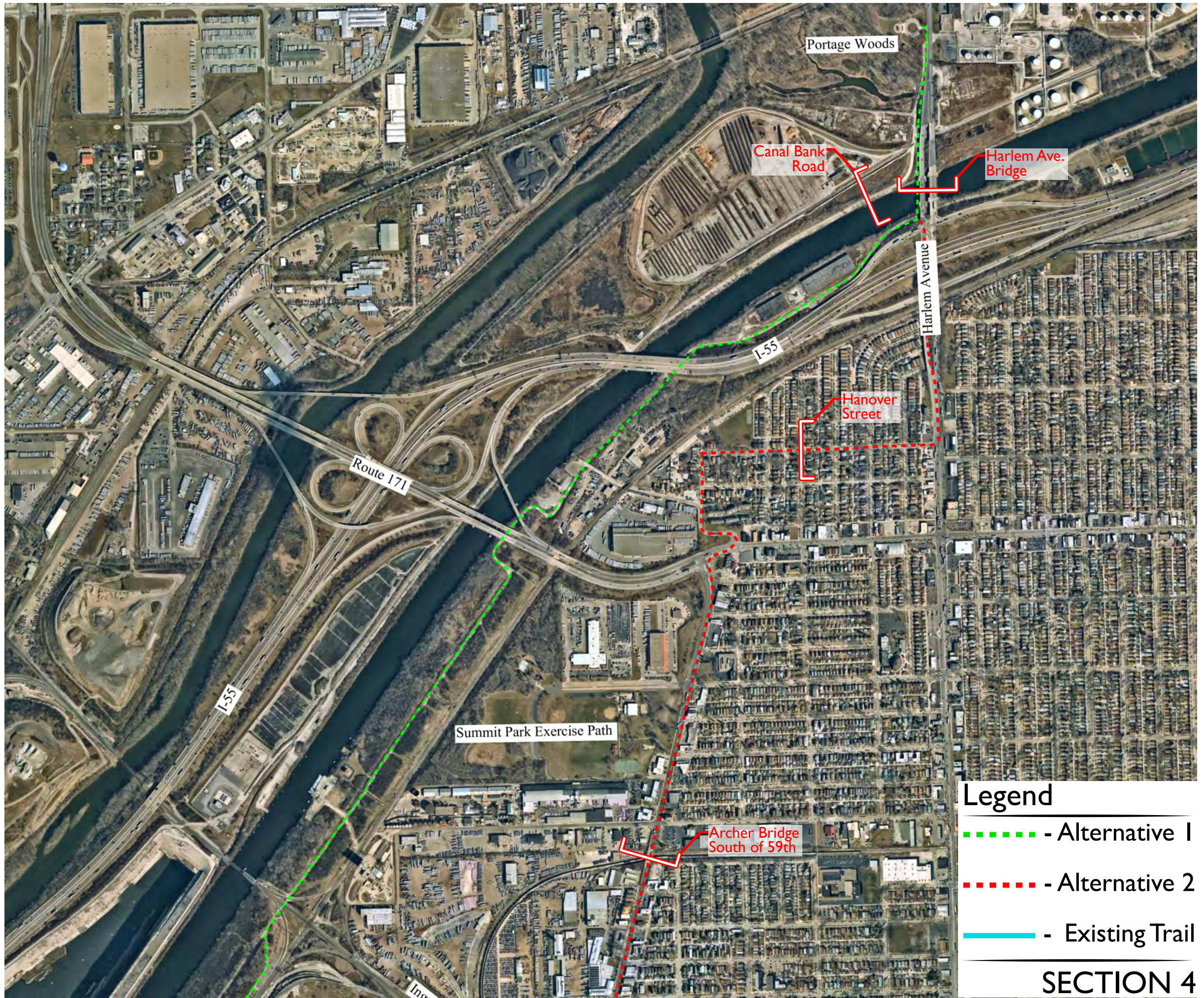
SECTION 2



Legend

- - Alternative 1
- - Alternative 2
- - Existing Trail

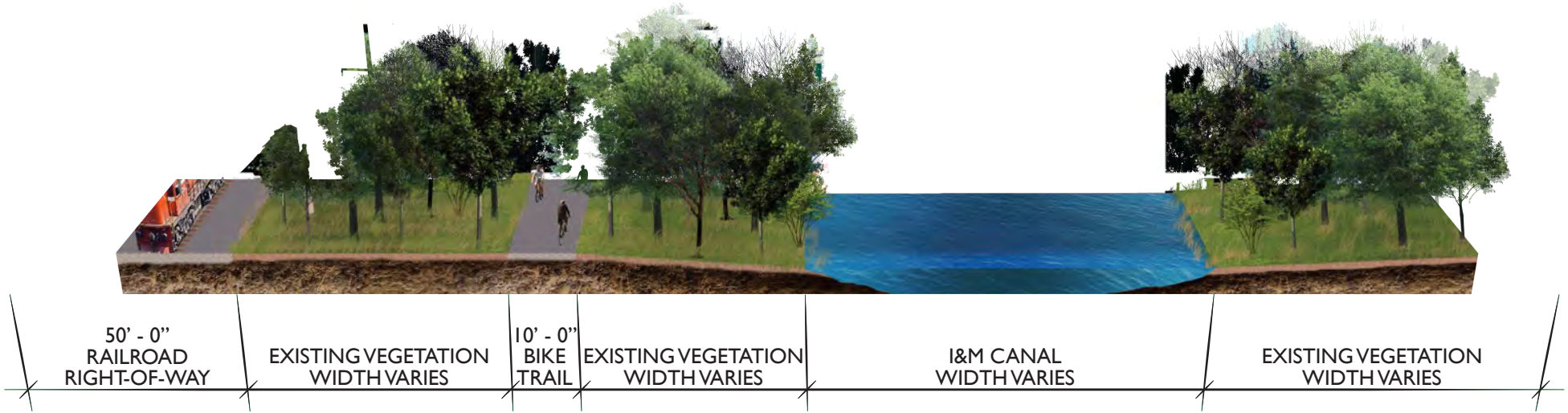
SECTION 3



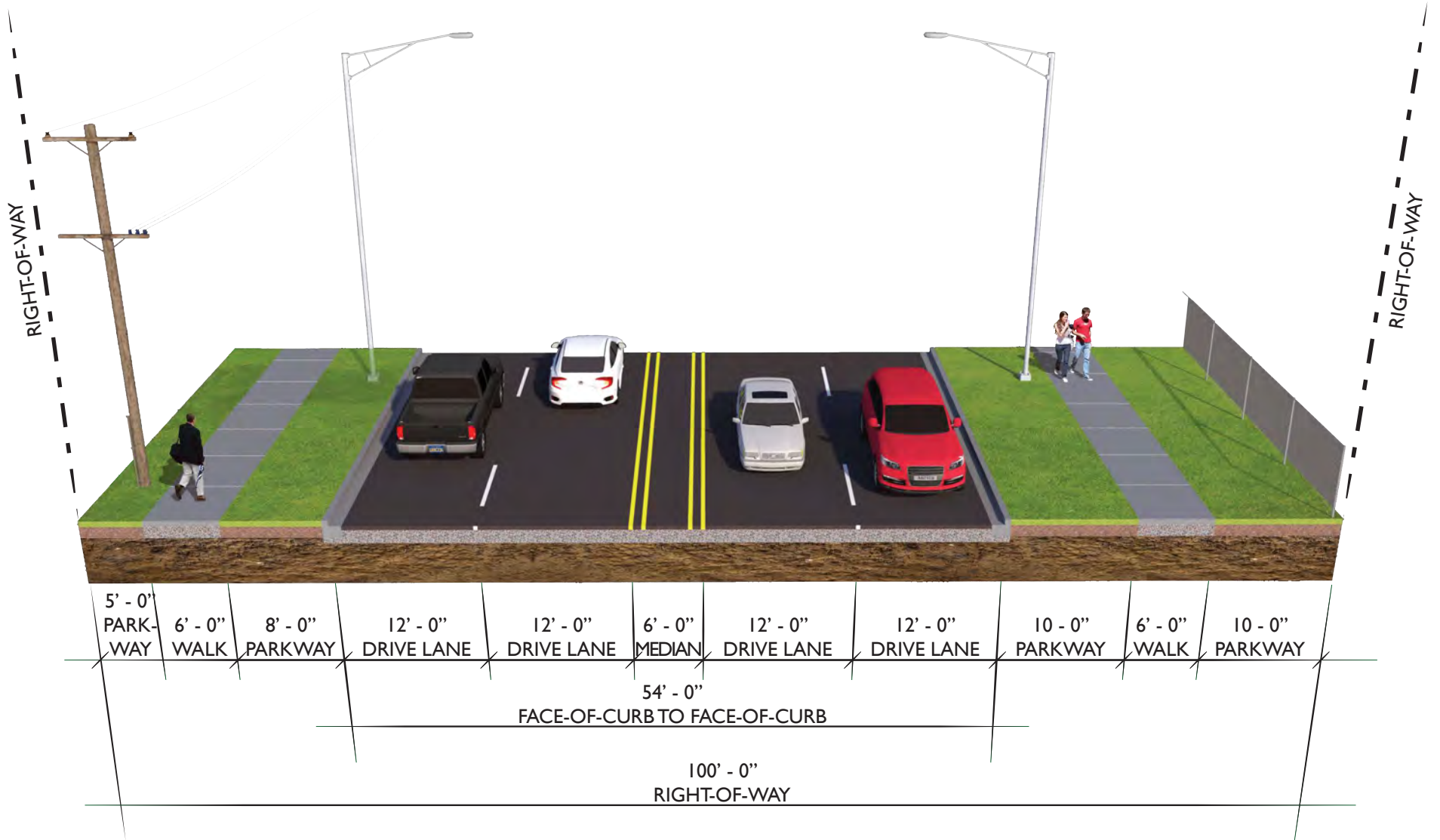
Legend

- - Alternative 1
- - Alternative 2
- - Existing Trail

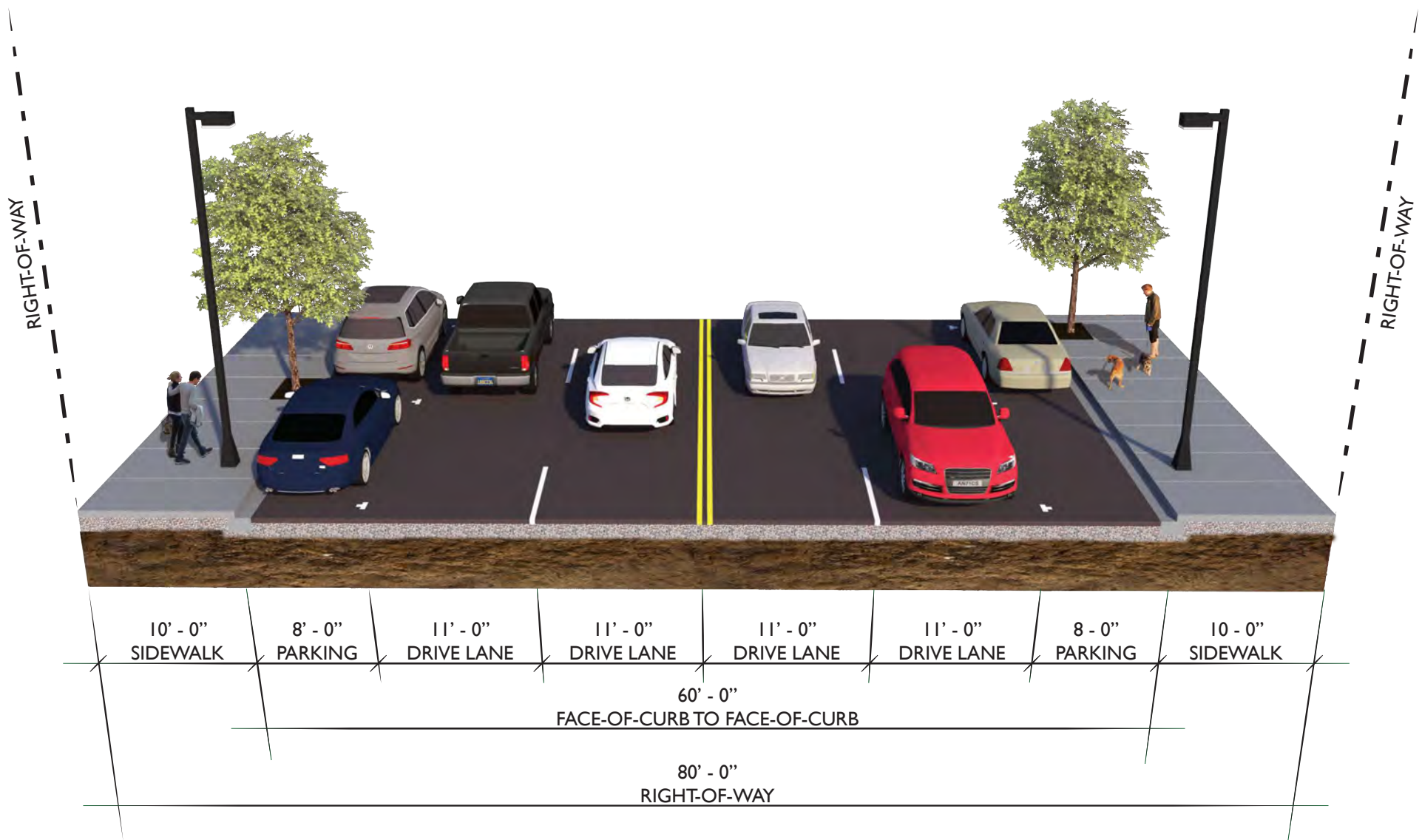
SECTION 4



TYPICAL EXISTING I&M CANAL BIKE TRAIL
JUSTICE, ILLINOIS



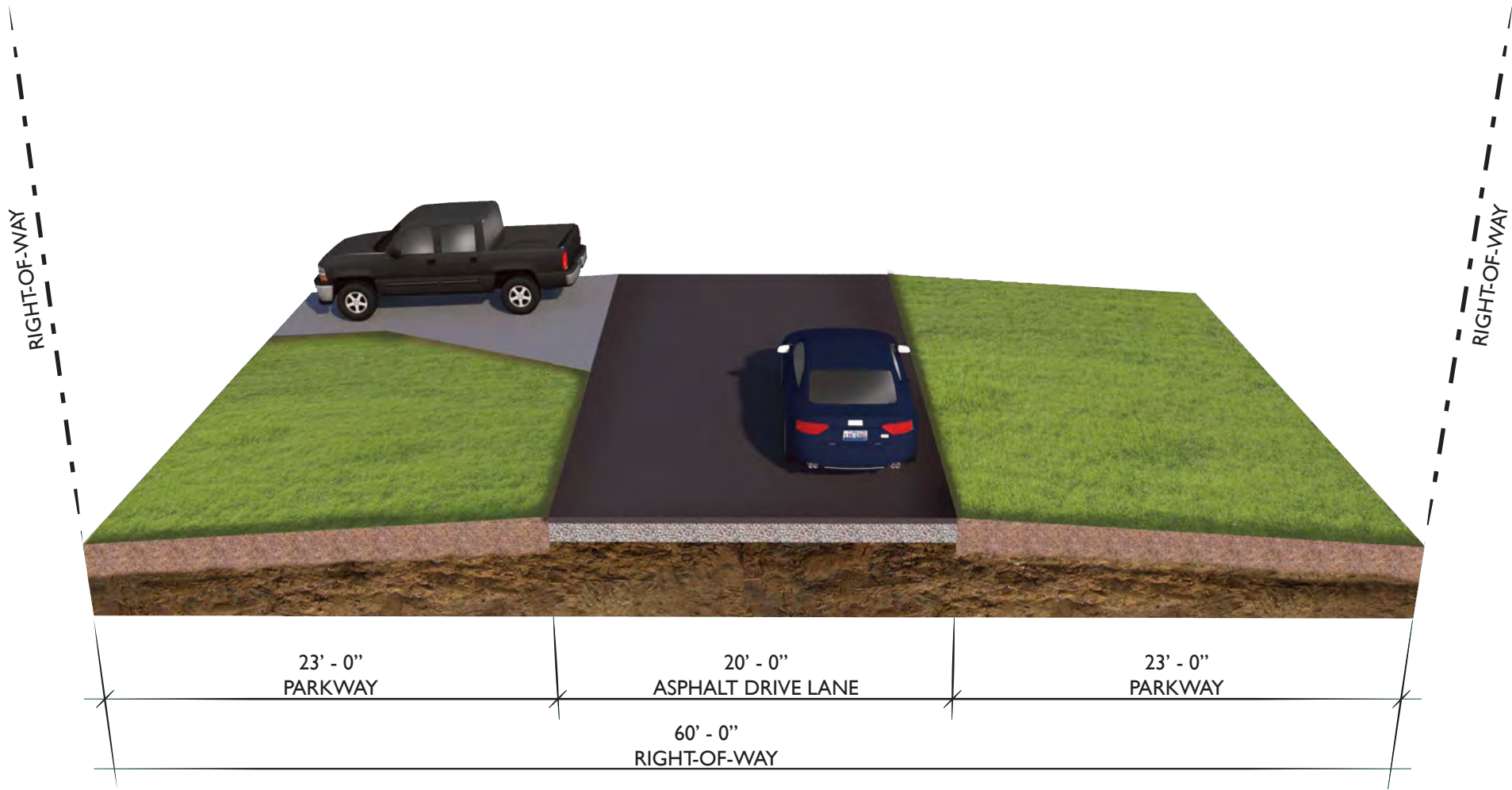
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - ARCHER AVENUE
JUSTICE, ILLINOIS



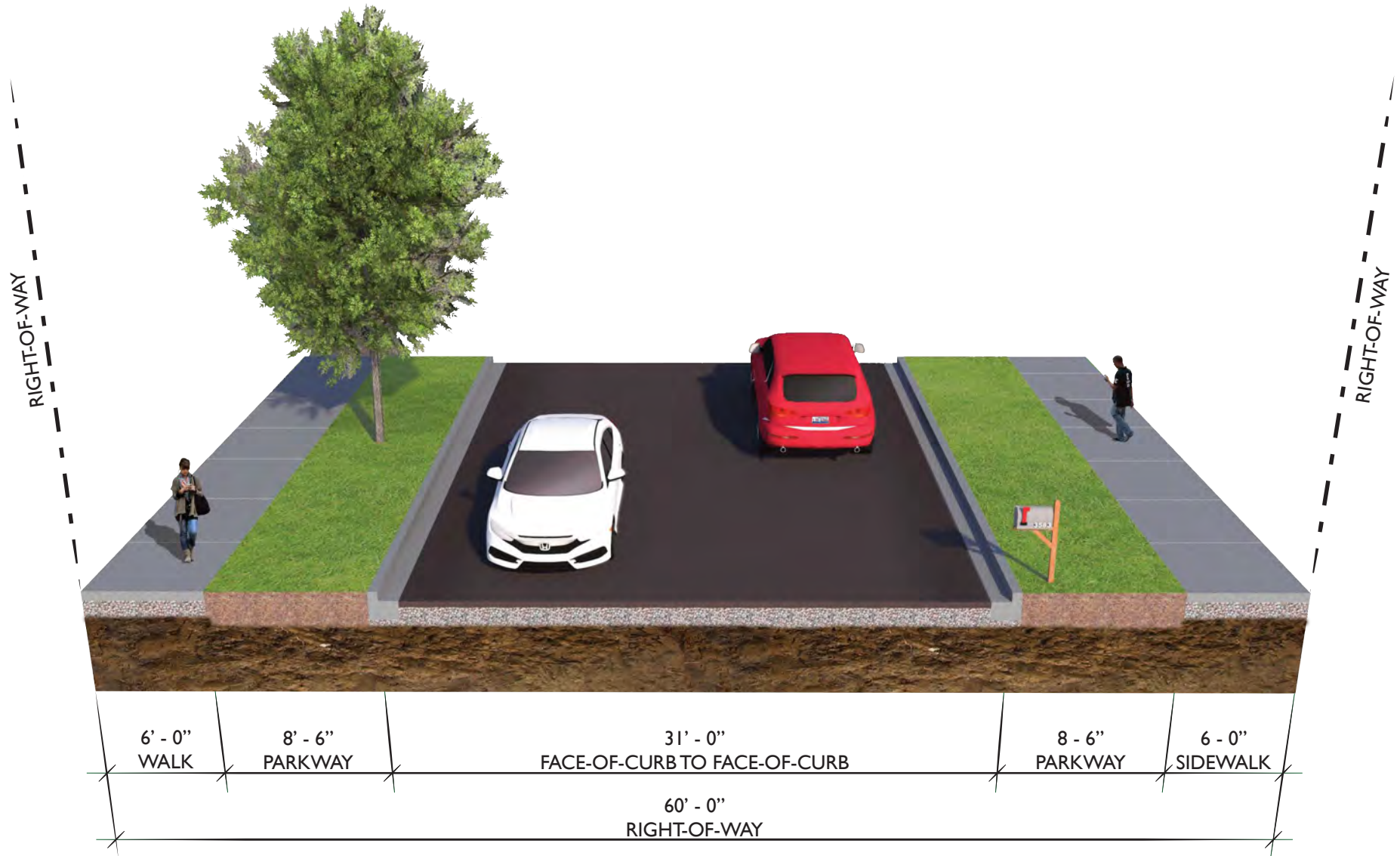
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - ARCHER AVENUE
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



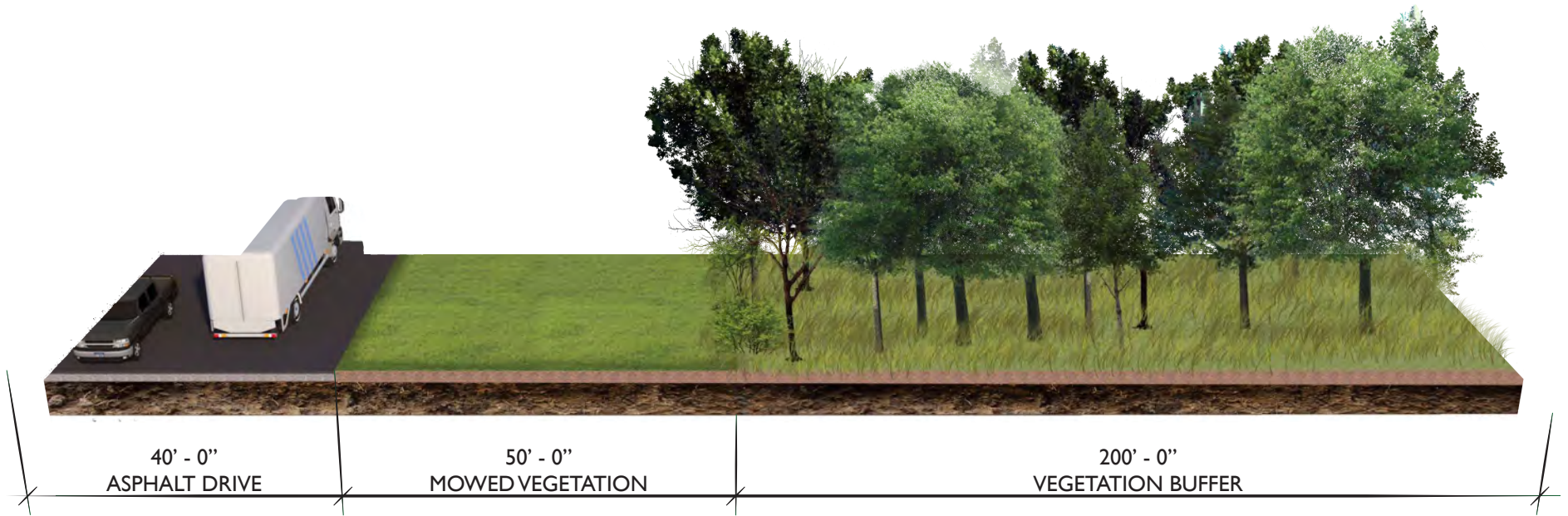
TYPICAL EXISTING TOLLWAY / 79TH STREET
JUSTICE, ILLINOIS



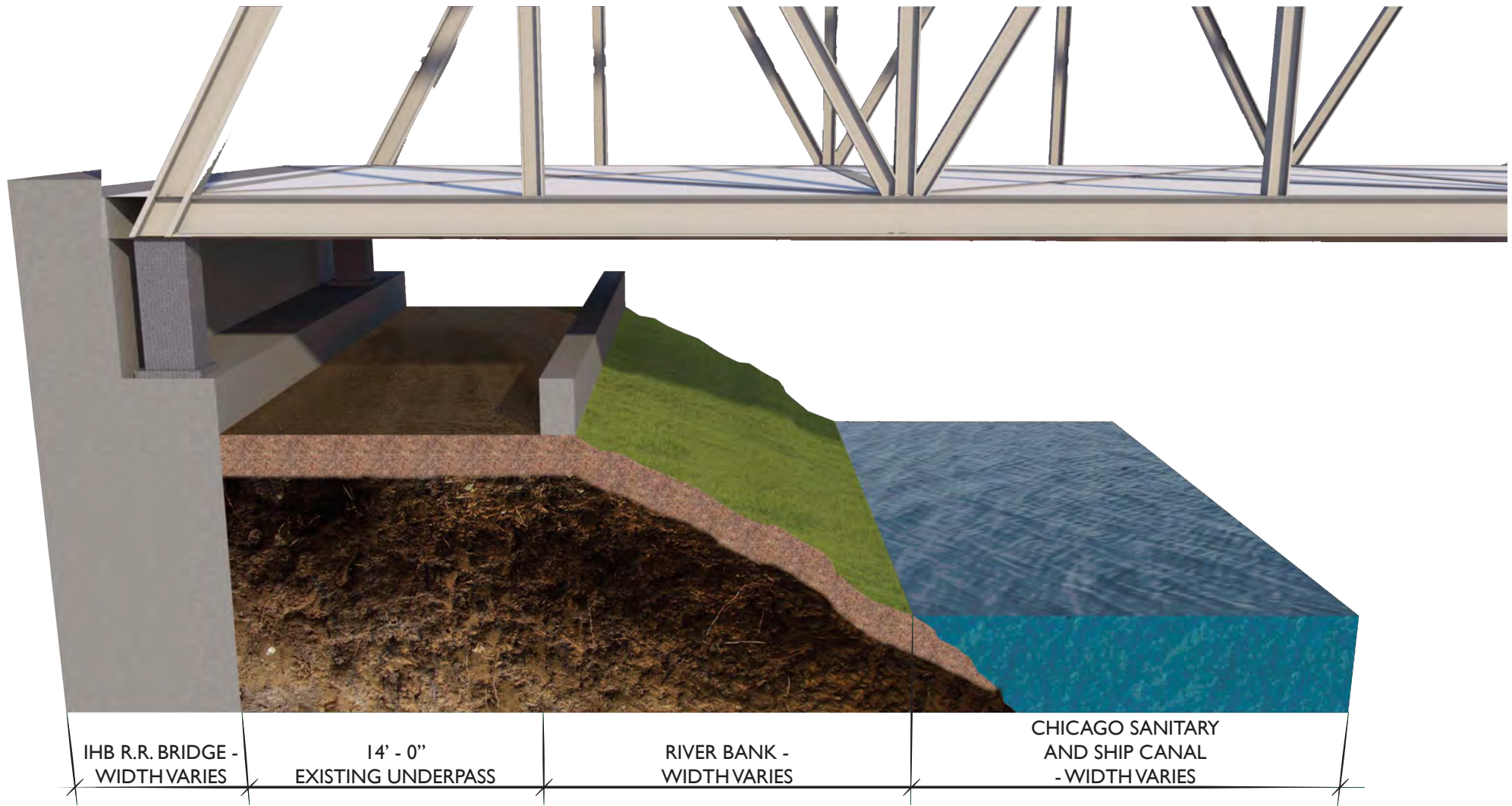
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - BLACKSTONE AVENUE
JUSTICE, ILLINOIS



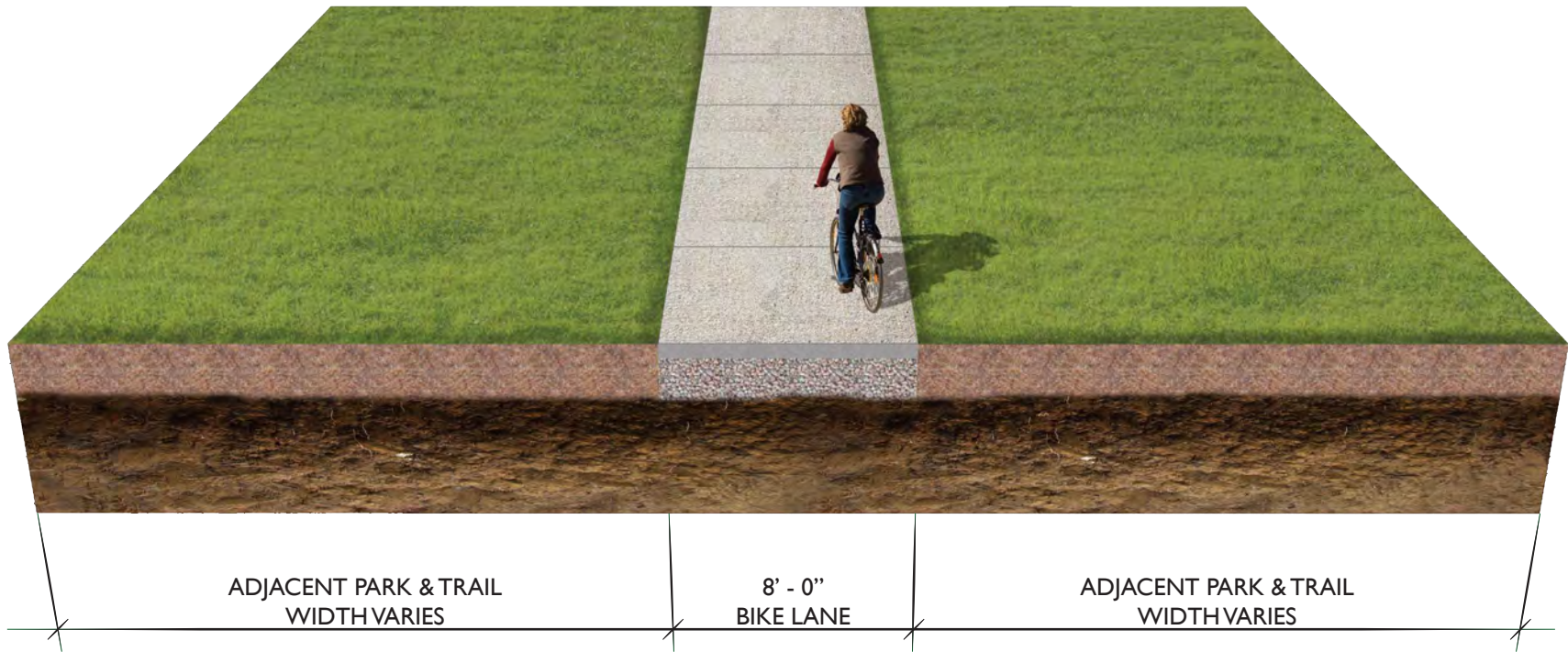
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - ARBOR LANE,
HEATHER TRAIL, SKYLINE DRIVE
JUSTICE, ILLINOIS



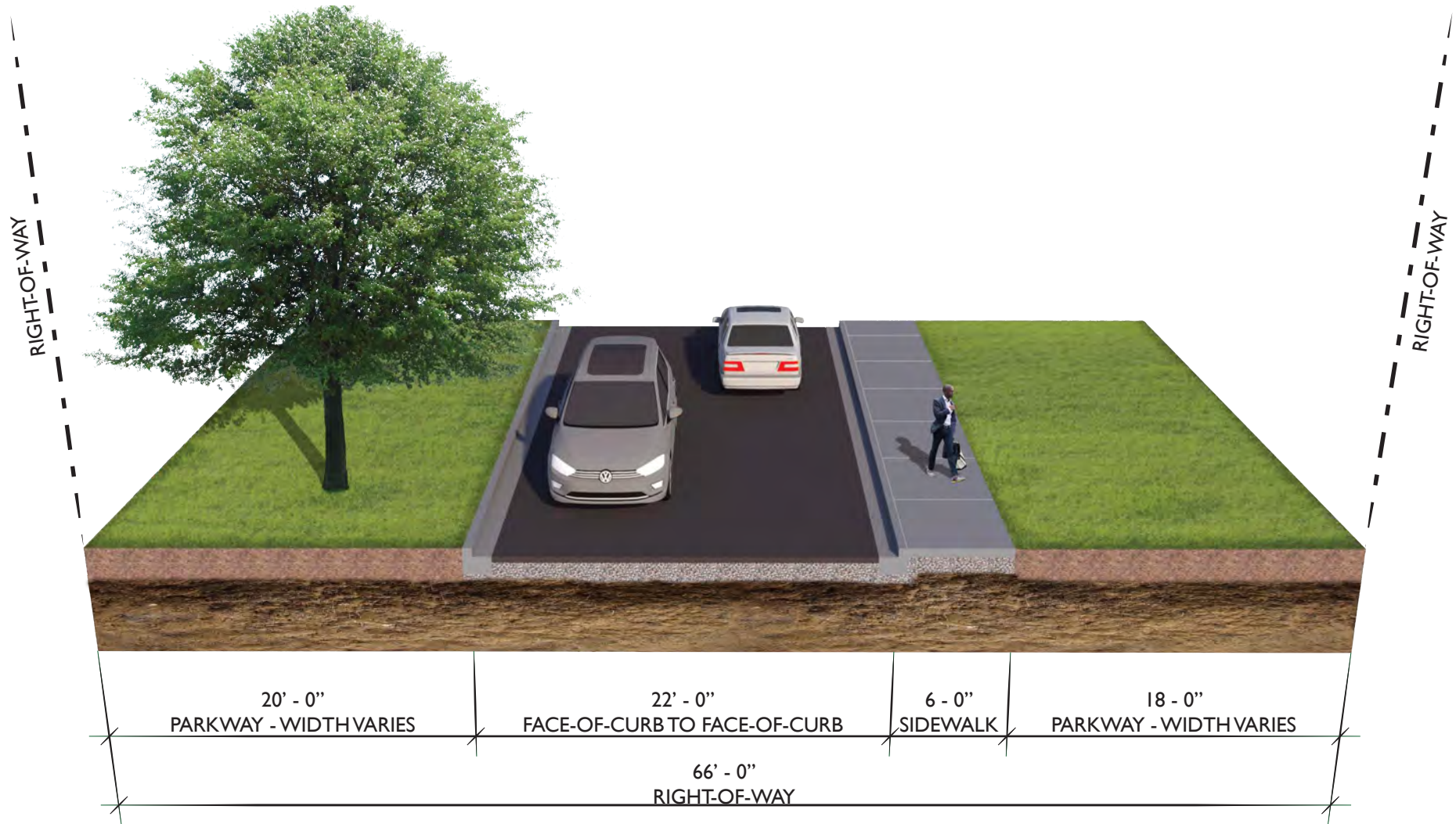
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - COLUMBIA DRIVE
BEDFORD PARK, ILLINOIS



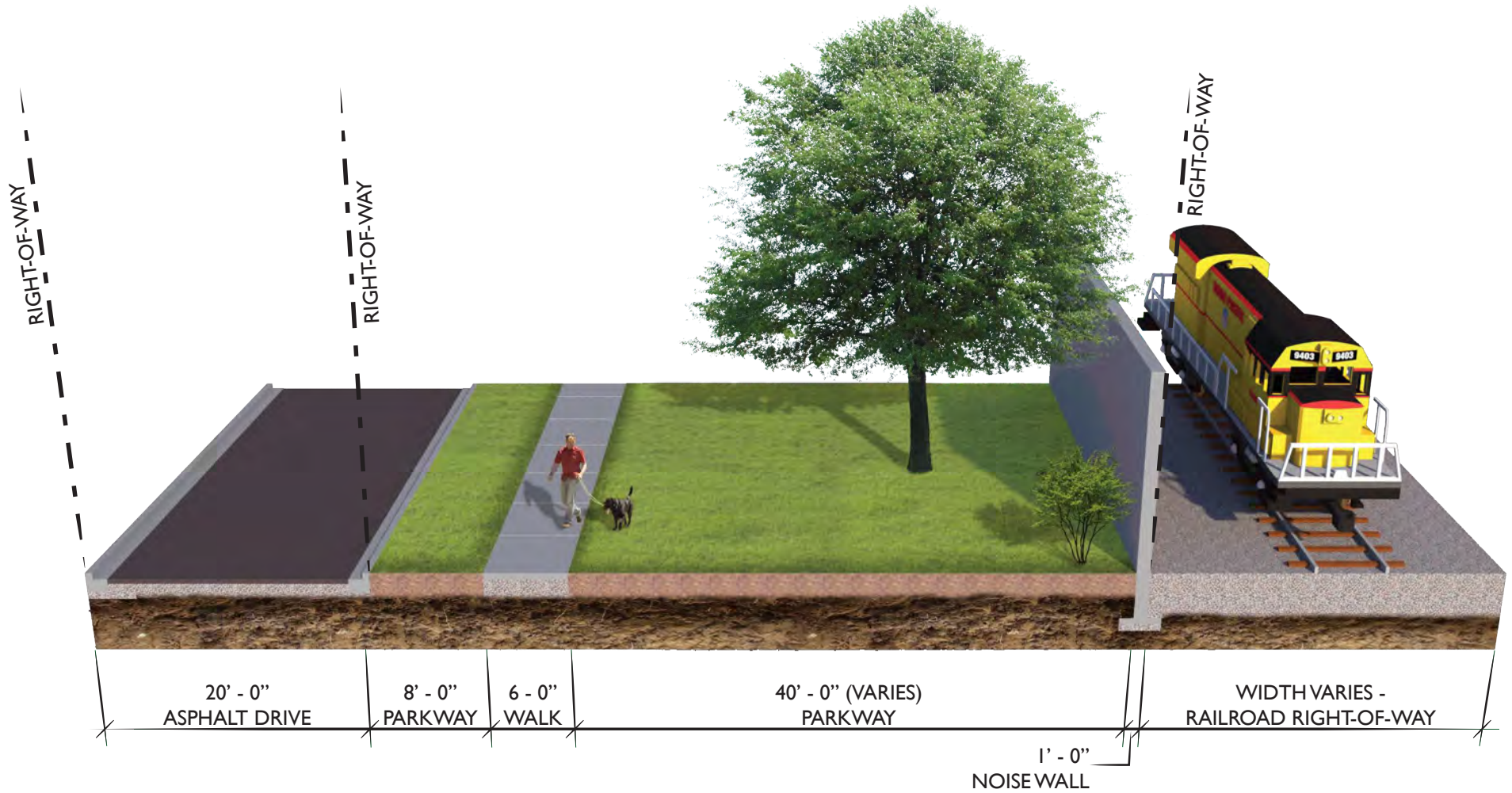
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - IHB RAILROAD BRIDGE UNDERPASS
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



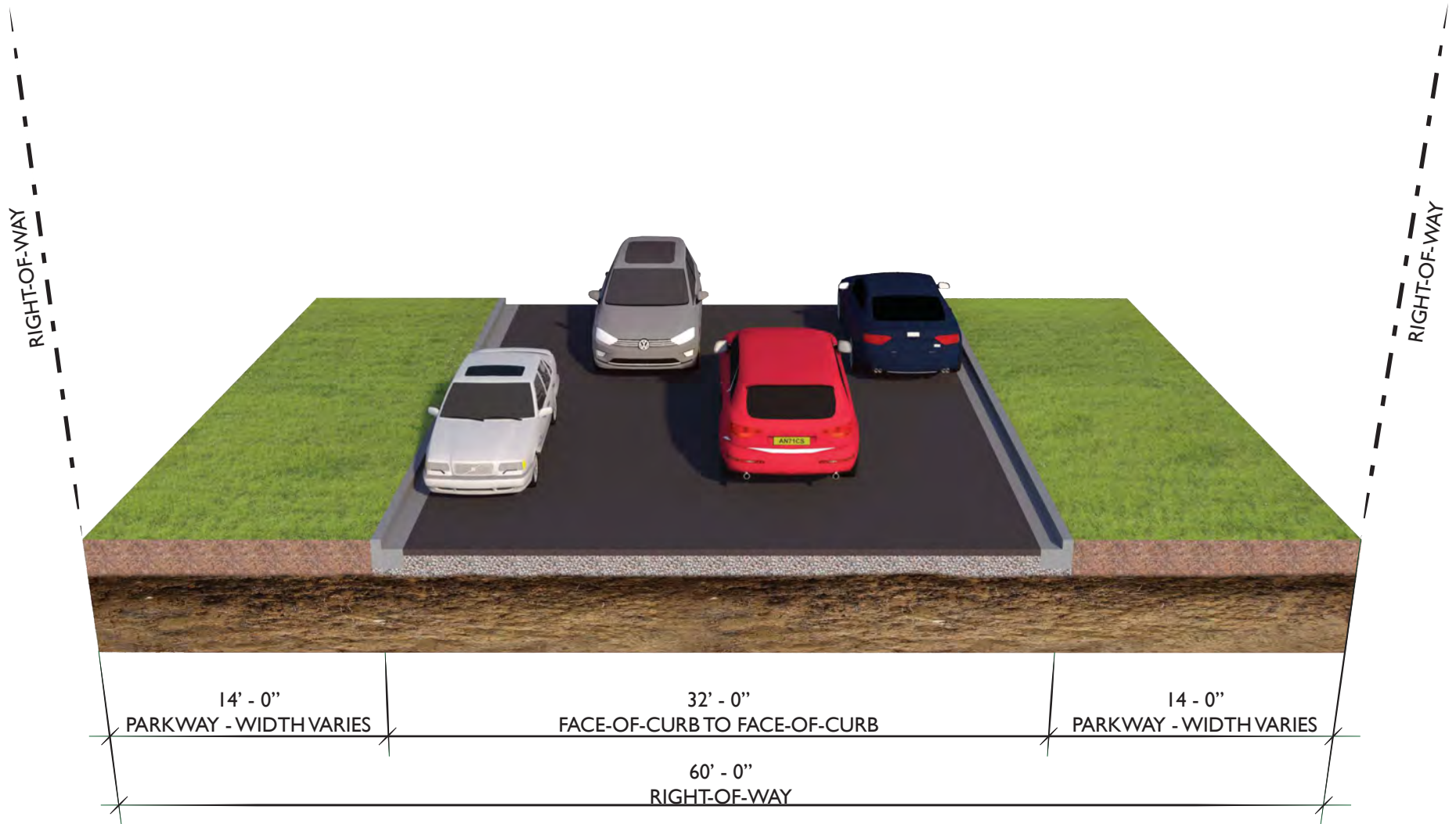
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - BEDFORD PARK BIKE TRAIL
BEDFORD PARK, ILLINOIS



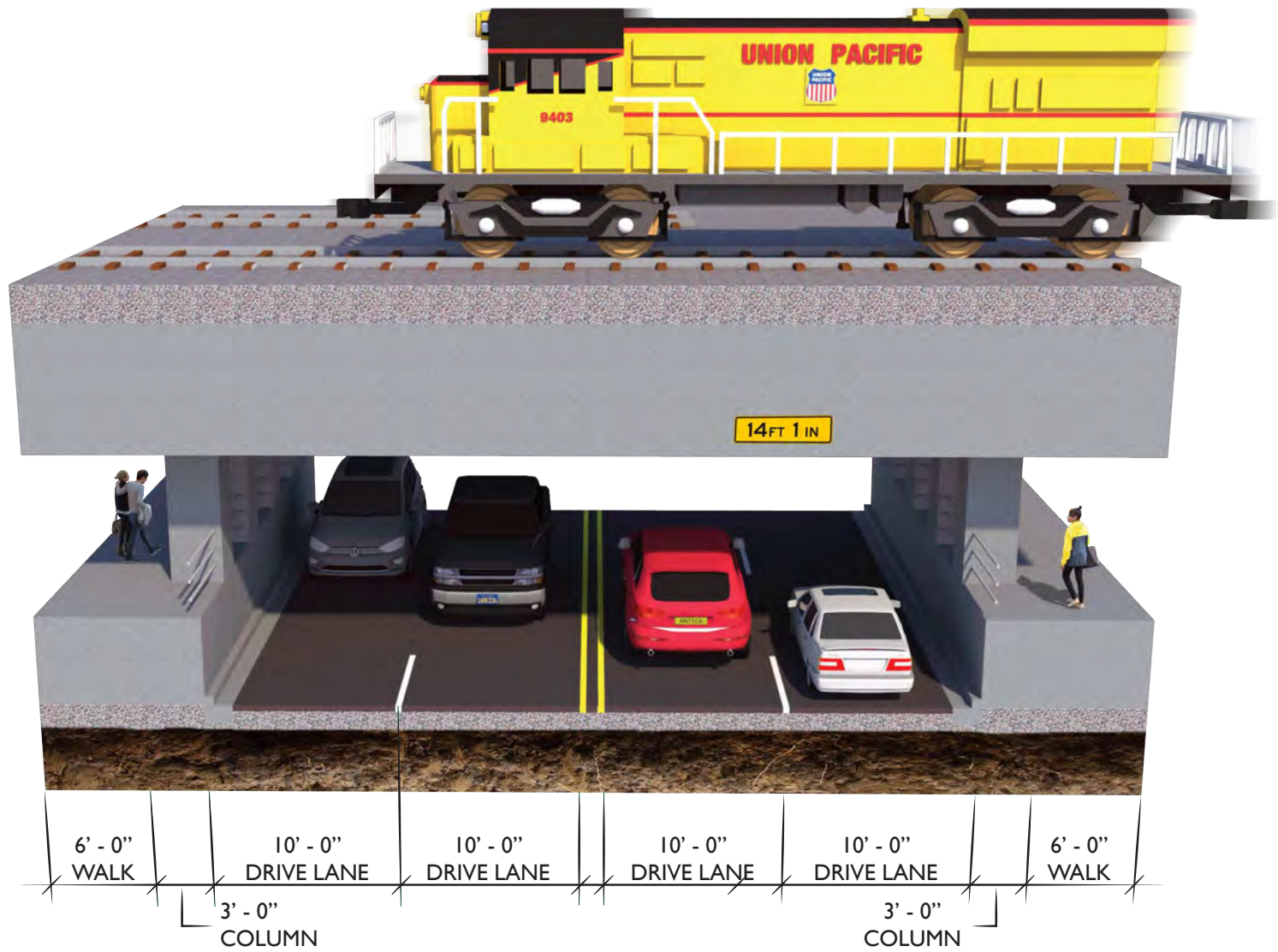
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - 78TH AVENUE
BEDFORD PARK, ILLINOIS



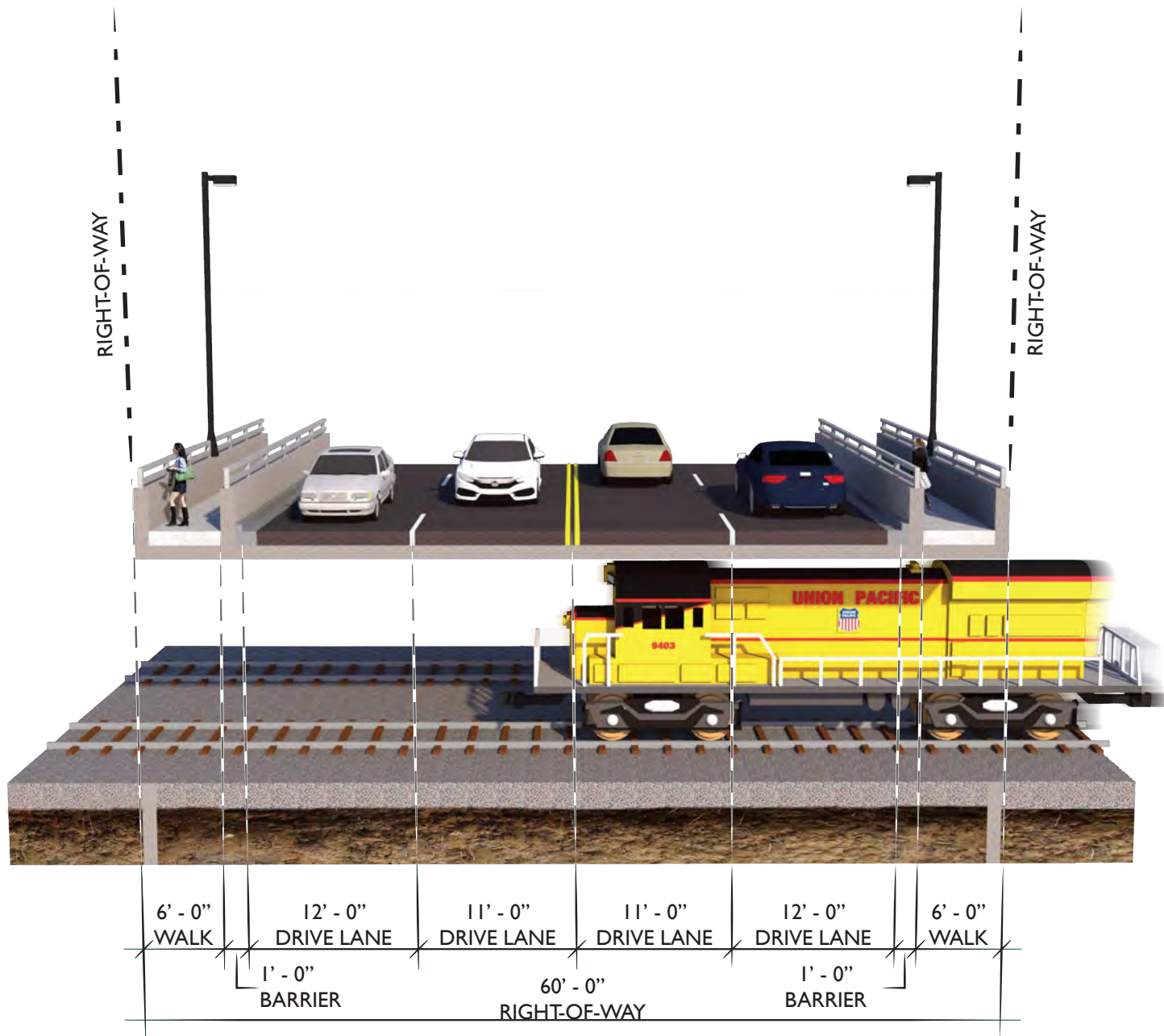
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - 66TH STREET
BEDFORD PARK, ILLINOIS



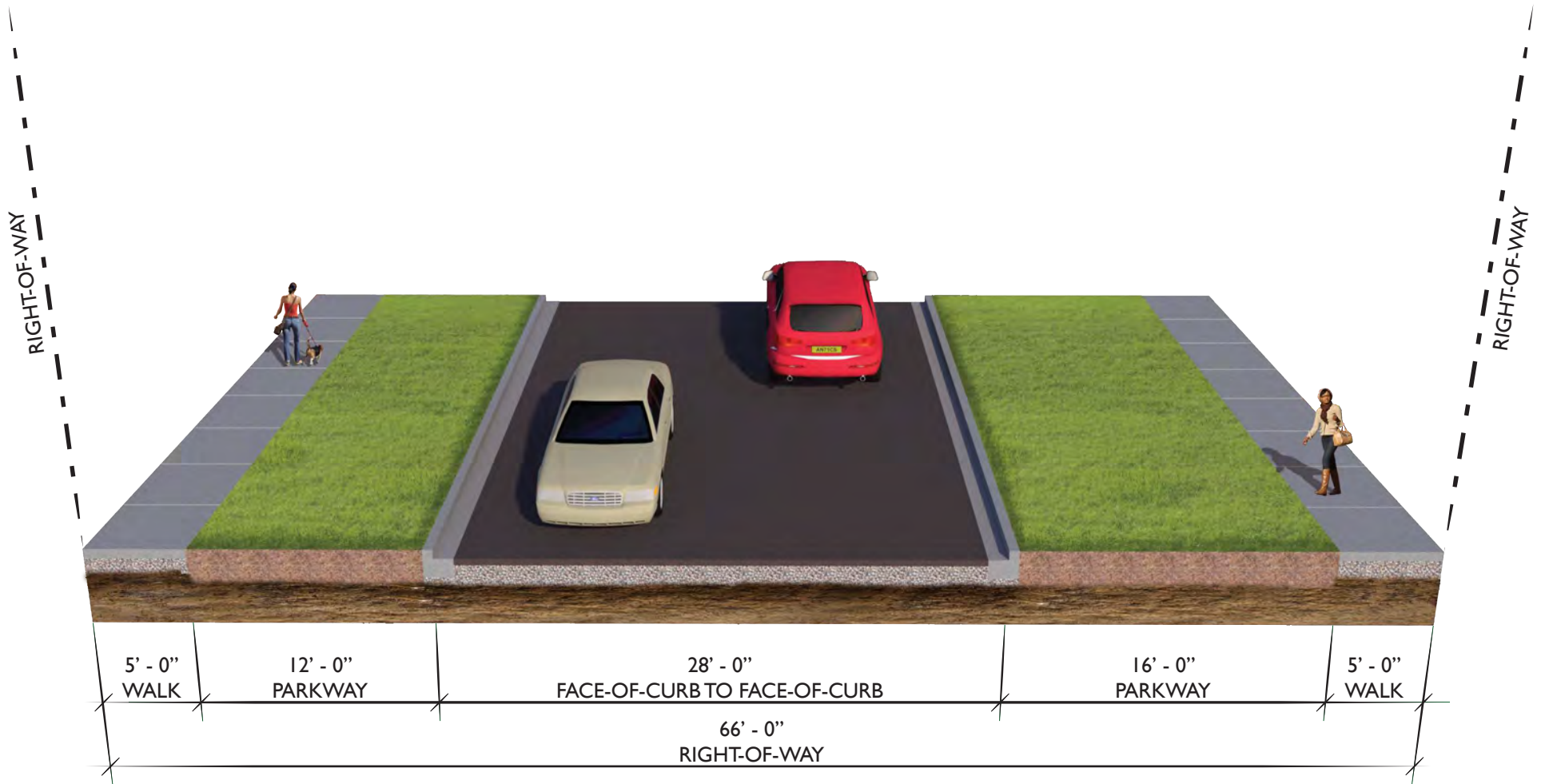
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - 76TH AVENUE
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



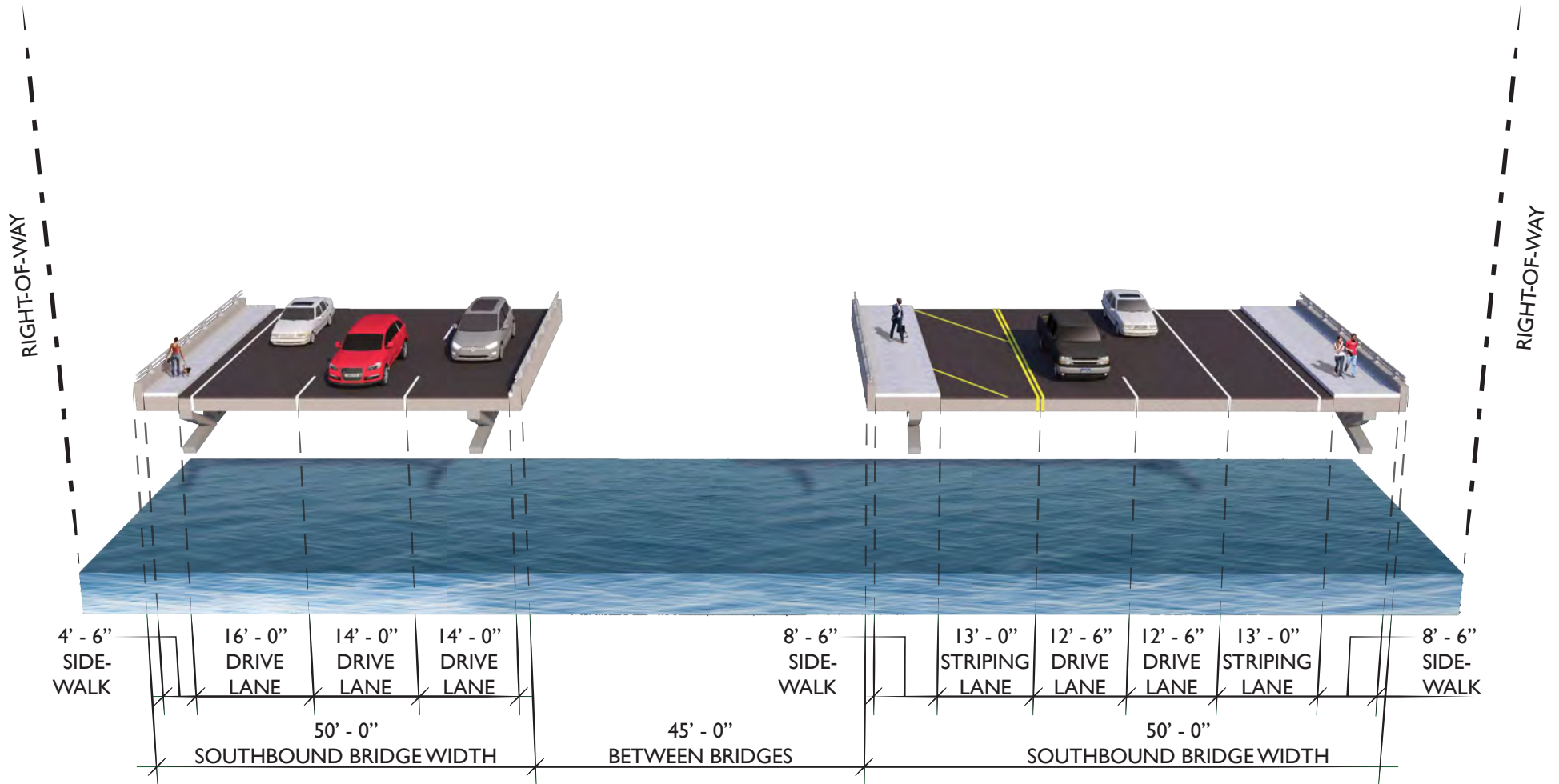
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - ARCHER AVE. BRIDGE SOUTH OF 63RD
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



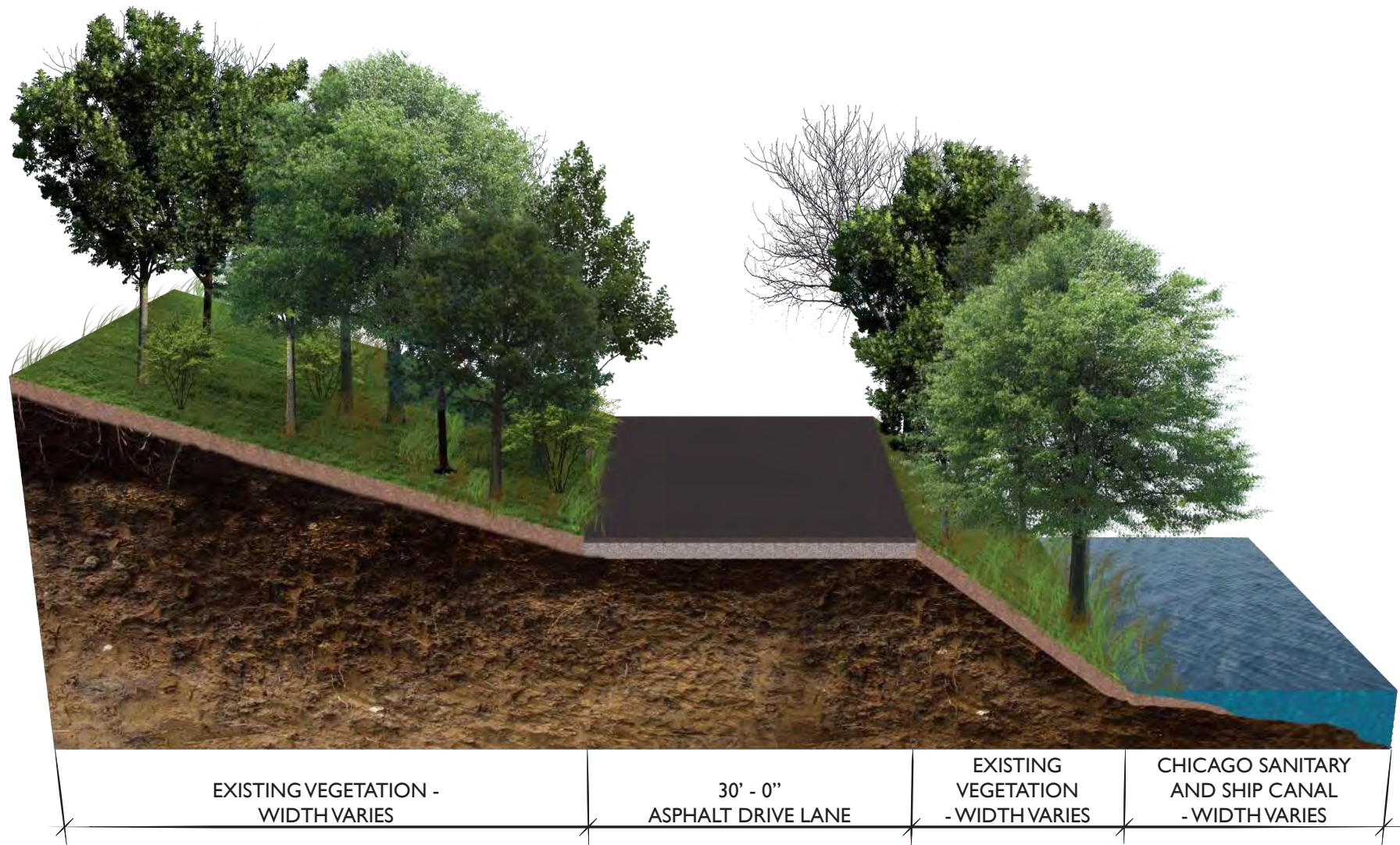
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - ARCHER AVE. BRIDGE SOUTH OF 59TH
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



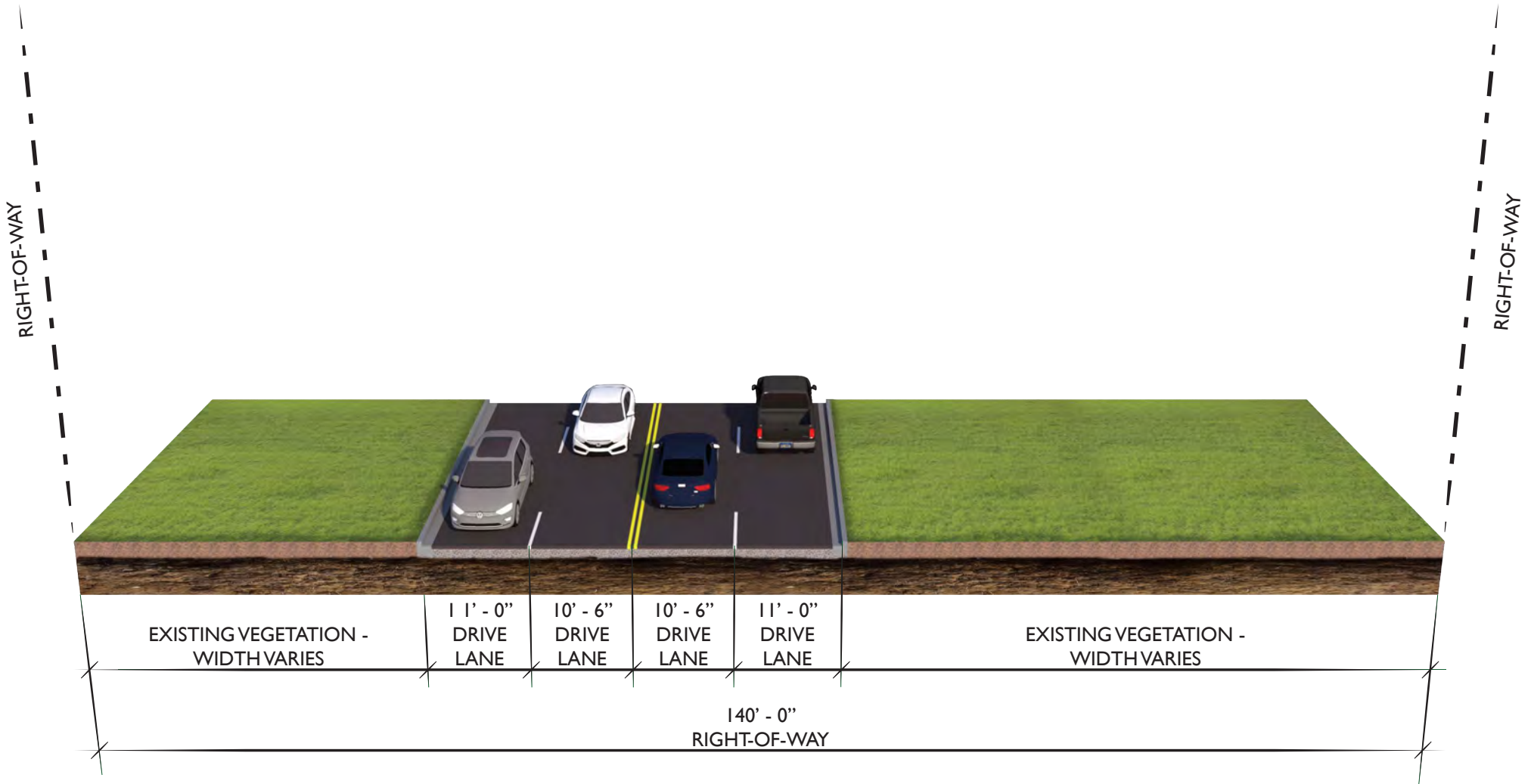
TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - W. HANOVER STREET
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - HARLEM AVENUE
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - CANAL BANK ROAD
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS



TYPICAL EX. CONDITION - HARLEM AVE. NEAR PORTAGE
SUMMIT, ILLINOIS