

## Section 3

### Recommended Priority Projects

Through the course of the Master Plan Process, priorities have been established based on a needs assessment of the overall parks and recreation system. This included public input meetings, surveys, and assessments of current assets. The Recreation Advisory Board worked in concert with staff using a matrix of projects to narrow down the areas with the highest needs for investment. These priorities were then presented to the public for feedback and confirmation. After reviewing the public comments, a final list of priorities was established. These priorities are organized under three primary areas: (1) Active Parkland; (2) Passive Parkland; and (3) Special Use Facilities. A general summary of each project is included which includes tasks to accomplish the priority and, in some cases, associated master plans and costs of each project.

The priorities are listed below and establish tasks to undertake and accomplish in the long term. The individual projects needed to meet these priorities will require further evaluation to determine the financial feasibility within the Town's current and future funding sources. The 5-year Capital Improvement Program, the budget process used to forecast capital funding needs, will be used to ensure critical steps to implementation are achieved in the short term. Ultimately, funding these projects will require Town Council approval. In some cases, land availability, funding sources, and other influencing factors may elevate a project's priority to take advantage of an opportunity. However, in the long term, the goal is to pursue these projects in their prioritized order.

#### 20-year priorities

1. Community Recreation Center
2. Athletic Fields
3. Active Park Amenities (Restrooms, dugouts, pavilions, parking, etc.)
4. Trails
5. Outdoor Pool Facility
6. Nature Study Center
7. Natural Areas
8. Indoor Pool Facility Expansion
9. Golf Course Expansion
10. Expand and improve programs as new facilities and parks are developed

## Parkland

### Active

#### Athletic Fields

1. Interchange Park (*develop to Community Park*)

The Interchange Park Master Plan was completed in 2006. This vision for this park is primarily active areas including several organized sports fields, warm-up/practice areas, lighting and playgrounds. Trails and a rain garden area provide some buffer to the neighborhoods and Rte. 460. The park is planned to be funded through a public/private development arrangement where the sale approximately 6 acres of the property for a commercial use will fund the construction and development costs of the park amenities. The total project cost is estimated at \$4 million exclusive of the commercial development.



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DATE	REV #	COMMENTS	DATE
DESIGNED : 06 APR 06 DRAWN : TML, BBB CHECKED : JPL, BBB DATE : 04/06			

**INTERCHANGE PARK**  
BLACKSBURG, VA

**MASTER PLAN**

DOCUMENT NO.  
**24855-00**  
1 SHEET  
OF 1

2. Northside Park (*Develop to Neighborhood Park*)

Northside Park is approximately 16-acres of land owned by the Town within the Northside Park subdivision. This park land is currently land locked. Development of this park is envisioned to be completed in concert with future subdivision development of the Given's property. There is currently no public access to the property.

Primary needs:

- Athletic Fields
- Active Park Amenities (ex. Playground equipment, shelters, benches, hard surface courts, restrooms)
- Neighborhood connections through trails and parking area

Key steps to develop park:

- a. Complete a master plan for park
- b. Develop construction plans and costs estimates
- c. Negotiate development agreement with property owner/developer
- d. Allocate funding to project

3. Kipps – Winfrey Fields (*Neighborhood Park expanded to Community Park*)

Winfrey Fields is approximately 11-acres of active sports fields located adjacent to Kipps Elementary School and the Blacksburg Middle School. This education and recreation campus is a key opportunity for the Town and County and broader community partnerships to work collaboratively to create an outstanding community destination. The current construction and development of the new high school stadium and a future Blacksburg High School further the opportunity of this area being critical to the long-term vision of the Parks and Recreation Services.

Key steps to park development

- a. Collaboratively develop a vision and master plan for education and recreation campus with Montgomery County and other community organizations
  - a. Joint use and maintenance agreements
  - b. School athletic fields and facilities
  - c. Active recreation and athletic fields
  - d. Community programming space
  - e. Open space
  - f. Trails
- b. Identify joint funding sources for County, Schools, and Town

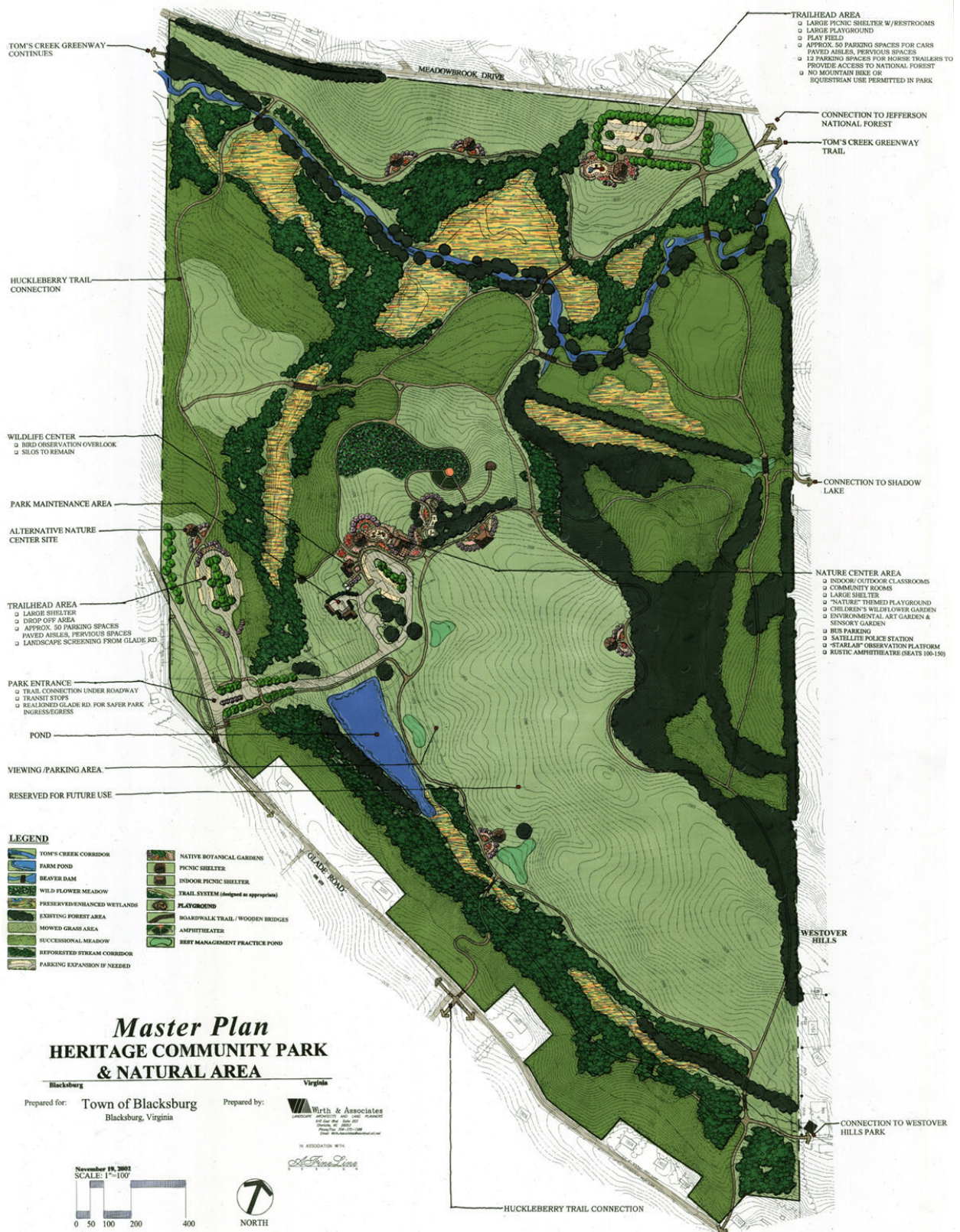


## Passive

1. Heritage Community Park and Natural Area (*develop to District Park*)

### *Master Plan*

In 1999, the town purchased 169 acres of land on Glade Road known as the Brown Farm. The purchase was intended for use a new district park that would serve current and future residents' recreational needs. The master plan was developed using significant input from the public, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Town staff, and Town Council. The process resulted in a final master plan for what is now called Heritage Community Park and Natural Area. This park includes major features such as 140 acres of natural areas for nature-related activities and access, a Nature Study Center, a lake, extensive trails, and approximately 30 acres of future use space. See the graphic below for details.



## 2. Nature Study Center

The vision of the Nature Study Center goes beyond a discrete structure within the landscape of Heritage Park. The Nature Study Center will serve as a vehicle that restores the environment while exemplifying the principles of sustainable development. The Center's conceptual design promotes preservation of the landscape through placement, scale of the building, and a harmonious merger into the existing landscape through minimal grading and vegetation removal. The Center concept will make use of ecologically positive strategies and technologies that demonstrate to the public how to support the natural flora, fauna and auxiliary systems; all in adherence to the LEED® Rating System. See a typical layout of the Center below. The next figure shows a typical layout of the Nature Center itself. The scope of a final design will need a community needs assessment. Additionally, there needs to be a balance to reflect the community's desire to have a smaller development impact on Heritage Park and increased financial investment in active recreation fields elsewhere in town.



# Blacksburg Nature Study Center

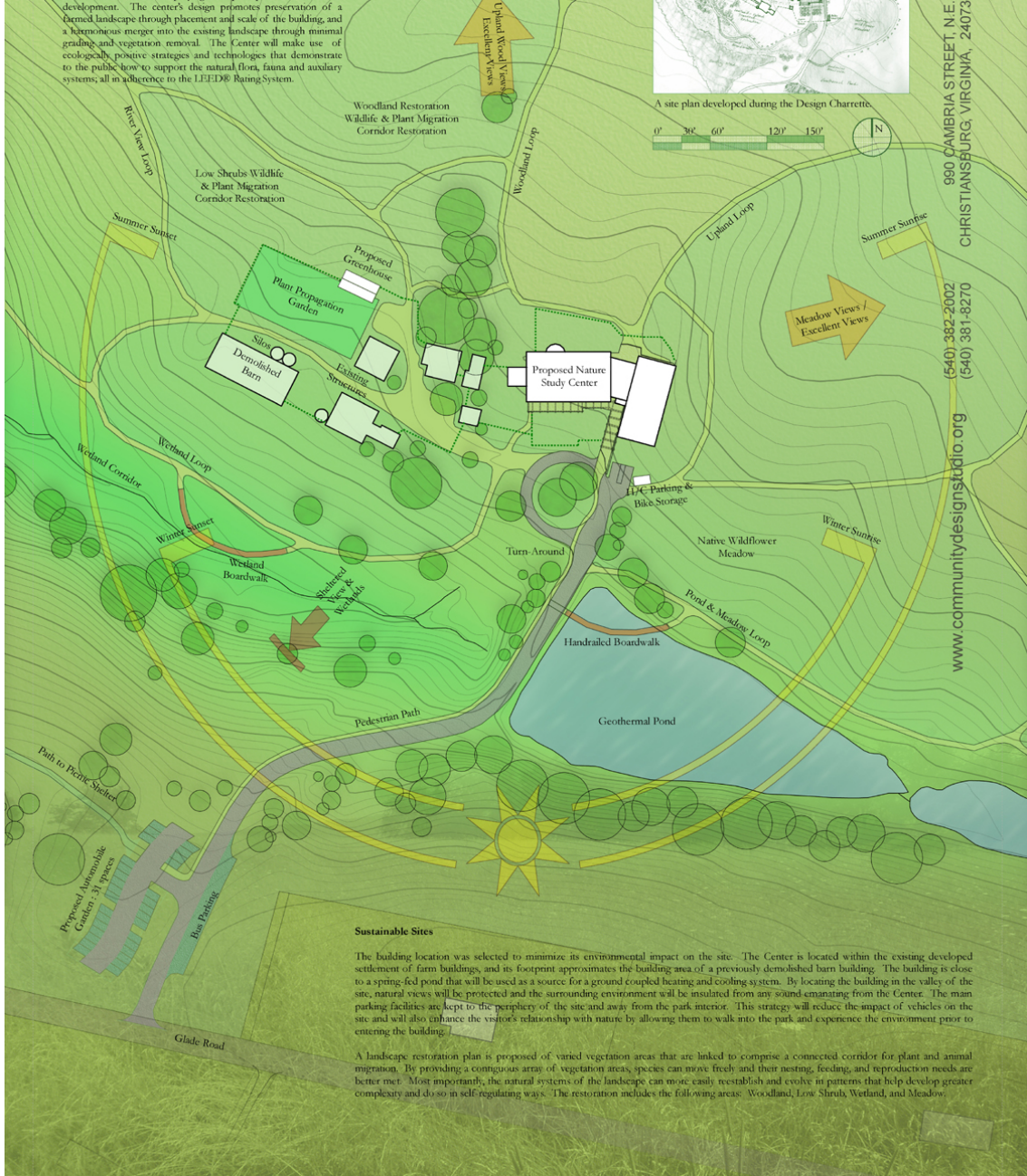
Blacksburg, Virginia ... a building as metaphor for Ecology ...

COMMUNITY DESIGN STUDIO

Our vision goes beyond a discrete structure within the landscape. The Nature Study Center will serve as a vehicle that restores the environment while exemplifying the principles of sustainable development. The center's design promotes preservation of a damaged landscape through placement and scale of the building, and a harmonious merger into the existing landscape through minimal grading and vegetation removal. The Center will make use of ecologically positive strategies and technologies that demonstrate to the public how to support the natural flora, fauna and auxiliary systems, all in adherence to the LEED® Rating System.



A site plan developed during the Design Charrette.



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### Sustainable Sites

The building location was selected to minimize its environmental impact on the site. The Center is located within the existing developed settlement of farm buildings, and its footprint approximates the building area of a previously demolished barn building. The building is close to a spring-fed pond that will be used as a source for a ground coupled heating and cooling system. By locating the building in the valley of the site, natural views will be protected and the surrounding environment will be insulated from any sound emanating from the Center. The main parking facilities are kept to the periphery of the site and away from the park interior. This strategy will reduce the impact of vehicles on the site and will also enhance the visitor's relationship with nature by allowing them to walk into the park and experience the environment prior to entering the building.

A landscape restoration plan is proposed of varied vegetation areas that are linked to comprise a connected corridor for plant and animal migration. By providing a contiguous array of vegetation areas, species can move freely and their nesting, feeding, and reproduction needs are better met. Most importantly, the natural systems of the landscape can more easily reestablish and evolve in patterns that help develop greater complexity and do so in self-regulating ways. The restoration includes the following areas: Woodland, Low Shrubs Wetland, and Meadow.

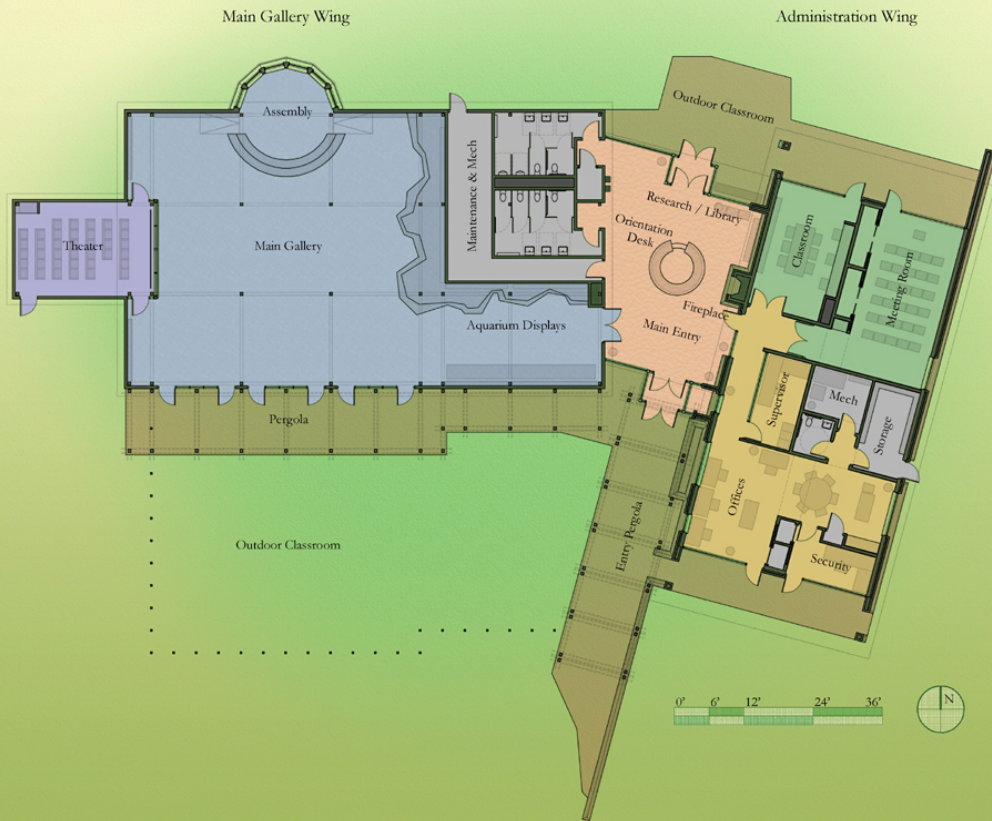


# Blacksburg Nature Study Center

Blacksburg, Virginia ... a building as metaphor for Ecology ...

COMMUNITY  
DESIGN

STUDIO



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### Building Envelope Modeling

The building plan comprises two main programmatic components: the main gallery space and the administration wing. In order to optimize energy performance and make use of passive solar heating and cooling, the gallery space is elongated on an east-west axis. This configuration allows maximum exposure for the south facing photovoltaic roof panels and makes the greatest use of passive solar heating and cooling. The administration wing follows the natural topography of the site thereby minimizing adverse solar exposure on the east and west sides of the building while maximizing glazing opportunities on the north and south facing ends. The design of an open floor plan arrangement optimizes the passive solar system operation and the addition of the south facing pergola prevents the summer sun from directly entering the interior.

### 3. Trails

The Pathways to the Future master plan sets forth an ambitious comprehensive trail system throughout Town and establishes connections into the unincorporated areas of the county and the Jefferson National Forest. This plan includes 105 miles of trails. To date, 21 miles of trails have been built and 84 miles of trail remain. Priority trail extensions are:

- Huckleberry Trail Extension
- Ellett Valley Loop Trail
- Cedar Run Greenway Trail
- Central Blacksburg Greenway

In today's dollars, one mile of flat unobstructed trail construction costs \$65,000 per mile. This creates a total build out cost of \$5,460,000 in today's dollars.

*(This is an estimated by town staff including typical costs of a private construction firm completing all related work to construct 1-mile, 10-foot wide asphalt trail on a flat surface. This does not represent topography changes, forest clearing, or water crossings. This also does not include any design fees associated with construction plans.)*

See the descriptions of these trails and their graphics below.

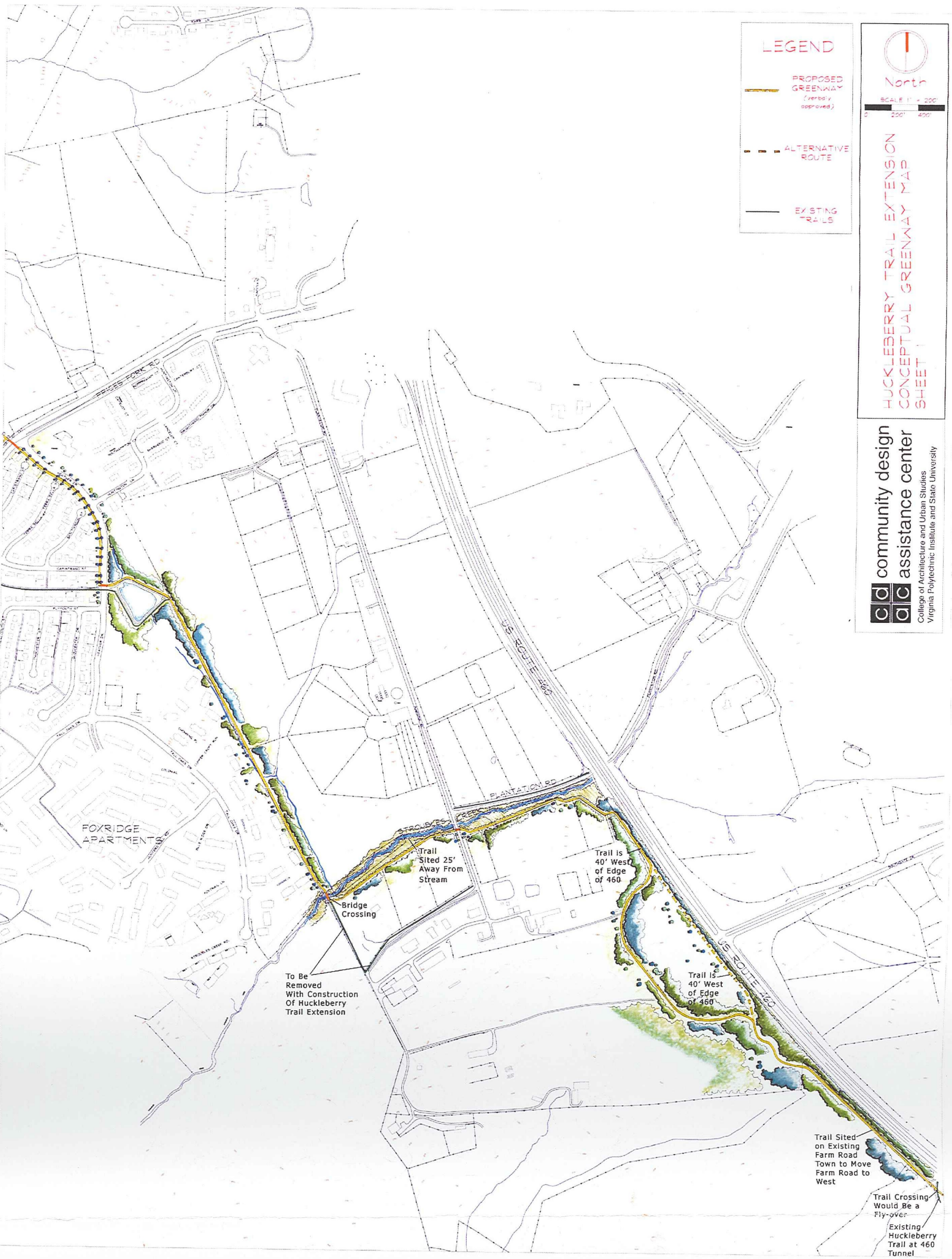
#### Master Plans for Priority Trails:

##### ***Huckleberry Trail Extension***

The Huckleberry Trail extension aims to connect a major population center within the Town of Blacksburg to the existing Huckleberry trail. It also seeks to provide off-road, town-owned trail access to two of Blacksburg's newest parks, and a connection to over 40-miles of National Forest trails.

An environmental objective in the greenway's development is the preservation and restoration of Strouble's Creek and the riparian corridor surrounding it. A segment of the greenway follows Strouble's Creek, affording an opportunity for the greenway to secure natural buffers around streams and to ensure that farm animals do not enter it. The trail extension showcases the agricultural heritage of the university, guiding trail users through a specific and defined corridor that gives them visual access to some of the university's farm operations and significant areas of open space with views of the Blacksburg landscape.





**LEGEND**

- PROPOSED GREENWAY (verbally approved)
- ALTERNATIVE ROUTE
- EXISTING TRAILS

North

SCALE 1" = 200'

0 200' 400'

HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL EXTENSION  
CONCEPTUAL GREENWAY MAP  
SHEET 1

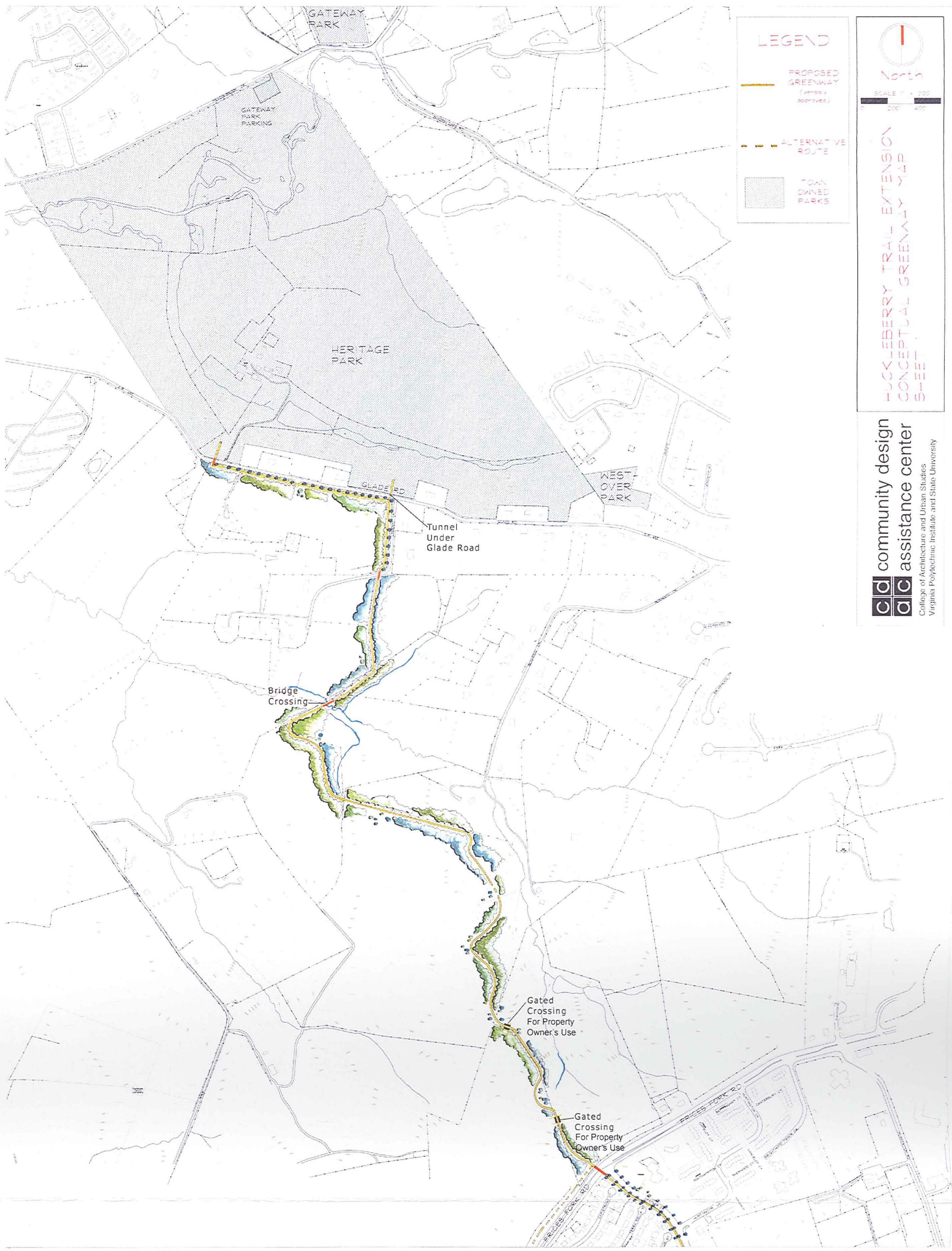
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College of Architecture and Urban Studies  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Huckleberry Trail Extension



CDAC





**LEGEND**

- PROPOSED GREENWAY (pending approval)
- - - ALTERNATIVE ROUTE
- TOWN OWNED PARKS

North

SCALE 1" = 200'

0 200 400

**HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL EXTENSION  
CONCEPTUAL GREENWAY MAP  
SHEET 1**

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College of Architecture and Urban Studies  
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Huckleberry Trail Extension



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