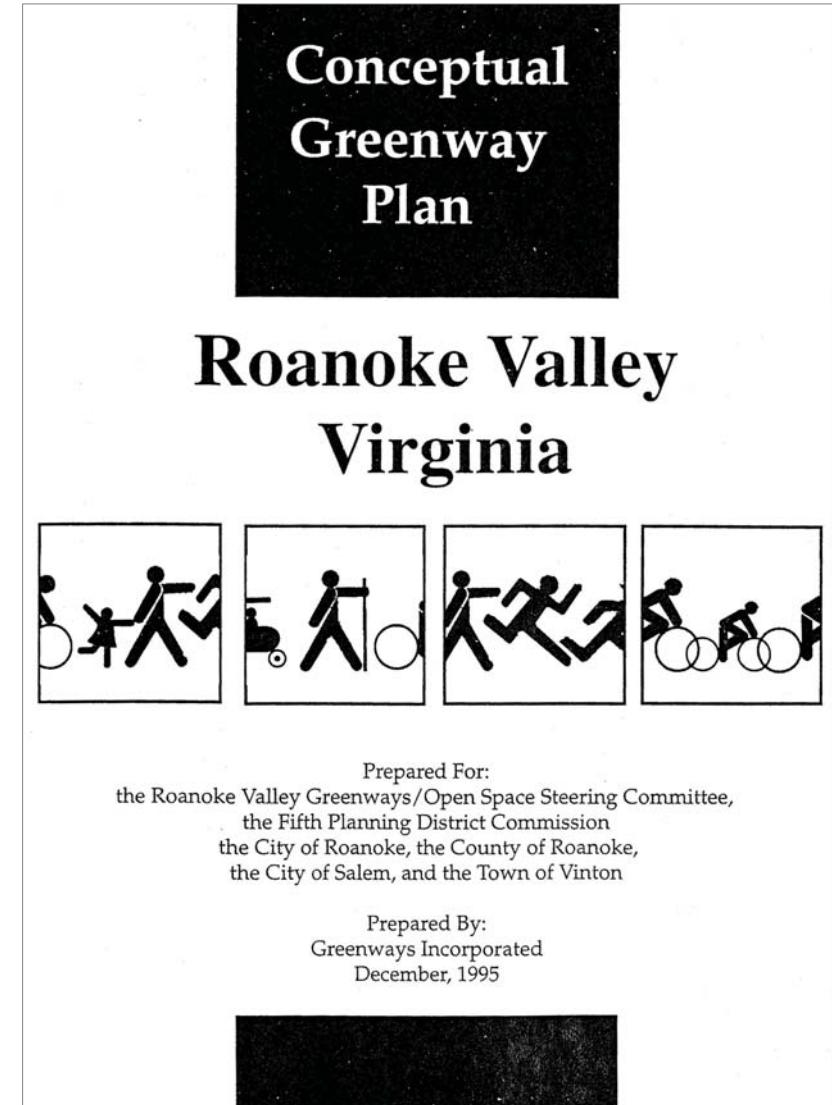


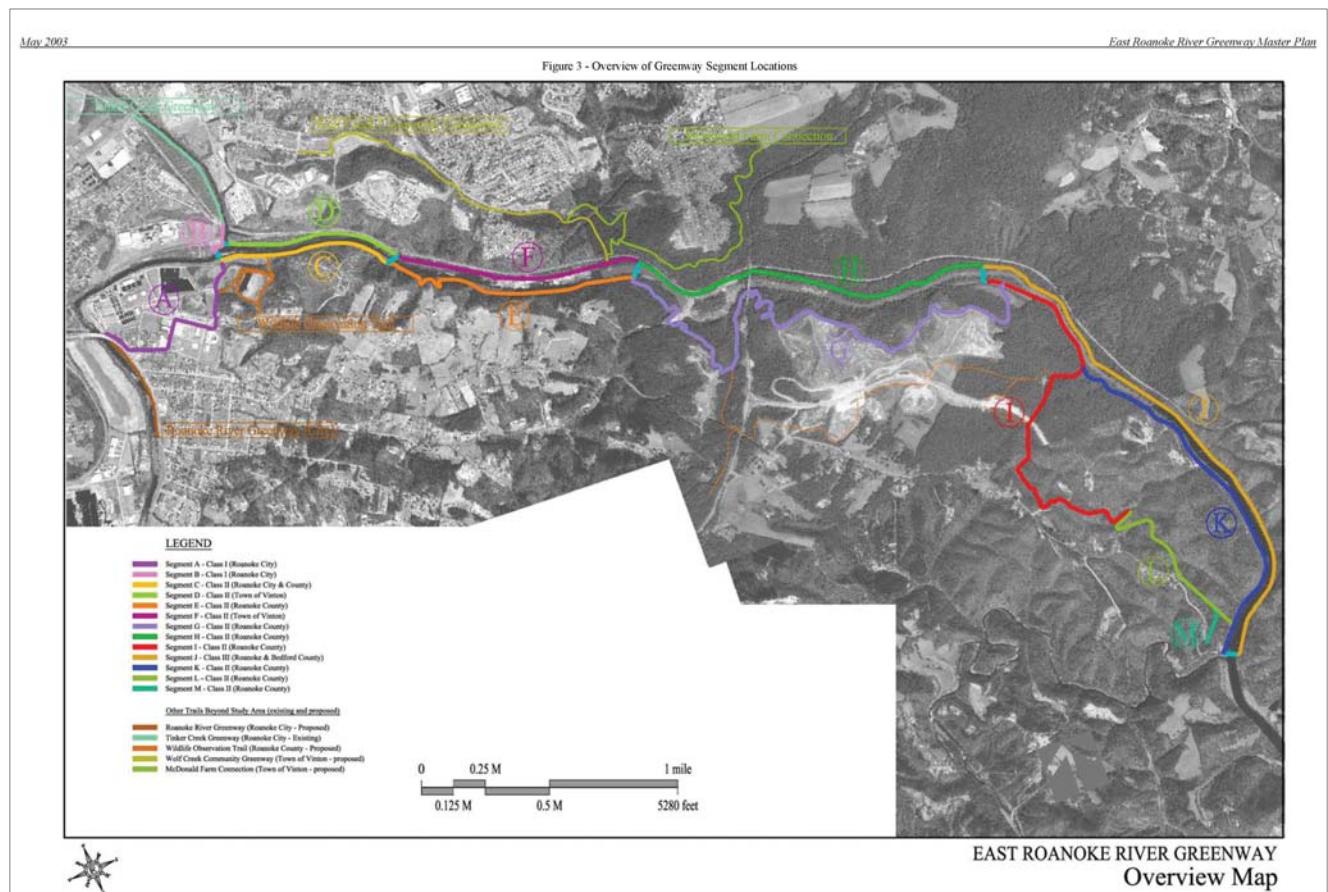
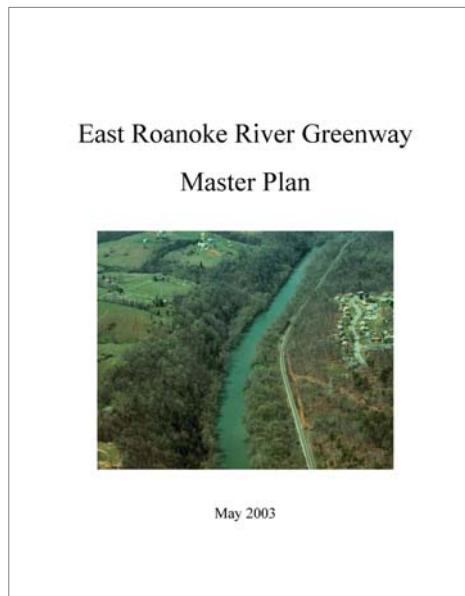
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**1995:** The Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan was completed which identifies the Roanoke River Greenway.



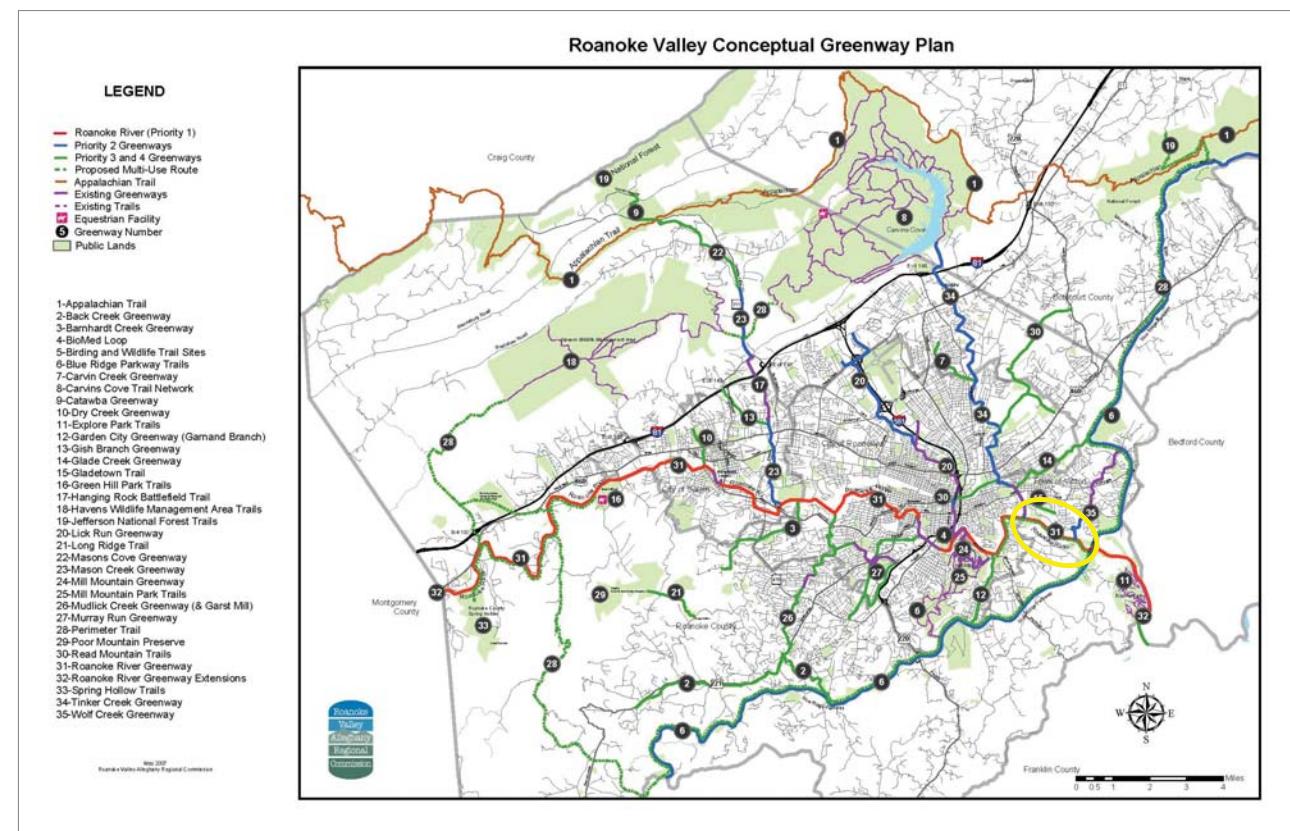
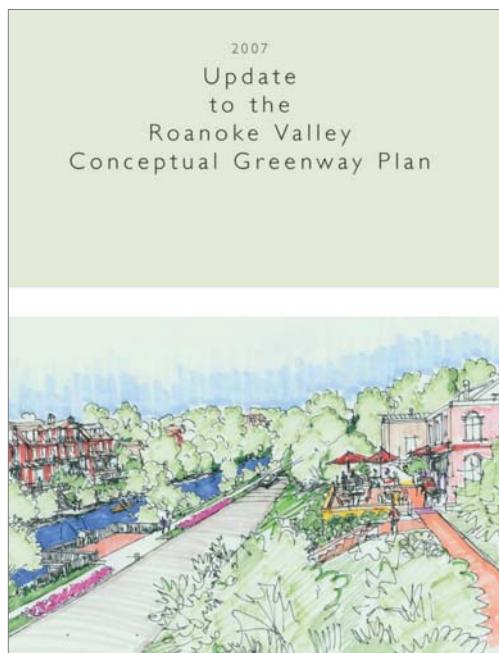
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

2003: The East Roanoke River Greenway Master Plan was completed which included potential greenway segments between Bennington Street and Rutrough Point on both sides of the river.



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**2007:** The Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan was adopted by the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission and member localities, including Roanoke County. The Roanoke River Greenway is the top priority.



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

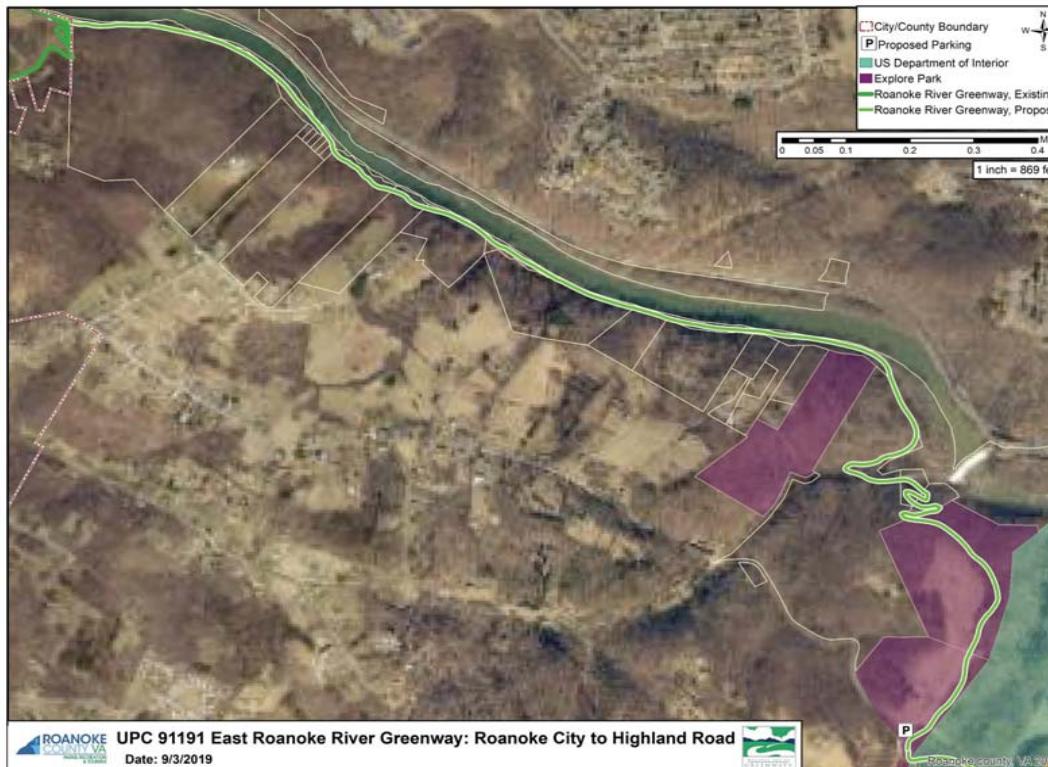
**2008-2014:** Roanoke County applied for and received several grants to fund the Roanoke River Greenway between the City of Roanoke and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**2012-2018:** Roanoke County hired Anderson and Associates of Virginia, Inc. (Now Hurt and Proffitt, Inc.) to design and engineer the greenway, and to perform environmental investigations. The County held meetings with the property owners along the Roanoke River as the greenway developed.

**2013:** Roanoke County partnered with the City of Roanoke, City of Salem and the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission to request additional grant funding to complete several sections of the Roanoke River Greenway, including the section between the City of Roanoke and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Funding was awarded.

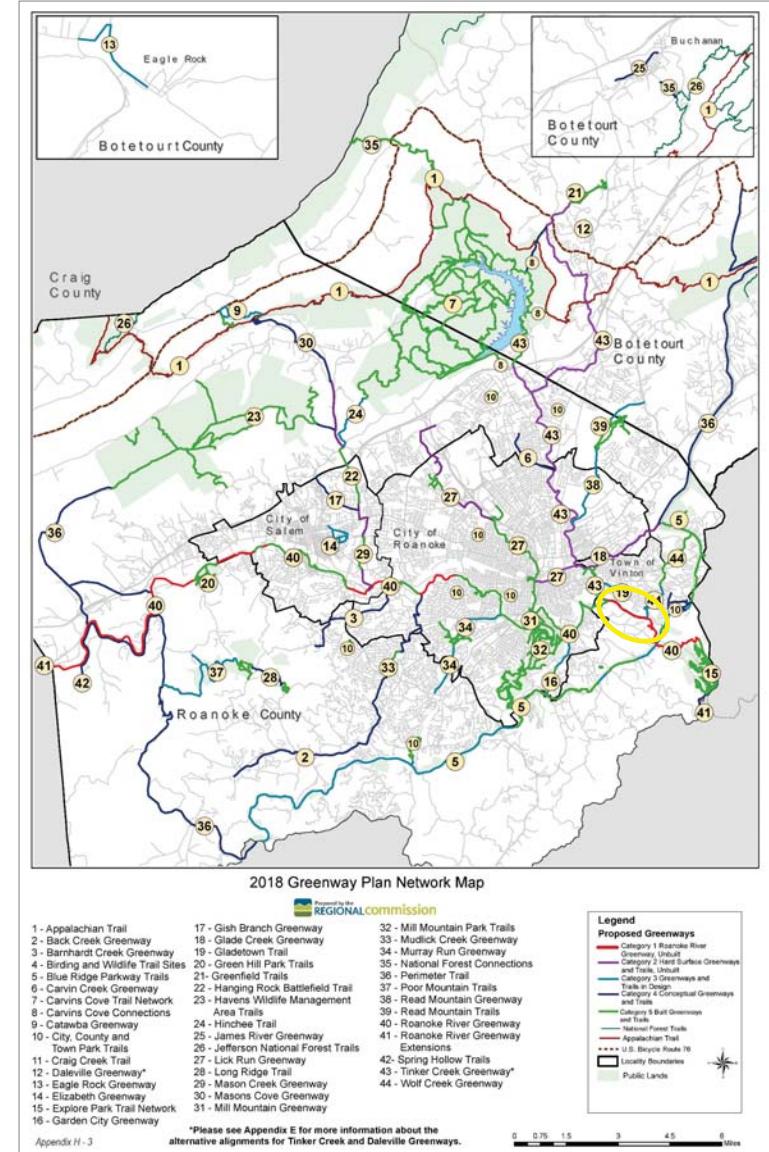
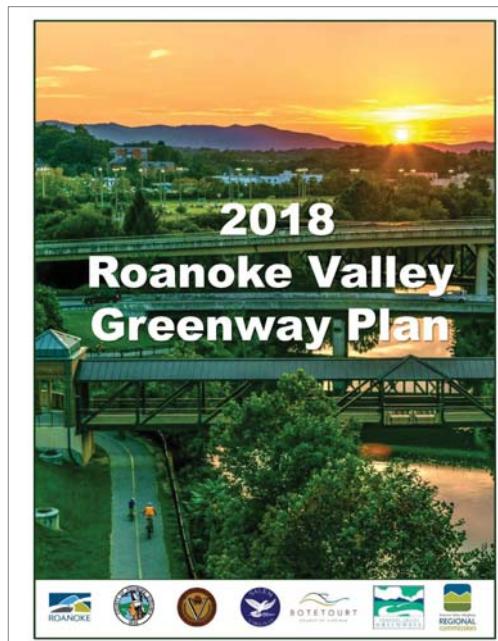
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**2018-2021:** Greenway design and environmental coordination was completed. The County hired a right-of-way consultant (3B Consulting Services LLC) to negotiate easements with property owners. Easements from five property owners on ten parcels were obtained along the corridor.



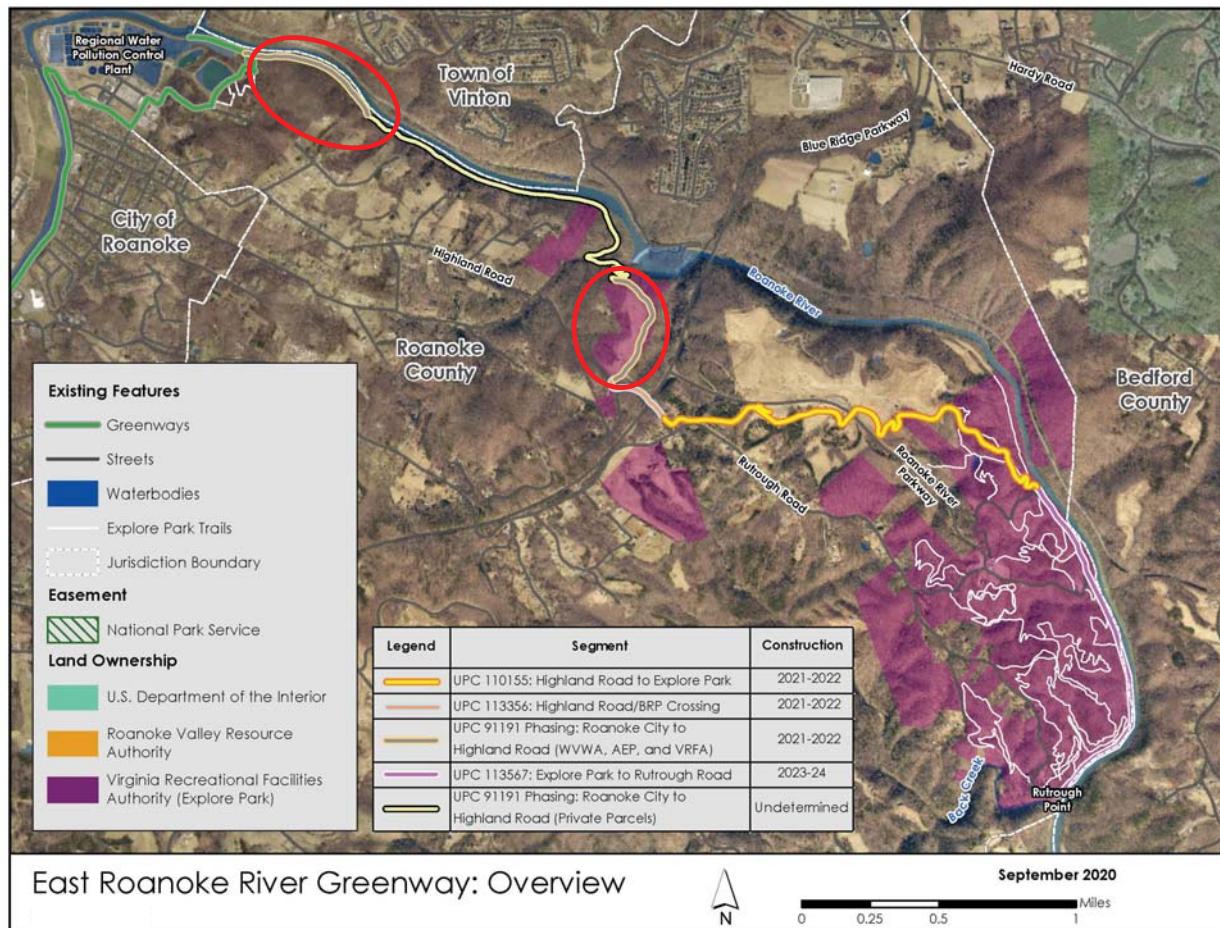
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

2018: The Roanoke Valley Greenway Plan was adopted by the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission and member localities, including Roanoke County. The Roanoke River Greenway is identified in Category 1.



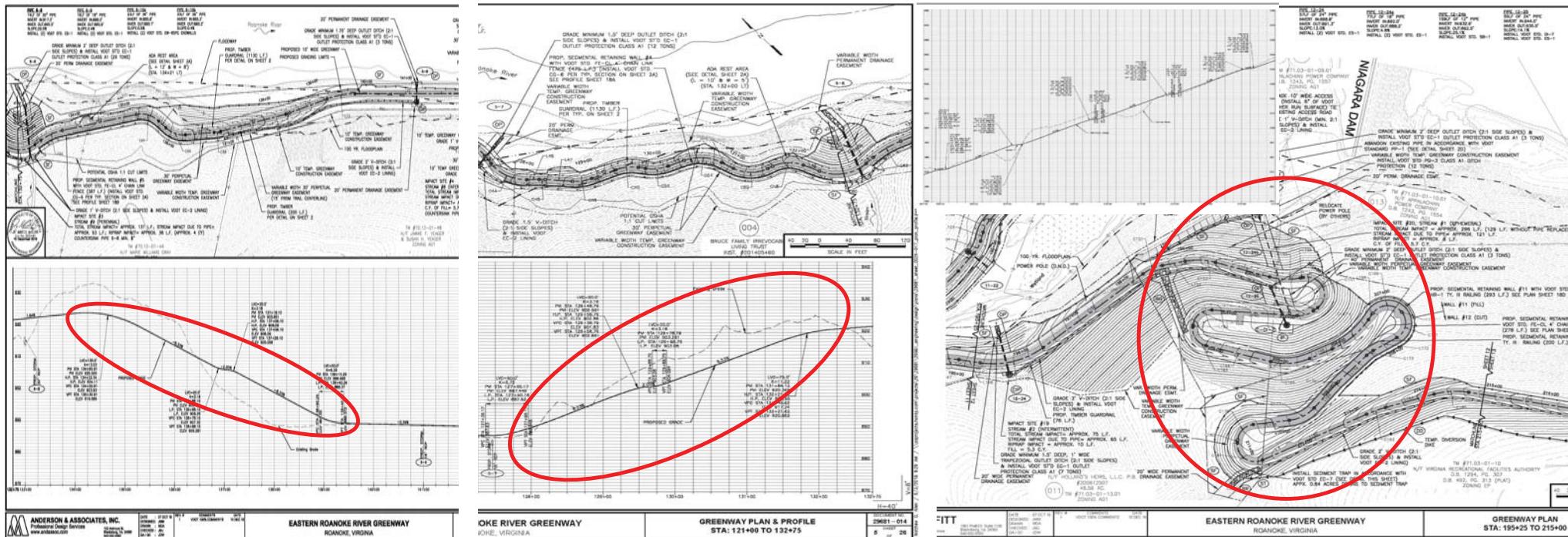
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

2020: Roanoke County phased the project to focus on both ends where contiguous right-of-way had been obtained.



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

2021: Regulations changed to require the greenway to have no steeper than five percent grade, or slope, to provide a better experience for users with disabilities. Because sections of the greenway had been designed to 8.33 percent grade, it must be redesigned.



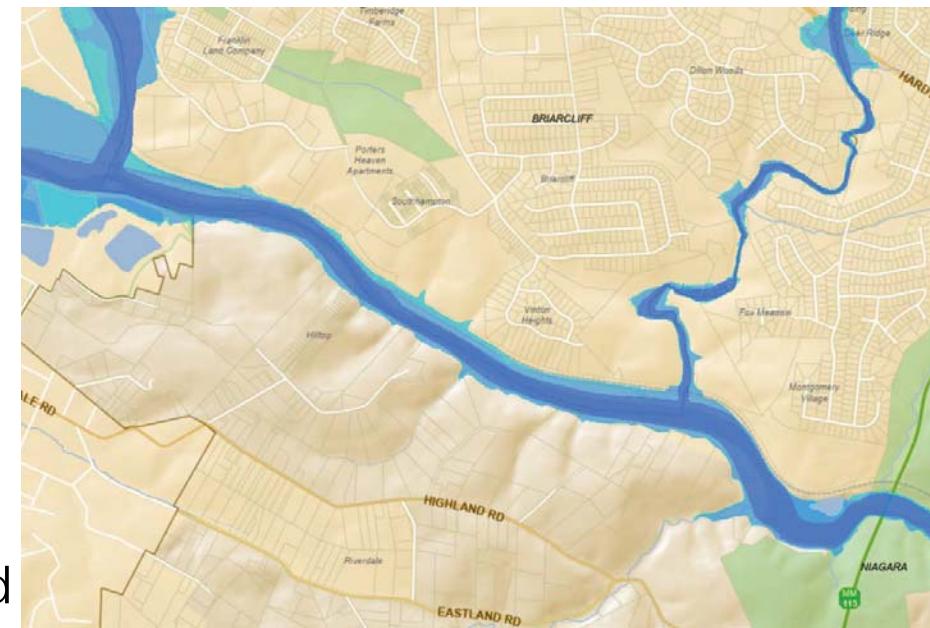
This exhibit shows about one half mile of greenway designed at 8.33 percent grade, which would be challenging for any user.

# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap Challenges

Roanoke County designed the original greenway concept between 2012 and 2018 to minimize impacts to property owners. As a result, the greenway was designed close to the Roanoke River in the 100-year floodplain. Based upon recent Roanoke River flows and historical storm data, half of the original greenway concept would likely flood once to several times a year for one to two days. More severe storms would flood the greenway for additional days. Greenway cleanup efforts would likely take one week or more for each storm.

In comparison, the Wiley Drive low water bridge located between Wasena and River's Edge Park, which is about 3 feet above the typical river water level, is closed due to flooding and the related debris removal a total of 15 to 25 days every year. Because of this, the City pursued and obtained funding to replace the bridge in the near future.

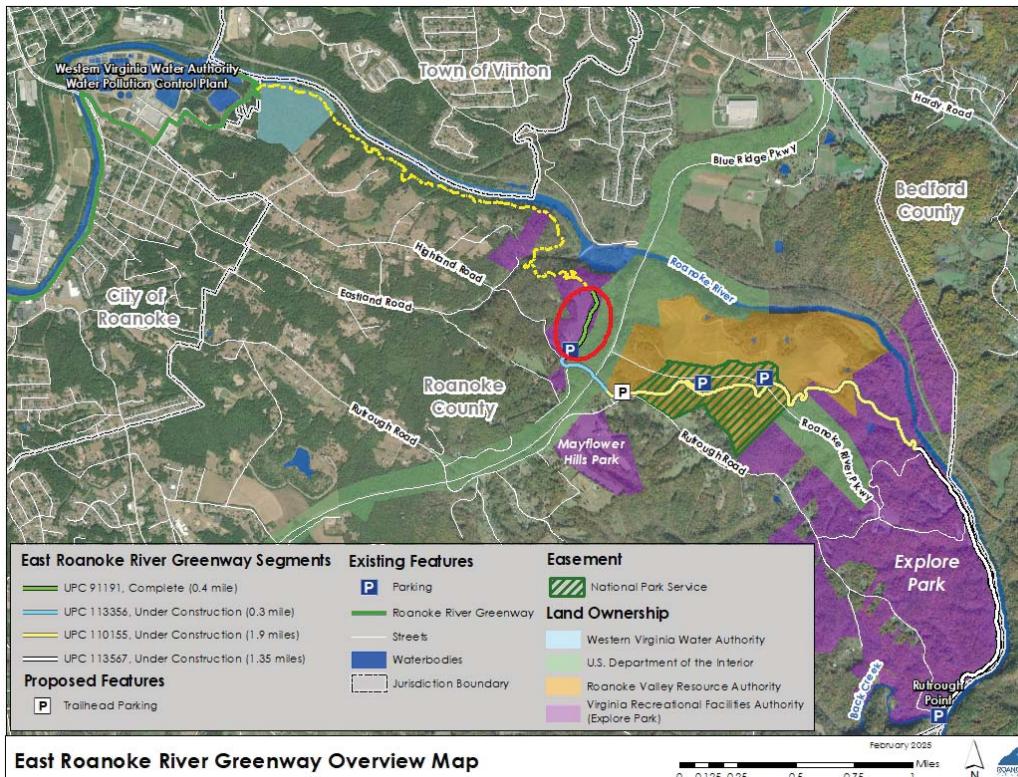
Many of the greenway concepts proposed in 2025 are located well above the 100-year floodplain and are unlikely to flood.



Floodway, 100-Year Floodplain and 500-Year Floodplain along the Roanoke River between Tinker Creek and the Blue Ridge Parkway

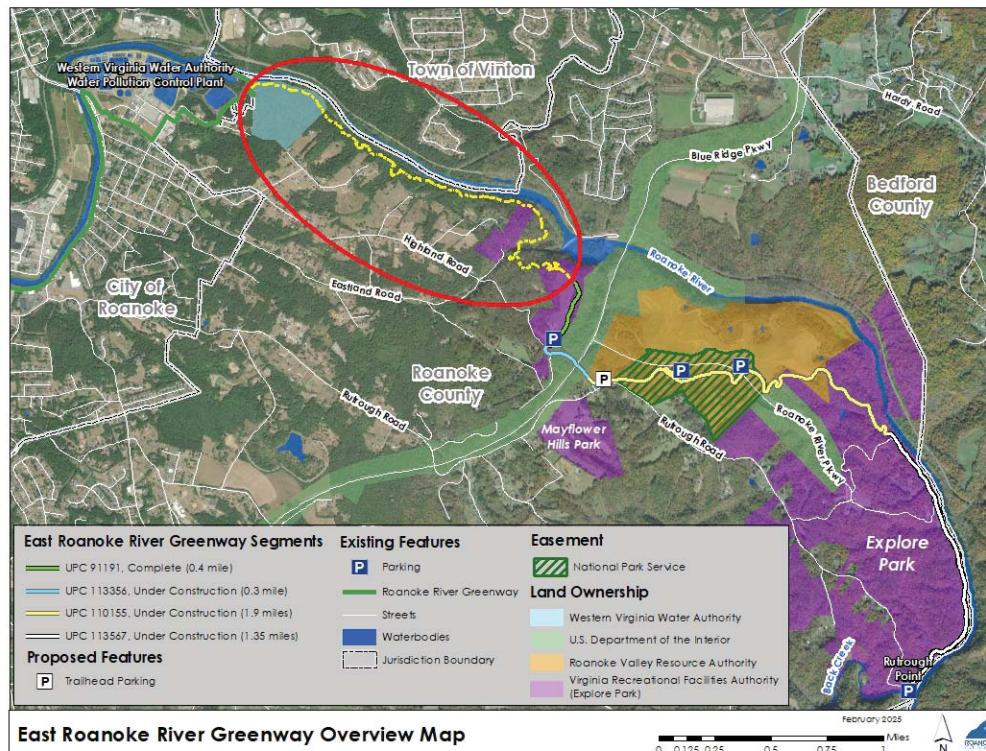
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

2022: Roanoke County and VDOT determined that the eastern section (VDOT UPC 91191) of the greenway on the Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority property could move forward to construction as designed. This greenway segment was completed in 2023.



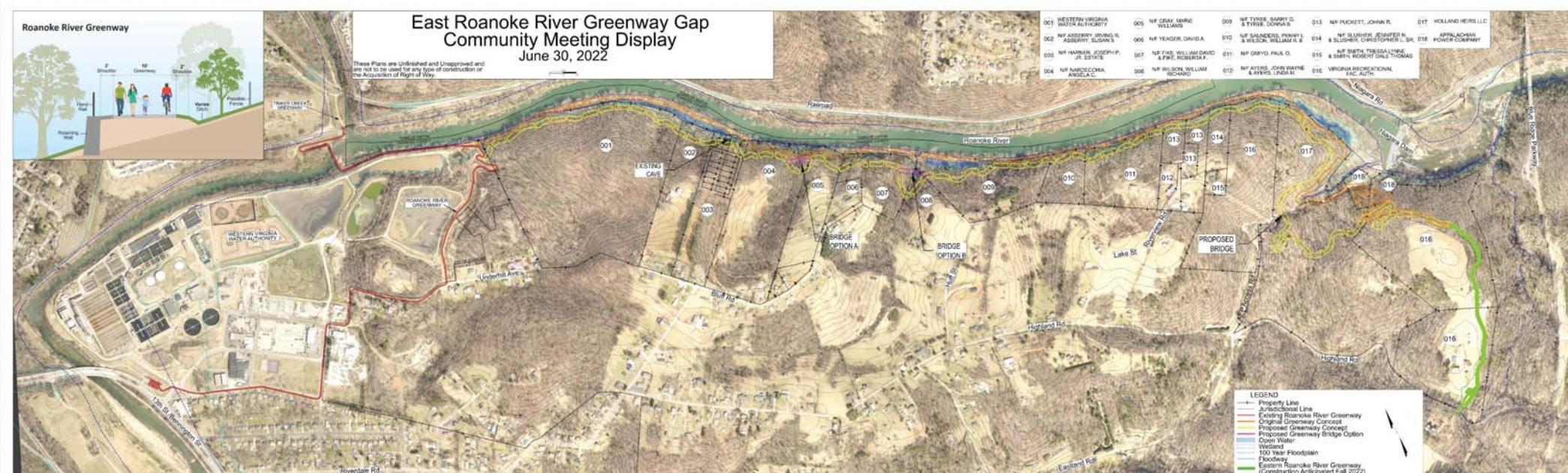
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**2022:** Roanoke County and VDOT collaborated on the remainder of this greenway segment between the Water Pollution Control Plant and the Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority greenway segment with a new alignment located farther up the slope to meet the new slope/grade requirements and to reduce the chance of flooding. A community meeting was held on June 30, 2022, at the Explore Park Visitor Center.



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

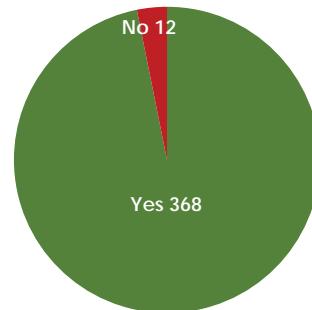
**June 30, 2022:** A total of 67 people attended a community meeting to review the potential VDOT greenway alignment (shown in yellow below) between the Water Pollution Control Plant and the Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority property where the new greenway segment was planned. The orange route along the river is Roanoke County's 2018 alignment. A total of 381 surveys were completed to provide feedback on the yellow VDOT alignment.



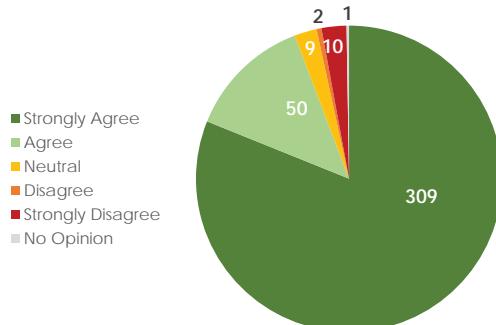
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

## June/July 2022 Survey Results:

- 381 total responses
- Do you use any of the greenways in the Roanoke Valley? (380 responses)



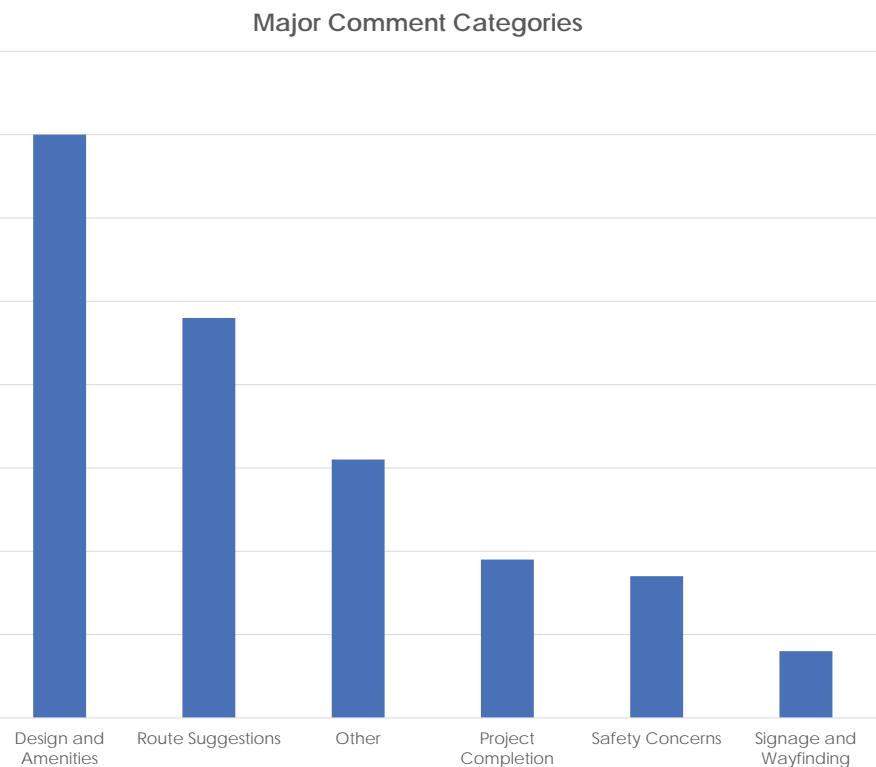
- What is your opinion about the Proposed Greenway Concept [VDOT yellow alignment]? (381 responses)



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

## June/July 2022 Survey Results, continued:

- How could the Proposed Greenway Concept [VDOT yellow alignment] be changed to improve it?



### Overview of Design and Amenities Comments

- Environmentally conscious design, including wildlife protection, natural setting preservation, and native plant promotion
- Applauded plans to reduce trail flooding issues
- Improve user amenity availability (including Parking, Benches, Overlooks, Water Fountains and Bathrooms)

### Overview of Route Suggestions Comments

- Grade requirements and accessibility
- Niagara Dam and the North side of the river as alternative routes
- Suggestions of additional routes for future improvements
- Trail connections to Explore Park, Blue Ridge Parkway, and other locations

### Other Comments

- Of the 31 comments classified as Other, 26 were General Comments, and five were unique from others, made by respondents to the survey.

### Overview of Project Completion Comments

- Requests for Project Efficiency and Swift Completion

### Overview of Safety Concerns Comments

- Bike Speeds and Pedestrian Safety on shared paths
- Exacerbated Trespassing Concerns

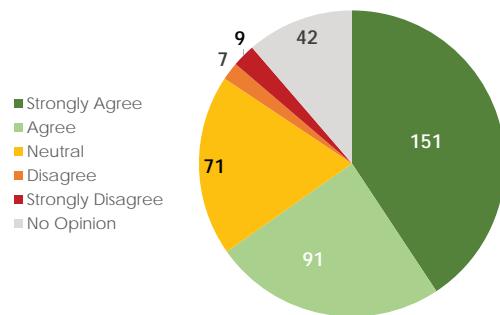
### Overview of Signage and Wayfinding Comments

- Promotion for points of interest
- Wayfinding is needed to improve connectivity to other areas of the county and cities.

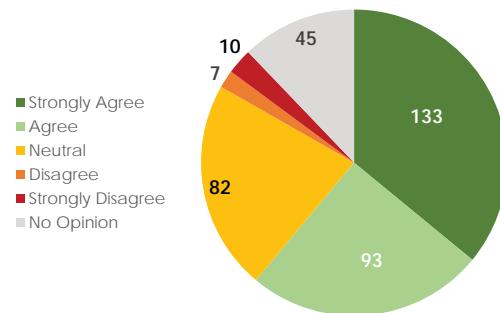
# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

## June/July 2022 Survey Results, continued:

- What is your opinion about the proposed [VDOT yellow alignment] Bridge Option A? (371 responses)



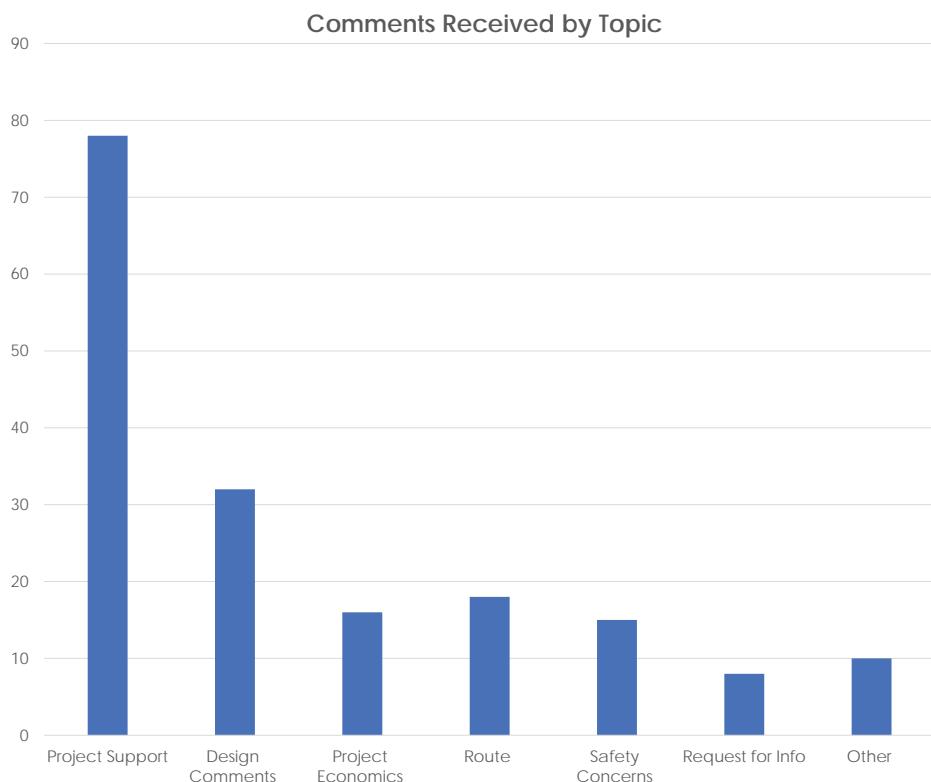
- What is your opinion about the proposed [VDOT yellow alignment] Bridge Option B? (370 responses)



# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

## June/July 2022 Survey Results, continued:

- Please share any other thoughts



### Overview of Project Support Comments

- Applauding plans to reduce trail flooding issues
- Sharing Personal Experience using the Greenway
- Requests for Project Efficiency and Swift Completion
- Support of County Greenway Initiative
- Good wishes for seeing the project funded

### Overview of Design Comments

- Environmentally conscious design, including wildlife protection, natural setting preservation, and native plant promotion
- Support or Concerns for one of the Design Concepts presented, minimizing impact to nearby property owners, addressing accessibility, and cyclist safety
- Improve user amenity availability (including Parking, Benches, Overlooks, Water Fountains and Bathrooms)

### Overview of Project Economics Comments

- Curiosity about the costs associated with the construction of presented project options
- Praise of the greenway project for promoting tourism and regional attractions for workers and businesses

### Overview of Route Comments

- Grade requirements and accessibility
- Suggestions of additional routes for future improvements
- Trail connections to Explore Park, Blue Ridge Parkway, and other locations

### Overview of Safety Concerns Comments

- Bike Speeds and Pedestrian Safety on shared paths
- Exacerbated Trespassing Concerns
- Bike safety navigating switchbacks

### Overview of Request for Info Comments

- Technical Difficulties finding materials
- Requests for more info on specific elements of the project, such as construction costs, environmental impacts, estimated user numbers

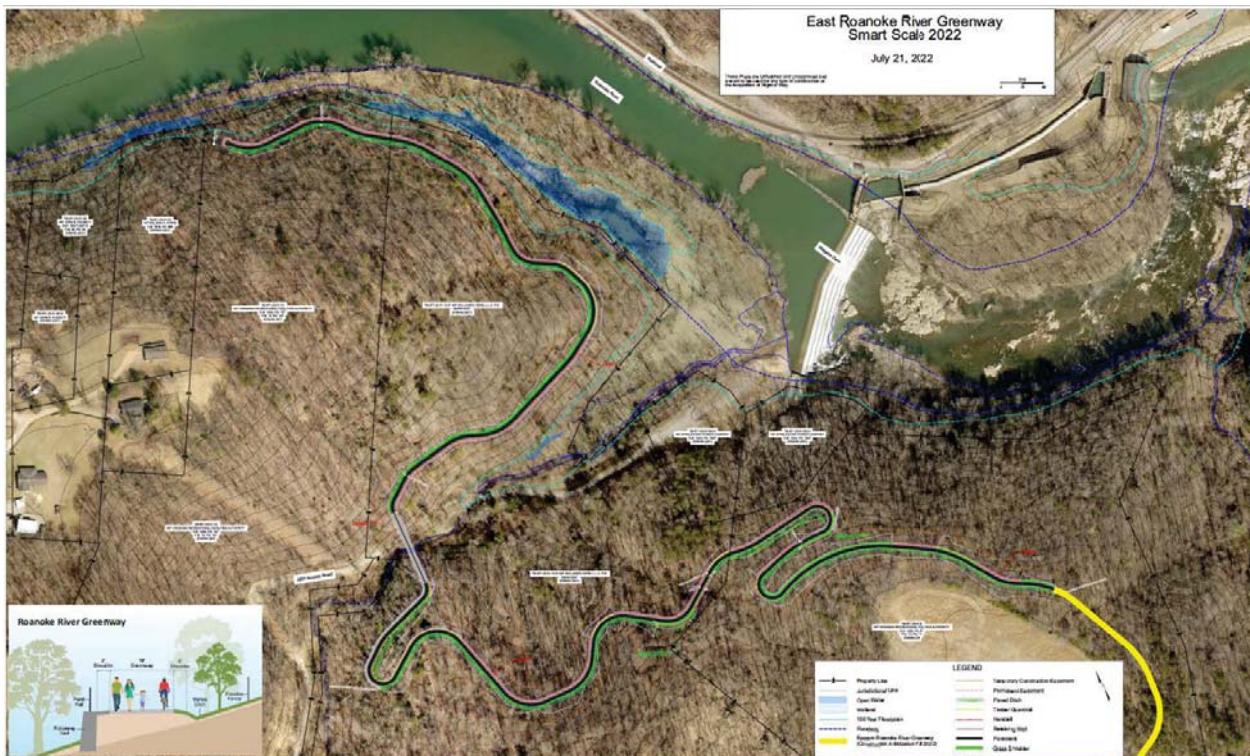
### Overview of Other Comments

Of the 10 comments classified as Other, these expressed specific comments that did not fit into the other categories, such as:

- Comments regarding trail maintenance of existing County Greenway
- Importance of equity access to greenways and other public spaces

# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**August 2022:** Roanoke County and VDOT identified a reduced project scope crossing Virginia Recreational Facilities Authority property and one unoccupied private parcel that was submitted as a SMART SCALE grant application. With an estimate of \$29 million for a 0.9-mile-long greenway segment, the project did not score well enough to be recommended for funding.

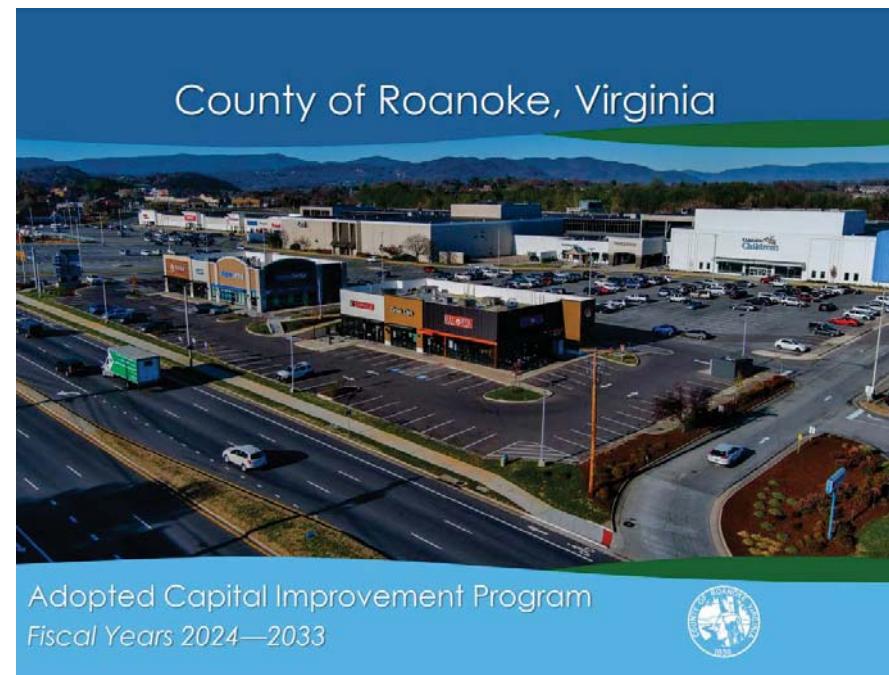


# East Roanoke River Greenway Gap History

**October 2022:** County staff submitted a Capital Improvement Program request for County funding for an East Roanoke River Greenway Feasibility Study to consider alternate greenway alignments proposed by the community in June and July 2022.

**May 2023:** Funding for the Feasibility Study was included in the Adopted Fiscal Year 2024 through Fiscal Year 2033 Capital Improvement Program.

**October 2024:** Roanoke County contracted with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to initiate the East Roanoke River Greenway Feasibility Study.

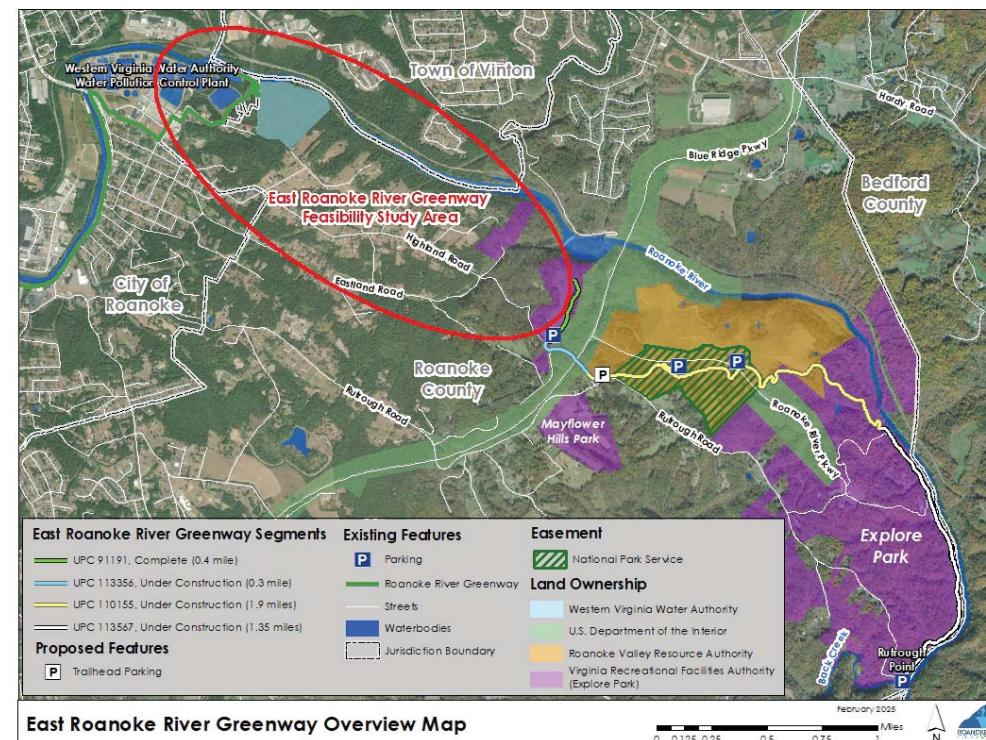


# East Roanoke River Greenway Feasibility Study

**Study Goal:** Using community feedback from June and July 2022, engage the community to determine a preferred greenway alignment that can be engineered with future grant funding.

**January 2025:** County and AECOM staff met with several stakeholders to review and discuss potential conceptual greenway routes including:

- Town of Vinton
- City of Roanoke
- AEP | Appalachian Power
- Western Virginia Water Authority
- Virginia Department of Transportation



# East Roanoke River Greenway Feasibility Study

## June/July 2022 Survey Results Used as the Study Foundation

Survey respondents proposed several alternatives to the orange and yellow routes, including:

1. Remove the Niagara Dam and construct the greenway closer to the river – *AEP / Appalachian Power's response: "Appalachian Power's Niagara Dam has provided customers with cost-effective, clean energy for decades. As we are currently engaged in relicensing for Niagara Dam through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, we expect one of the staples of Roanoke County and the community it serves to continue providing safe and reliable power for many years."*
2. Construct the greenway on the north side of the river – *two routes are proposed*
3. Construct the greenway closer to the river – *an in-river route is proposed*
4. Construct the greenway at a higher elevation for improved accessibility – *several routes are proposed at higher elevations than the yellow route*
5. Widen Rutrough Road and locate the greenway alongside it – *routes are proposed adjacent to portions of several roads including Rutrough, Eastland and Highland*
6. Provide access to the water/river – *river access may be possible depending upon the route chosen*
7. Provide access to the Blue Ridge Parkway – *access to a Roanoke River Parkway overlook is part of the new Roanoke River Greenway segments to the east of the Blue Ridge Parkway*
8. Construct the greenway with steep slopes – *this cannot be accomplished using state or federal grant funding*

# Next Steps

- **By February 28, 2025:** Please review the map, complete and return the survey:
  - Leave the completed survey with County staff;
  - Mail the completed survey to the address on the back; or
  - Complete the survey online at [www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap](http://www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap).
- **June/July 2025:** A second round of community meetings will be held to review and comment on potential routes chosen for further study.
- **September 2025:** Roanoke County anticipates submitting a grant application to request funding for preliminary engineering activities for the preferred greenway alignment.
- **June 2026:** If grant funding is awarded, the Commonwealth Transportation Board will include it in the adopted FY 2027 Six Year Improvement Program.



**East Roanoke River Greenway Gap Survey**  
February 2025

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please review the "East Roanoke River Greenway Gap" map when answering these questions. Please visit [www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap](http://www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap) to view the map and to complete the survey online if you so choose.

Using community feedback from a June 2022 Community Meeting that asked for comments on a potential Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) alignment for the East Roanoke River Greenway Gap, Roanoke County has begun an East Roanoke River Greenway Gap Feasibility Study. The goal of this study is to determine a potential alignment for the last remaining section of the East Roanoke River Greenway between the City of Roanoke and new greenway in Roanoke County near the Blue Ridge Parkway. There is no funding for greenway design, right-of-way acquisition or construction at this time.

Please provide your thoughts on the Potential Alignment Alternatives shown on the map, which are ideas based on the June 2022 feedback. The results of this survey will help County staff and stakeholders determine which routes to continue to study and evaluate. A second round of community meetings will be held this summer for you to review and comment on those remaining routes.

Please complete and return the survey by **February 28, 2025** through one of three ways:

1. Bring the survey to either community meeting;
2. Complete the survey online by visiting [www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap](http://www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov/ERRGGap) and clicking on the survey button; or
3. Fold this survey to show the Roanoke County Department of Planning address, tape, add a stamp and mail.

# East Roanoke River Greenway Construction

## Segments Nearing Completion:

Light blue (UPC 113356) and yellow (UPC 110155) segments are located south of the Roanoke River, run parallel to Highland Road, cross underneath the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Roanoke River Parkway, and extend into Explore Park. Completion is anticipated in March 2025.

## Segment Under Construction:

White (UPC 113567) segment extends through Explore Park to Rutrough Point. Completion is anticipated in Spring 2026.

**Combined length of the one existing and three new segments: 3.95 miles**

