



# The Treeline Allen Creek Urban Trail

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q1: What is The Treeline?

The Treeline – a **planned urban trail** through the heart of Ann Arbor – is a transformative idea for connecting people and places. The Treeline will connect the Huron River to surrounding neighborhoods, the core of downtown Ann Arbor, and University of Michigan athletic facilities while also linking to the regional Border-to-Border (B2B) Trail and the state-wide Iron Belle Trail.

### Q2: How did this project evolve?

The Treeline originated as the Allen Creek Greenway (ACG), an idea that has been discussed in the community for nearly 20-years. In 2015, the Ann Arbor City Council identified the ACG as an opportunity to create better non-motorized connections through the city to the Huron River and regional B2B Trail.

City Council allocated resources to develop a **master plan** that defines a **feasible non-motorized route** from the B2B Trail north of downtown to the State and Stimson Street intersection to the south.



### Q3: What does “feasible” mean for The Treeline alignment?

The Treeline master plan describes a feasible route that addresses the following considerations:

**Property access:** Discussions have taken place with property owners who indicate a willingness for their private property to be included in the plan. Unless otherwise noted, no formal agreements have been made and future use of properties would be contingent on concurrence with the property owner(s).

**Physical constraints:** The trail is aligned where there is physical space and in locations where engineering constraints would not preclude construction.

### Q4: How was the trail alignment determined?

In addition to feasibility factors, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and community input shaped the preferred alignment of The Treeline in accordance with the following desires:

**Continuity:** Desire for a continuous user experience that minimizes breaks, stops, and interruptions along the trail.

**Safety:** Improve safety throughout the corridor along the trail and at points of access. “Design for the unaccompanied 10-year old” by minimizing at-grade crossings at major, busy intersections.

**Accessibility:** Design for all users, ages, and abilities by meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and providing frequent points of access to the trail.

**Connectivity:** Connect to key community assets and destinations and link to existing non-motorized facilities.

**Sustainable:** Manage stormwater, restore habitat, support alternative modes of travel, and use sustainable practices.

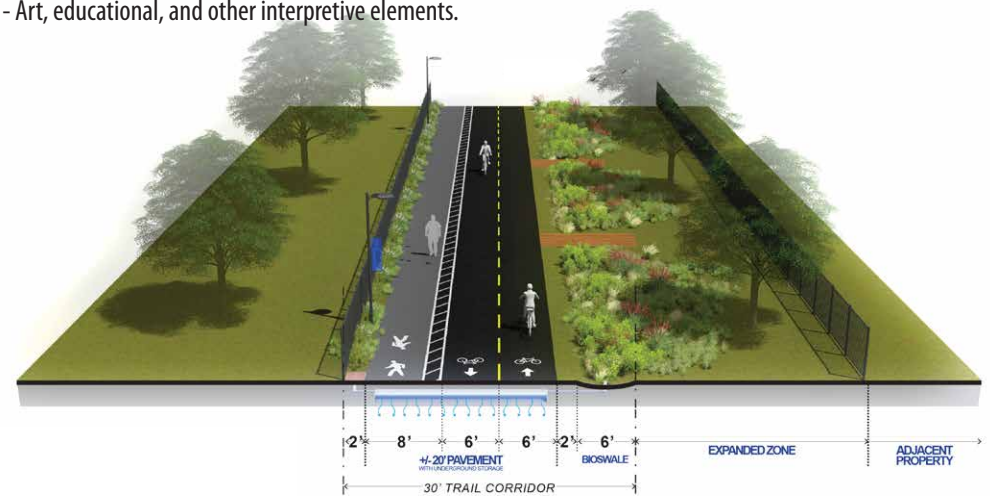
**Transformative/Unique Experiences:** Use the trail to celebrate the community and its unique assets. Enhance the quality of life for residents, students and visitors.

**Responsive and opportunistic:** Be flexible during implementation to adapt to beneficial opportunities.

### Q5: What will The Treeline look like?

Designed to serve users of all ages and abilities, The Treeline is envisioned as a 30-foot wide urban trail corridor (wider where space allows) that would accommodate:

- A multi-use paved trail with separated pedestrian and bicycle areas.
- Shade trees and native landscaping adjacent to the trail.
- Stormwater management features including rain gardens and bioswales.
- Pedestrian-scale lighting throughout and security measures (e.g., fencing) as needed.
- Furnishings such as benches, waste receptacles, and signage.
- Art, educational, and other interpretive elements.



While the trail will primarily be located on public or private lands, some sections will be located within the street right-of-way. These include bicycle and pedestrian facilities separated from the roadway and feature significant improvements to the safety of street crossings. Parking may need to be removed on at least one side of the street to accommodate the trail features.

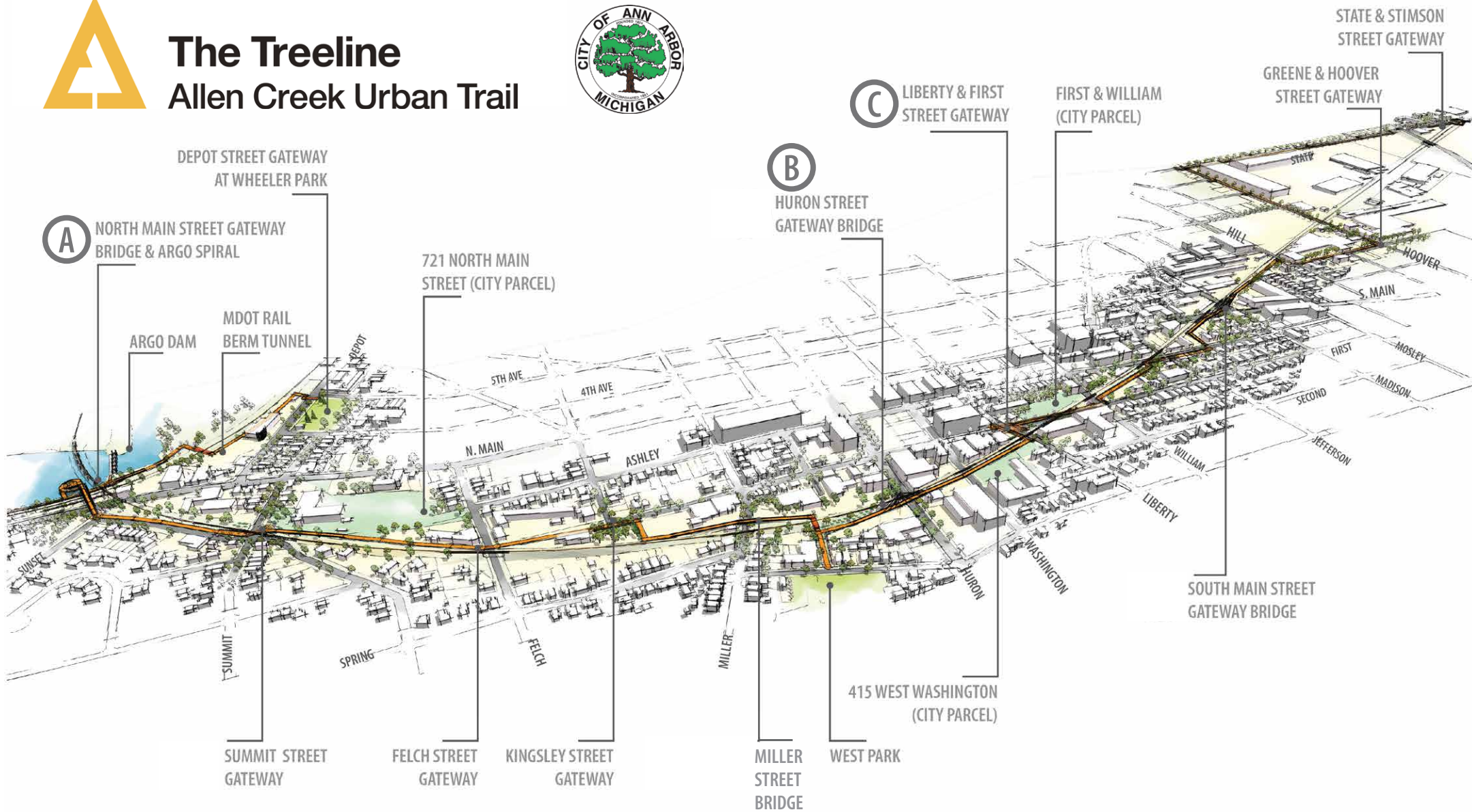
### Q6: Why aren't more green spaces shown along the trail?

The Treeline master plan focuses on identifying a **feasible alignment for an urban trail**. Within and adjacent to the trail corridor there will be opportunities to create areas of open space for recreation, habitat, stormwater management, or other complementary green space. These opportunities are subject to land availability and access beyond what the trail will require. Details for these items will be developed as these opportunities arise.



# The Treeline

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### Q7: How can a master plan be developed without formal agreements from property owners?

During the master plan process, the project team met with nearly all property owners\* – including the railroad companies and the University of Michigan – to understand the feasibility of aligning the trail through affected properties. The City is proceeding with the alignment, at a conceptual level of detail; discussions about future access agreements will take place during future phases of implementation.

\*Properties with an X on the plan indicate property owners that have not been briefed on the trail alignment.

### Q8: What is the plan for city-owned properties along The Treeline?

Approaches for improving the three City-owned properties along the corridor—721 North Main, 415 West Washington, and First and William—will continue to be studied in future plans. The Treeline master plan focused on what portion of the City properties would be needed to accommodate the urban trail without precluding future uses of these properties.

### **A** NORTH MAIN STREET GATEWAY BRIDGE & ARGO RAMP



### **B** HURON STREET GATEWAY BRIDGE



### Q9: What are the benefits of The Treeline?

More than just a trail, The Treeline will bring impressive benefits to the City of Ann Arbor by providing: quality of life improvements for residents, visitors and University students of all ages and abilities; seamless multi-modal transportation alternatives; positive economic impact; improved public health; and a limitless source of community identity and pride.

**Regional connectivity:** Connect to adjacent communities via the B2B Trail and the statewide Iron Belle Trail system.

**Mobility:** Expand transportation options, connecting people to jobs, destinations, and recreation amenities.

**Economic Vitality:** Urban trails show positive benefits to the local economy, through increased property value and retail spending, and for employer recruitment.

**Tourism:** The Treeline will be a signature facility capable of drawing people to Ann Arbor, connecting an active riverfront to downtown commercial districts and University athletic events.

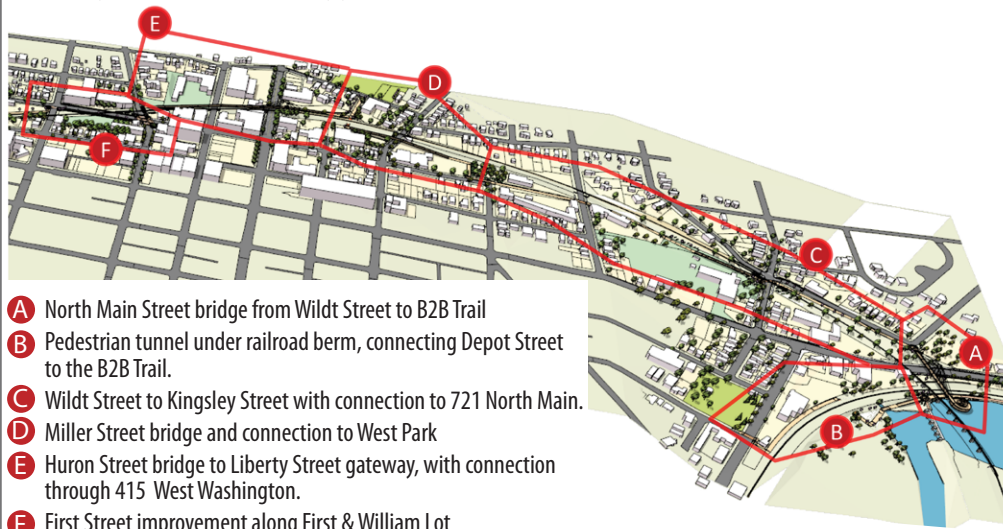
**Environmental Health:** Manage stormwater runoff from the trail and improve conditions within the floodplain as other opportunities arise.

### Q10: When will The Treeline be built?

The Treeline will be phased and built as funding resources and property access becomes available. Continued discussions with property owners to secure access agreements and the allocation for funding to develop detailed design and construction drawings for each phase are critical to advance implementation.

### Q11: Will The Treeline be constructed all at once?

The master plan identifies a phasing strategy, starting in the north with a direct connection to the B2B Trail, which is important for establishing a regional connection and addressing an immediate gap across North Main Street to the Huron River. The plan also identifies near-term opportunities for creating connections that will provide benefits to mobility and safety while other sections await implementation. The Treeline will, likely, be developed over many years in stages.



### C LIBERTY & FIRST STREET GATEWAY



### Q12: Why does The Treeline cost so much?

Building a trail in a complex urban environment faces many challenges. Addressing infrastructure complexities while delivering a high level of benefit requires significant resources. The Treeline is much more than a wide sidewalk; it includes bridges and portions of elevated trail to provide a safe and continuous experience for users. The cost opinion is a preliminary estimate that will be revised as implementation moves forward.

### Q13: Who will pay for The Treeline?

The Treeline will require a broad range of funding approaches. Sources for capital costs and long-term operations and maintenance may include state, local, and federal grants (transportation, environmental, floodplain, community development, and health programs), philanthropic/foundation support, sponsorship, public-private partnerships, revenue generation, crowdfunding, and other financing tools.

### Q14: What if conditions change; can the alignment be modified?

The Treeline master plan was designed to be flexible and respond to changing circumstances such as availability of other properties that might provide added benefit to the alignment. This can include opportunities for complementary open space or other supporting features.

### Q15: What role will The Treeline Conservancy play?

The City is exploring partnership options with The Treeline Conservancy to manage and operate the urban trail in a manner consistent with the management structure of other urban trails across the country. The Conservancy will also raise funds for all aspects of implementation: acquisition, design, construction, operations, and maintenance.



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