

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The South Kootenay region, celebrated for cultivating both professional and recreational sports enthusiasts, is setting its sights on a new, ambitious initiative - the South Kootenay Green Link Active Transportation Plan (ATP). With a \$50,000 grant from BC’s Active Transportation Network Planning program, matched by funds from the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDKB), we are poised to create a comprehensive, accessible, multi-use active transportation connection between Rossland and Fruitvale.

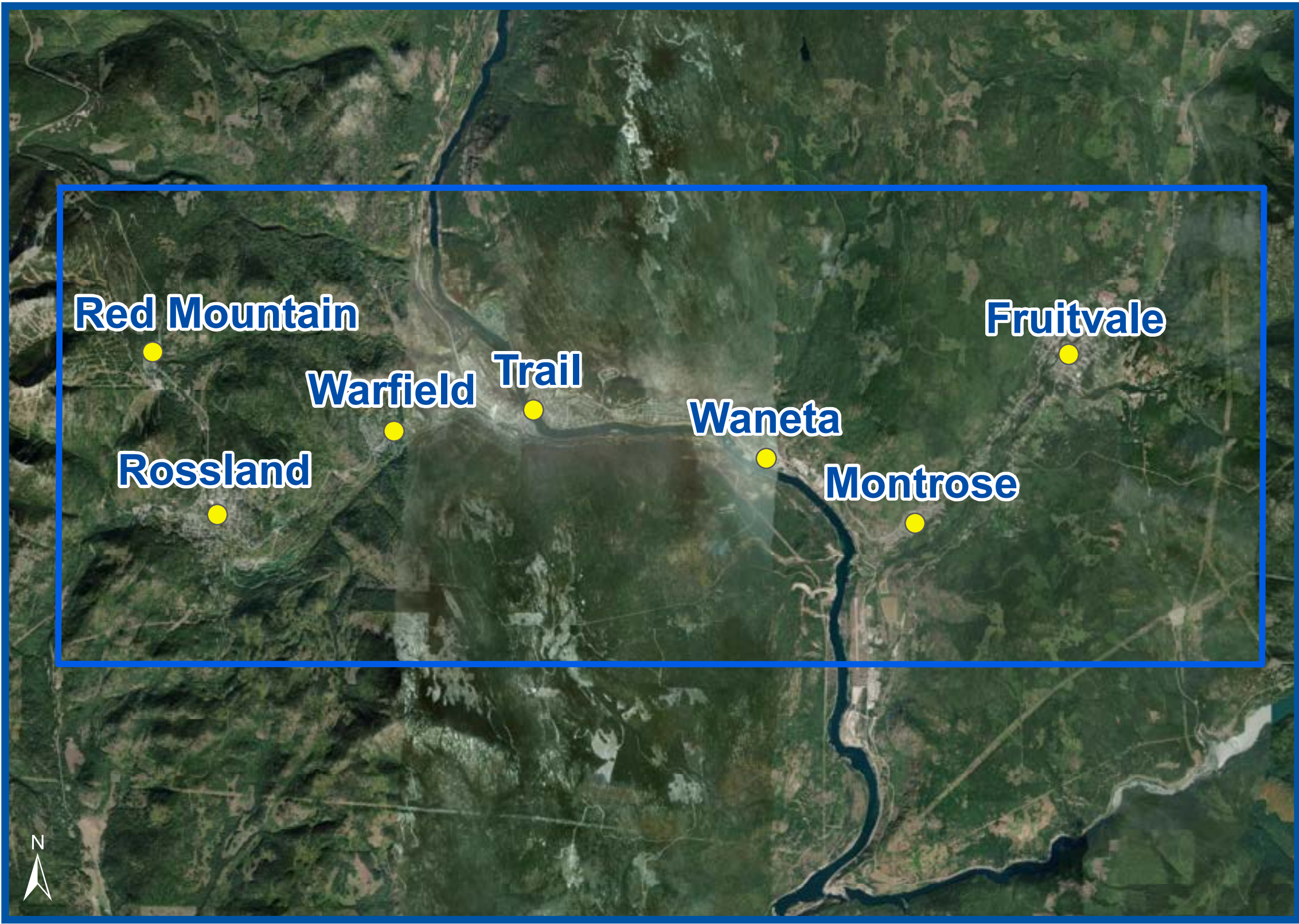
Despite the region’s natural beauty, there is a lack of interconnected, safe, and accessible routes for cyclists, pedestrians, and other active transportation users. This limits the adoption of sustainable transportation, leading to increased car usage and environmental impact. The region also presents unique challenges, such as varying elevations and routes adjacent to highways.

The planning process has focused on addressing these challenges by developing a preferred route active transportation corridor consisting of All Ages and Abilities (AAA) active transportation facilities that align with best practices from the BC Active Transportation Design Guide (2019). By encouraging active transportation, the project aspires to build a healthier, environmentally conscious community.

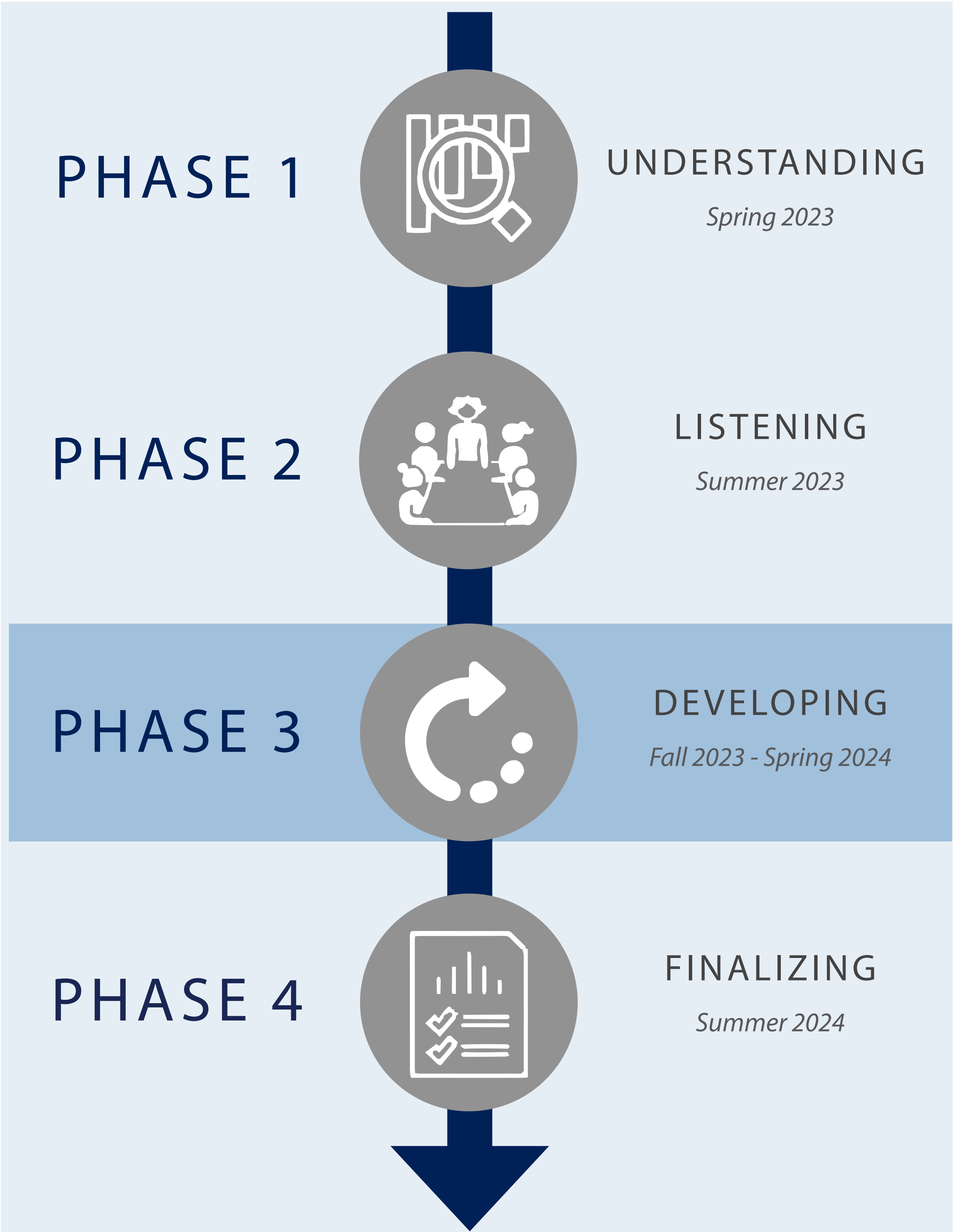
DRAFT PLAN VISION

By encouraging active transportation, the South Kootenay Green Link aspires to build a healthier, environmentally conscious community. The corridor will be functional, comfortable, convenient, and attractive, ensuring safety for all users. It will connect downtown cores, places of employment, local schools, and other important destinations. By enhancing recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, and promoting tourism, the South Kootenay Green Link will enable people to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster a healthier lifestyle for residents.

STUDY AREA



PROJECT TIMELINE



Past Engagement

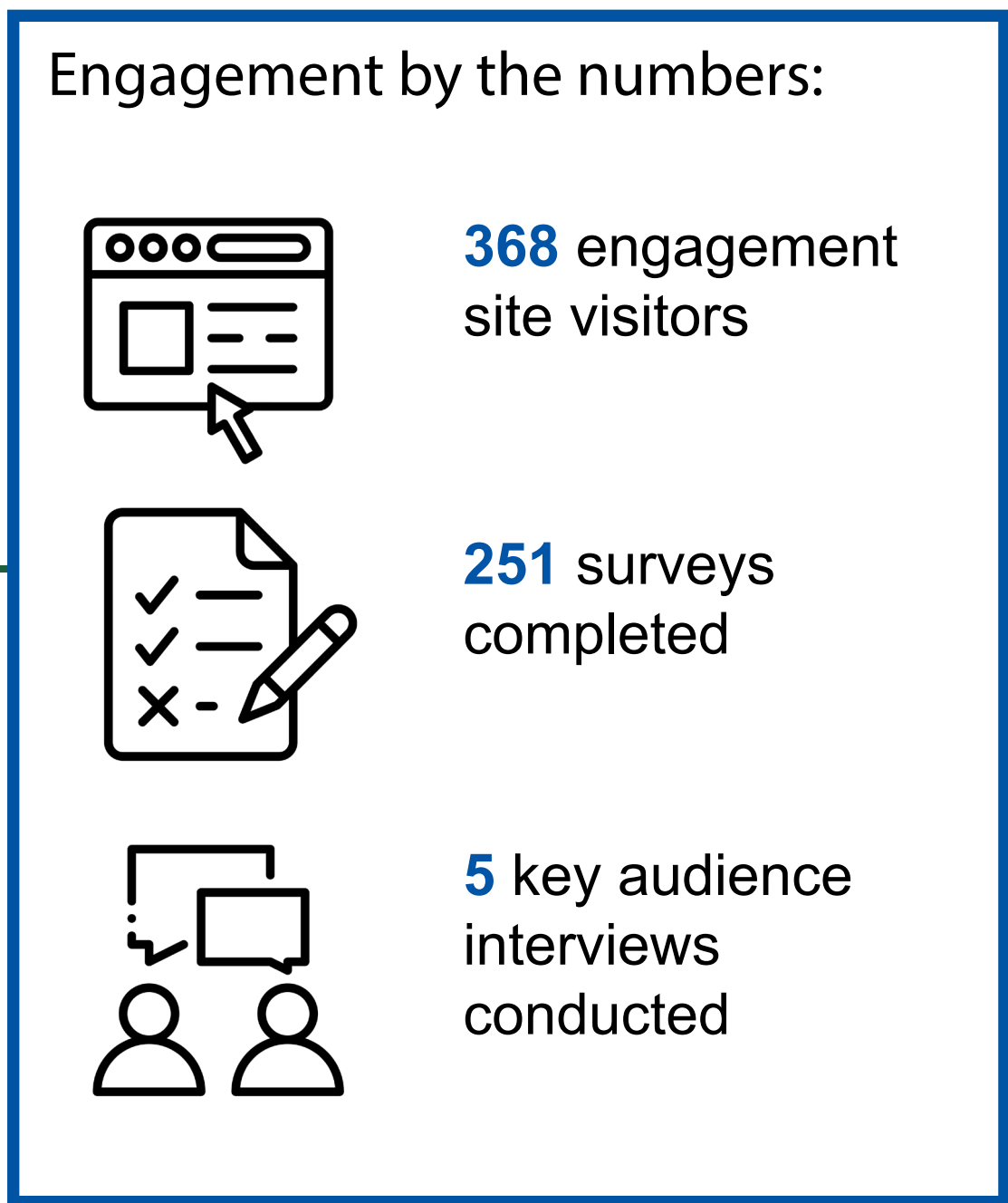
Engagement in the Listening Phase took place from June 13, 2023, to July 27, 2023. Here’s what we did to gather your input:

Online Survey

A survey was posted on the RDKB’s Join the Conversation platform, and hard copies were available upon request.

Interviews

We talked with key people involved in active transportation, public health and safety, education, and local employers to get their direct insights.



Ideas Fairs

Held in Fruitvale and Trail, these events allowed participants to share feedback using sticky notes and vote on preferred principles and practices.

Bikeshops

Provided an opportunity to discuss specific issues within specific sections of the SKGL corridor and to hear directly from participants about what the key barriers are and what they would like to see addressed in the plan.

The listening phase highlighted several key themes and priorities from the community that guided the development of the South Kootenay Green Link Active Transportation Plan (ATP):

Barriers

Key barriers include insufficient infrastructure, safety concerns, and poor connectivity between communities. Addressing these issues is crucial to encouraging more active transportation use.

Opportunities

The community sees several opportunities for the South Kootenay Green Link, including developing more cycling routes, improving connections to schools and parks, enhancing surface conditions on existing routes, and adding amenities like secure bike parking to encourage active transportation.

Intercommunity Connectivity and Routing Suggestions

Respondents emphasized the need for routes that connect communities such as Warfield, Trail, Rossland, and Waneta. Many specific routing suggestions were provided, focusing on creating seamless links and avoiding steep inclines to ensure accessibility for all fitness levels.

Health, Safety, and AAA Infrastructure

Health and safety concerns highlighted the need for safer routes, improved lighting, and better maintenance. There was strong support for All Ages and Abilities (AAA) infrastructure, ensuring that routes were accessible and safe for everyone.

Preferred Facilities and Surface Condition Improvements

The most popular active transportation facilities are multi-use pathways and protected bike lanes. Additionally, many requests were made to improve the surface conditions of existing cycling routes and paths, as smooth, well-maintained surfaces are crucial for the safety and comfort of all users.

Separation from Motor Vehicles and Incorporating Nature

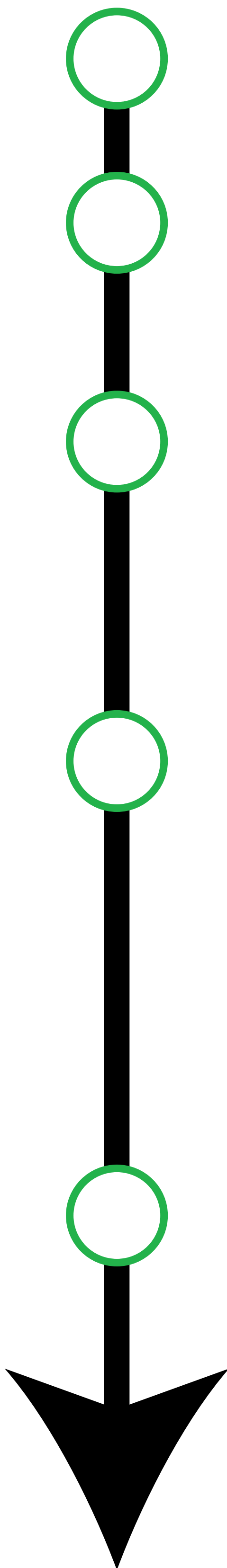
Participants emphasized the need for routes that provide clear separation from motor vehicles on roads with larger traffic volumes for safety and comfort, reducing the risk of collisions. There was also a desire to incorporate natural elements into active transportation routes to enhance the natural beauty of the region and provide a pleasant experience for users.

Multi-Modal Transportation Options

Requests for improvements to public transit highlighted the need for better integration with active transportation routes. Enhanced integration can offer a seamless travel experience, making it easier for people to choose sustainable transportation options.

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Informed by the Listening Phase, which highlighted several key themes and priorities from the community, the Developing Phase focused on creating the preferred route for the South Kootenay Green Link Active Transportation Plan (ATP). Here’s what we did:



Analyzed Feedback

- Reviewed and categorized community feedback to identify key themes and priorities, such as safety, connectivity, and accessibility.

Developed Evaluation Criteria

- Created evaluation criteria based on the identified themes, focusing on Directness, User Comfort and Safety, Connections, and Constructability to ensure the preferred route meets the community’s needs.

Identified Route Options that Incorporated AAA Infrastructure

- Included All Ages and Abilities (AAA) infrastructure in routing option development to ensure accessibility and safety for everyone.
- Considered opportunities for improving surface conditions on existing AT infrastructure and the maintenance needs for new facilities to ensure smooth, safe travel for all users.

Enhanced Connectivity, Multi-Modal Integration, and incorporated Natural Elements

- Focused on creating seamless links between the community nodes, avoiding steep inclines to ensure routes are accessible for all fitness levels.
- Ensured routes are well-integrated with public transit to provide diverse travel options and facilitate a seamless travel experience.
- Developed routes to incorporate natural elements, enhancing the aesthetic and environmental value of the corridor and providing a pleasant experience for users.

Assessed Route Options

- Evaluated multiple route options using the developed criteria, focusing on safety, connectivity, and user comfort.

Collaborated with the Steering Committee

- Engaged with representatives from the involved communities, community groups, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, which make up the steering committee, to refine the preferred route and ensure comprehensive support for the project.



Definitions / Descriptions

The following pages provide the preferred routing of the SKGL starting on the western terminus of the study area at Red Mountain, heading east towards Montrose and Fruitvale in the Beaver Valley. The maps have some different routing line types, which have the following definitions / descriptions:

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Preferred Route: The current preferred route of the South Kootenay Green Link. This alignment utilizes existing multi-modal corridors (such as the Centennial Trail) and proposes new infrastructure to fill in gaps throughout the plan area (such as new Multi-Use Pathways in Rossland & Fruitvale). This route provides a continuous, accessible network that seamlessly connects residents and visitors alike, to key destinations and other trail networks in the area.
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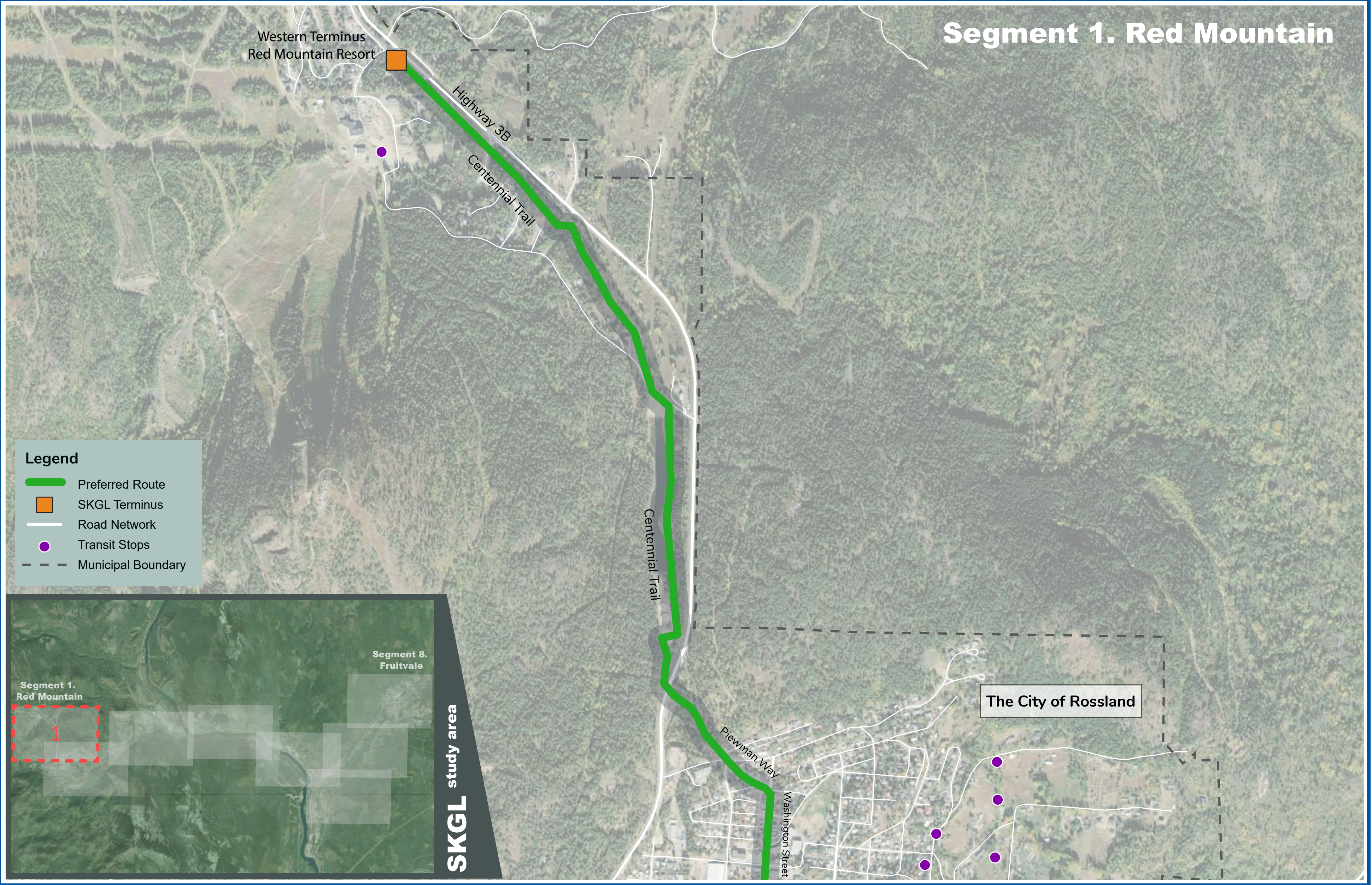
SKGL Terminus Points: Locations where the preferred routing is proposed to end.
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Preferred Future Route Alignment: Identified future alignment to enhance the current route by improving directness, decreasing travel distance, and/or avoiding sections with higher vehicle volumes. These alignments may require property easements, land acquisition, or future study and planning. Once feasible, this alignment would supersede the preferred route.
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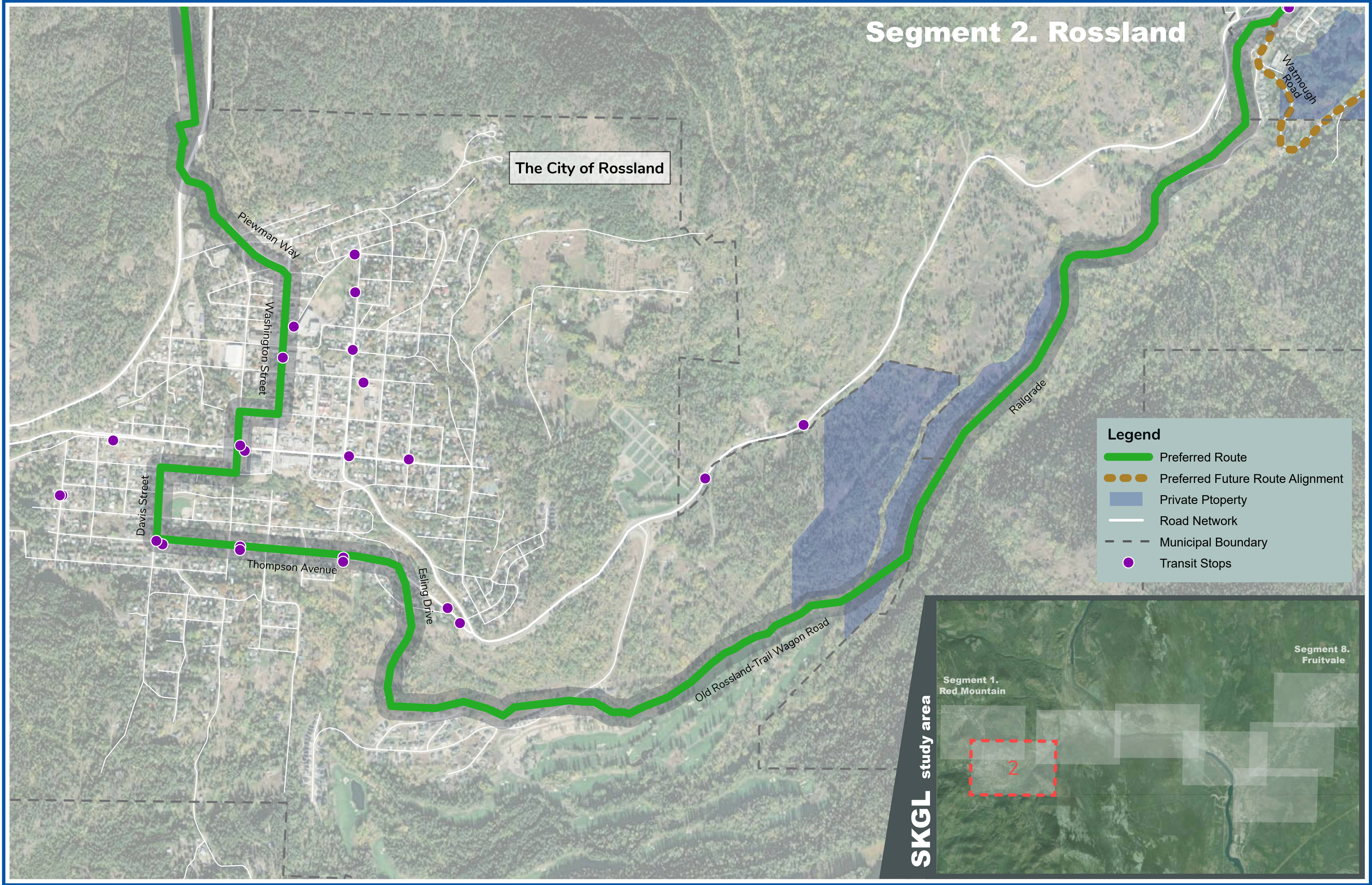
Potential Future Recreational Connection: A potential secondary route identified in the developing phase of the plan, considered a supportive connection to the SKGL but not meeting AAA Facility requirements.
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Potential Future Connection: A potential secondary route identified in the developing phase of the plan, requiring property easements and land acquisition. This connection supports the SKGL and could be developed as either a recreational connection or AAA facility.

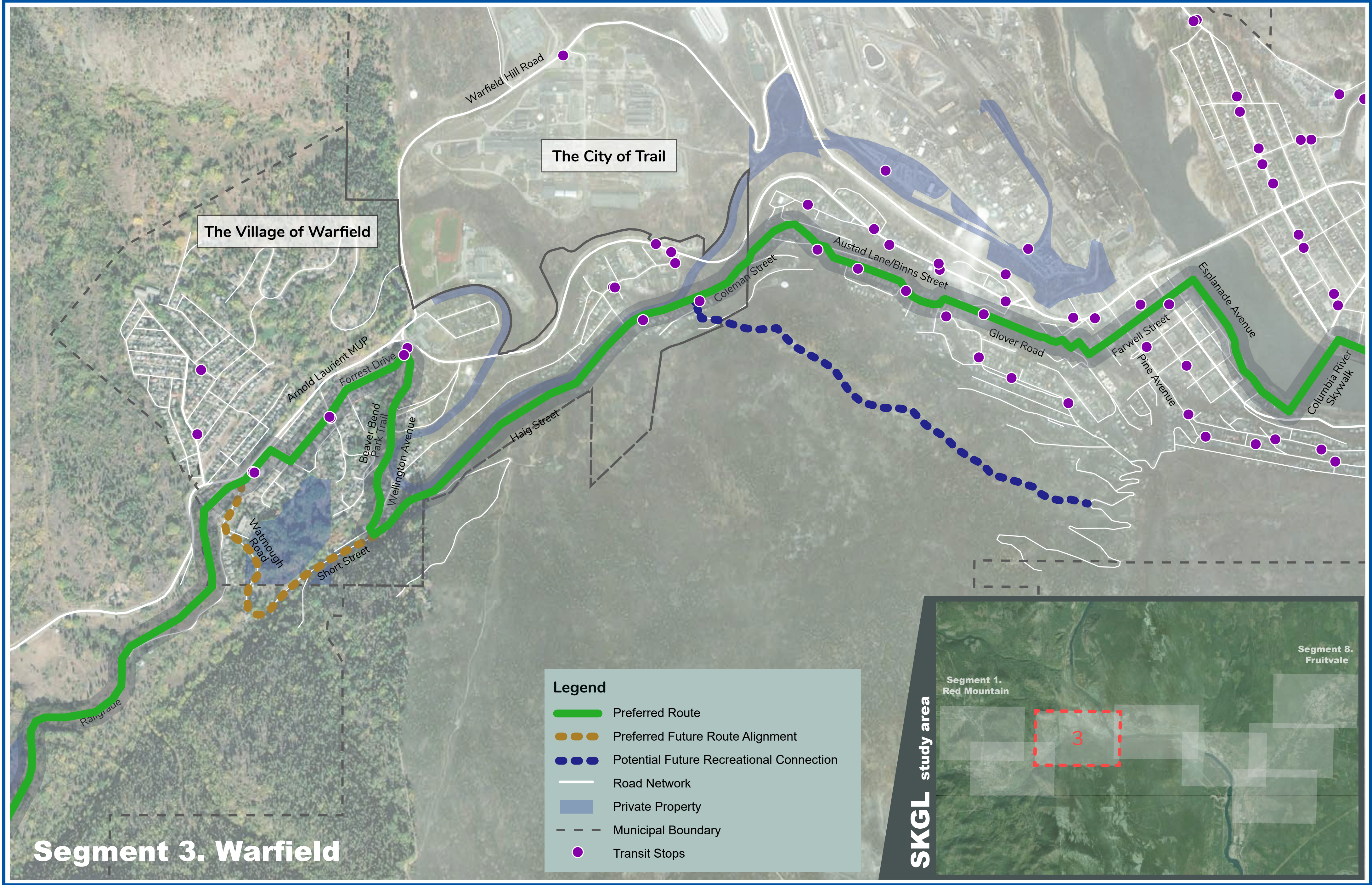
Segment 1. Red Mountain



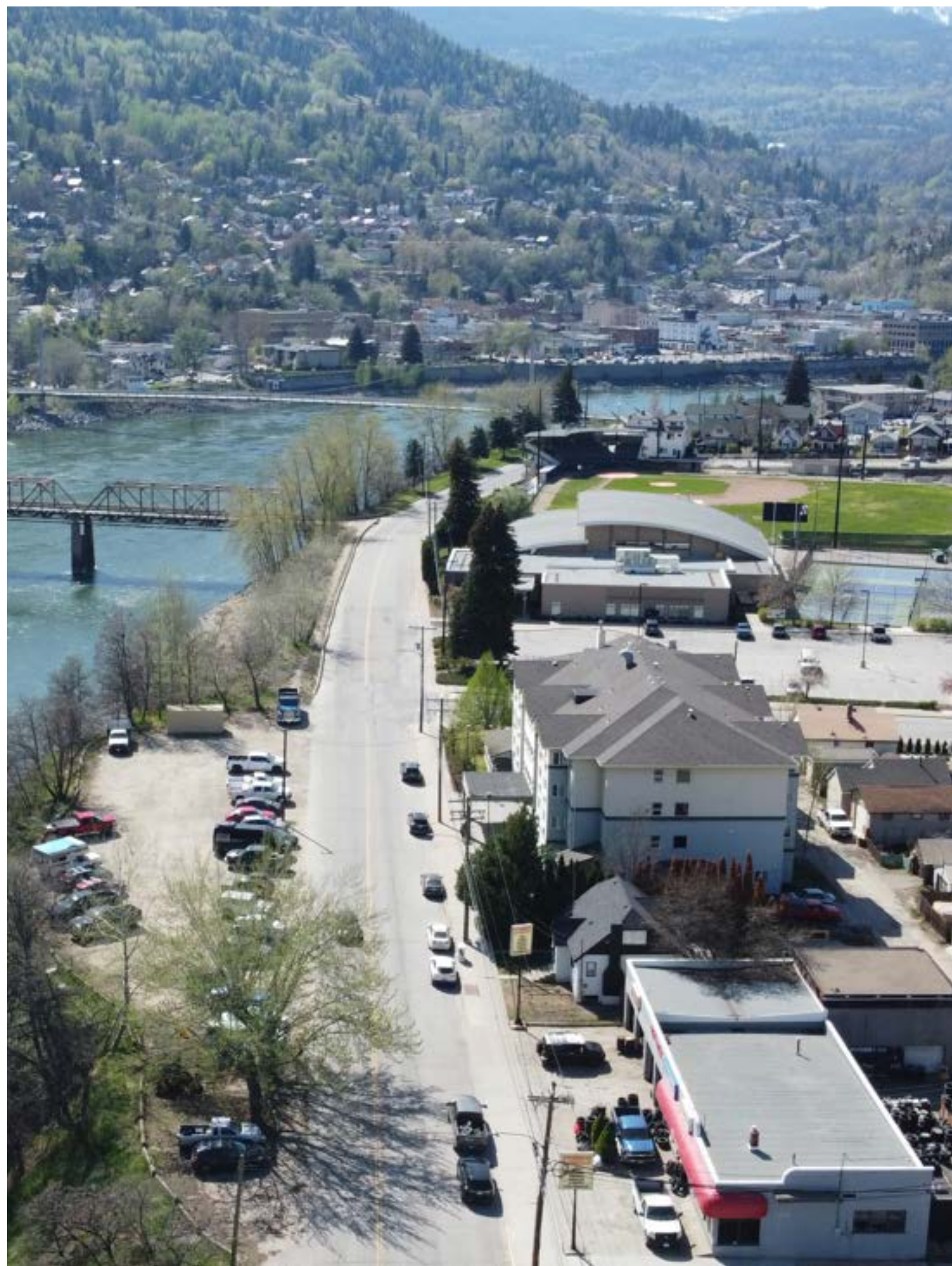
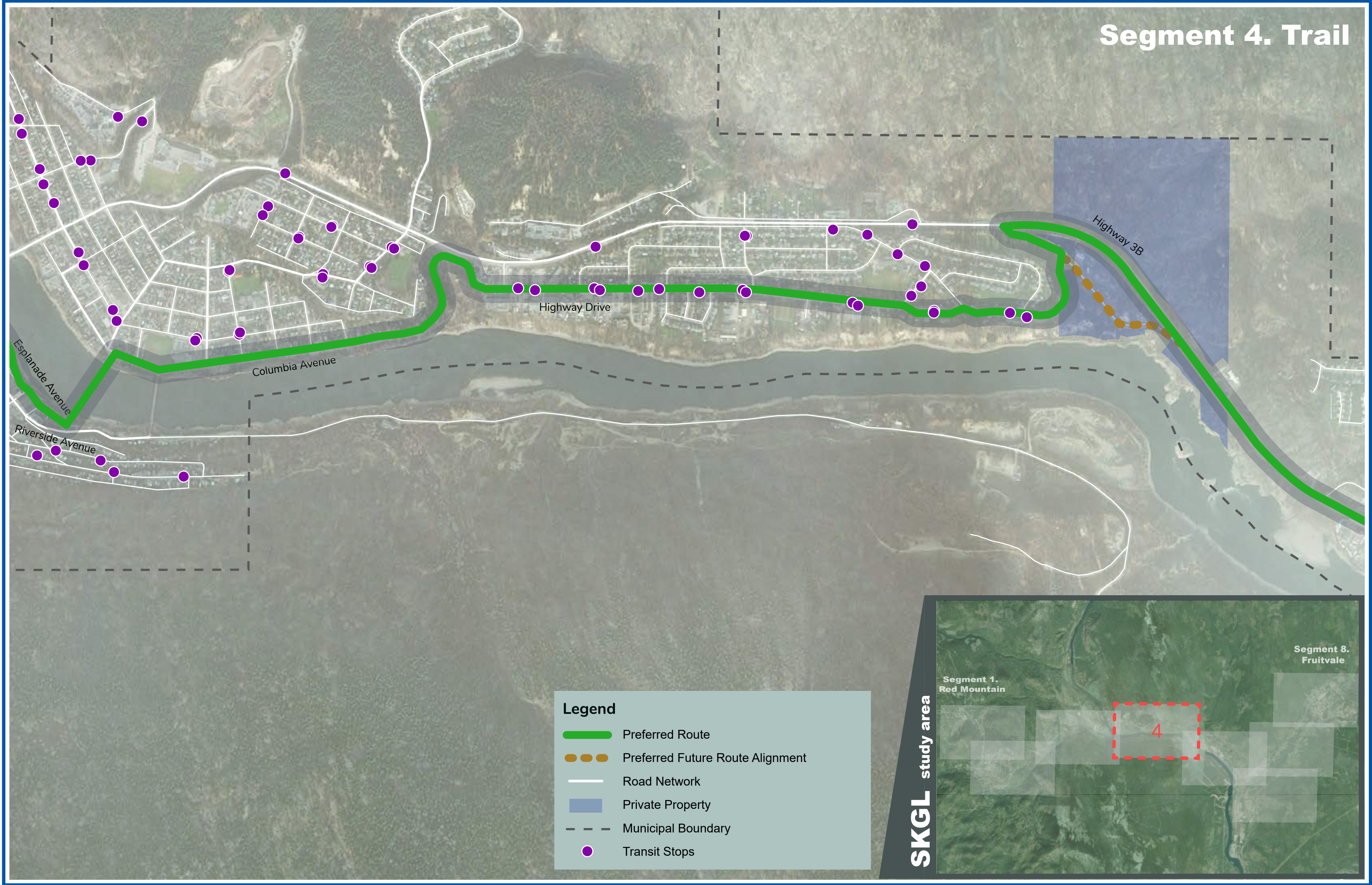
Segment 2. Rossland



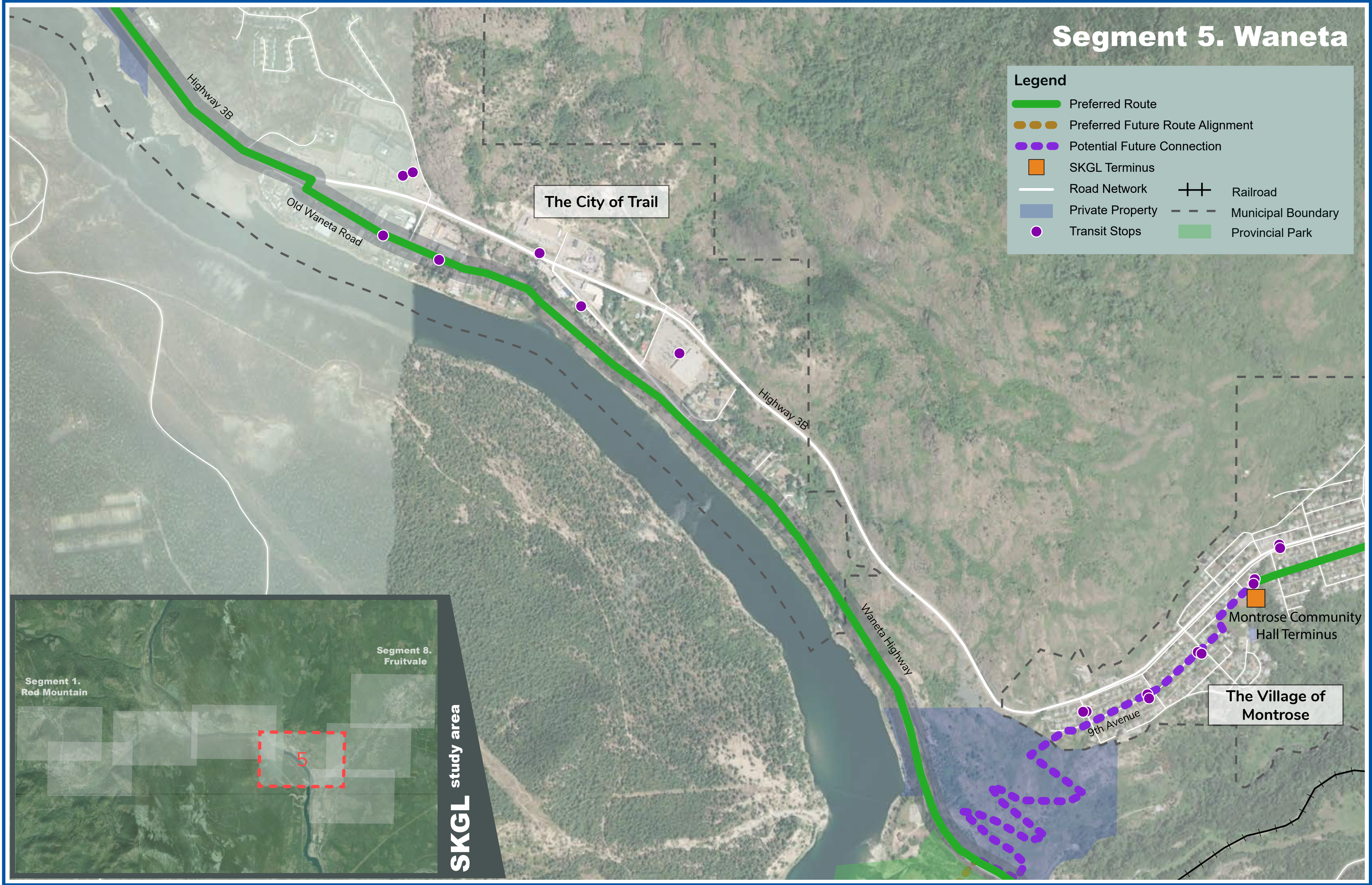
Segment 3. Warfield



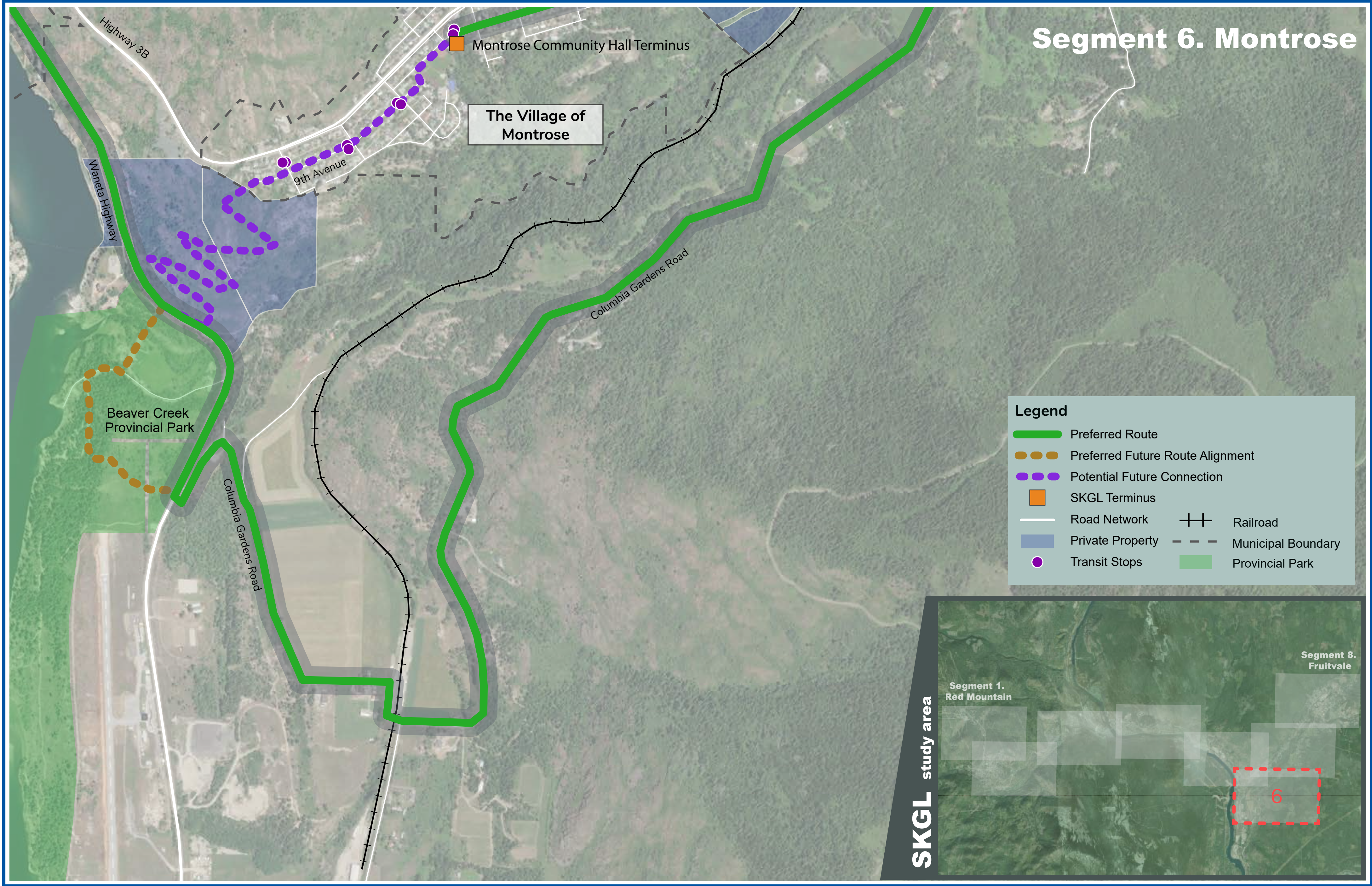
Segment 4. Trail



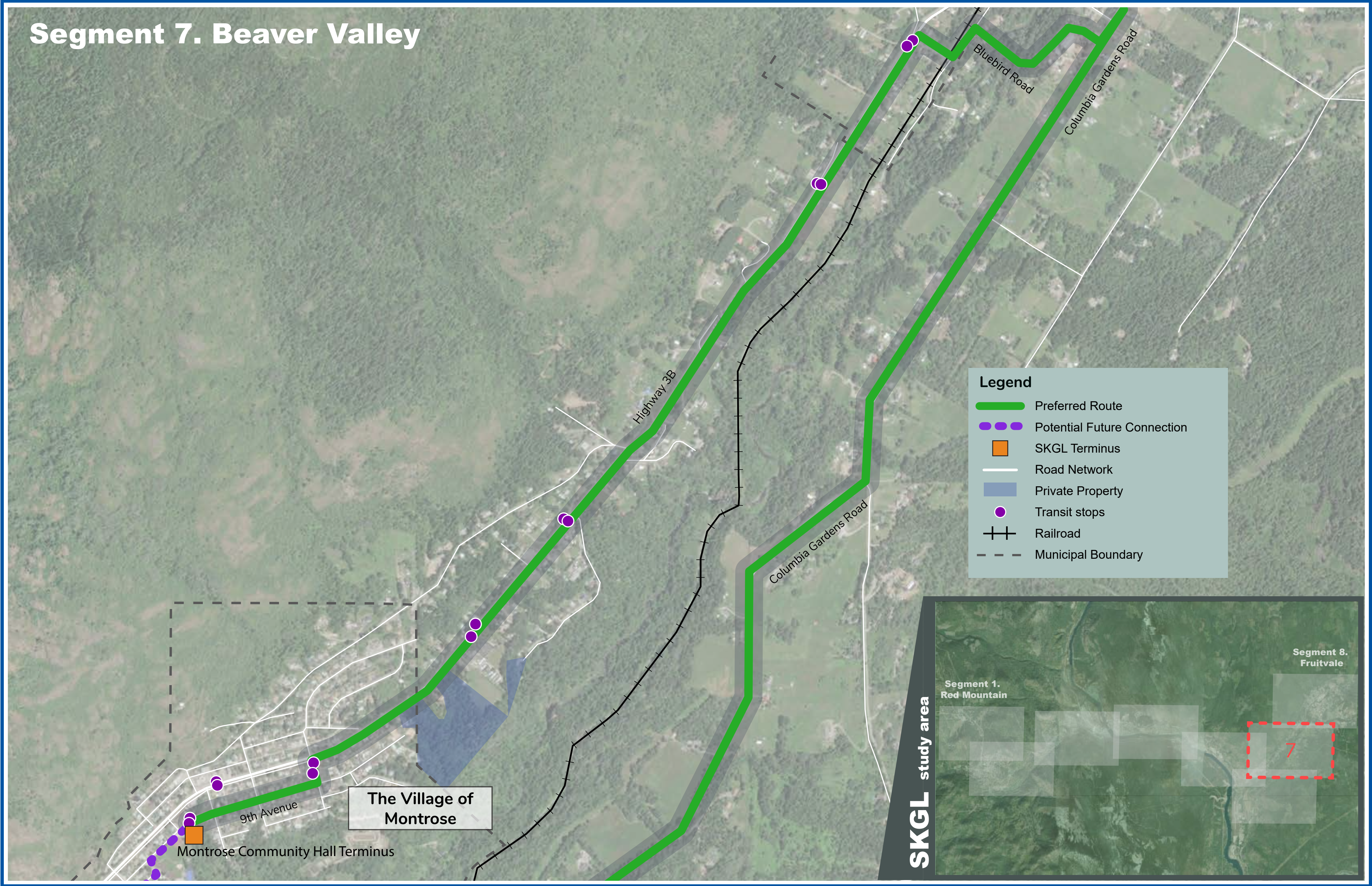
Segment 5. Waneta



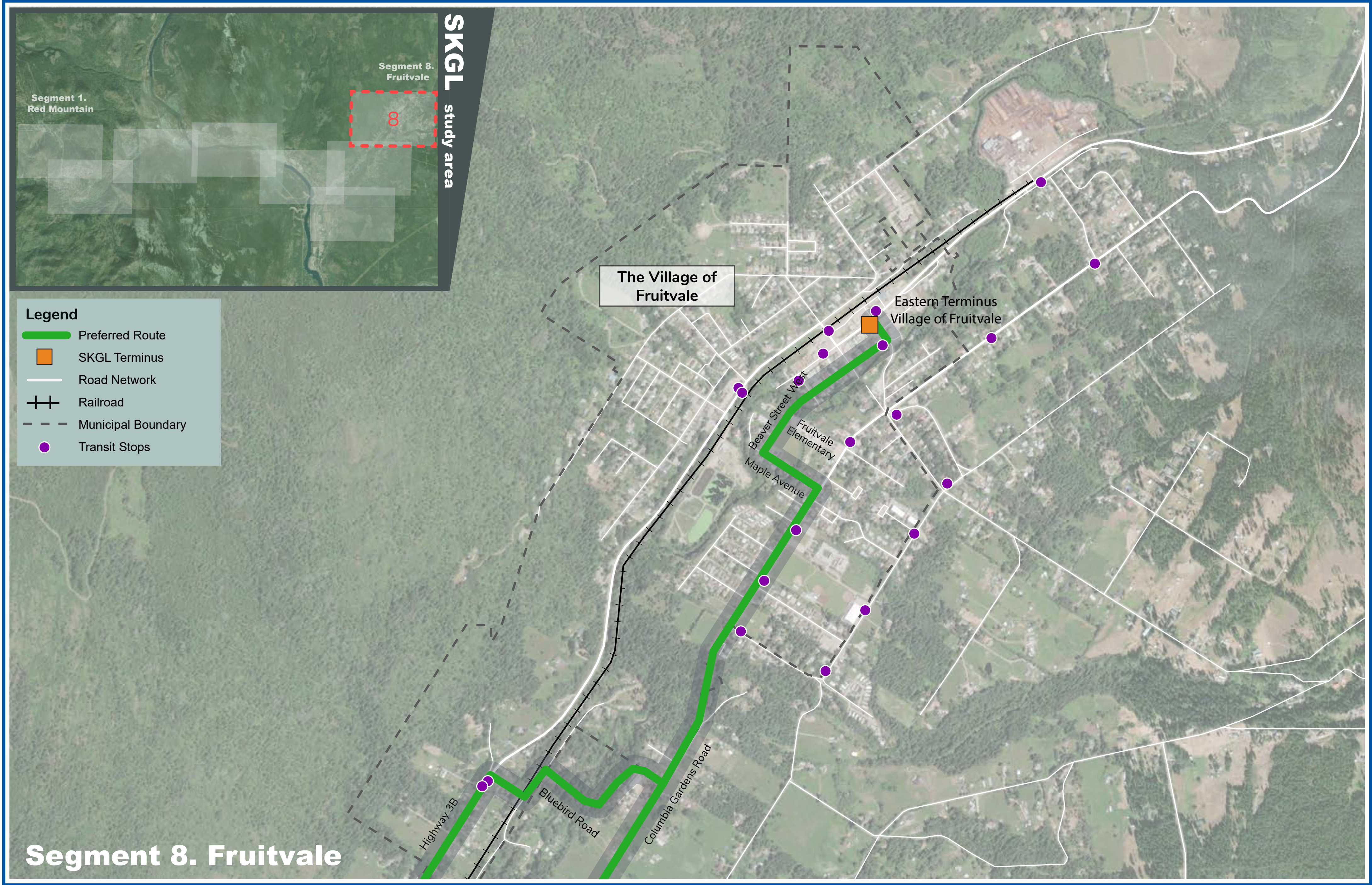
Segment 6. Montrose



Segment 7. Beaver Valley



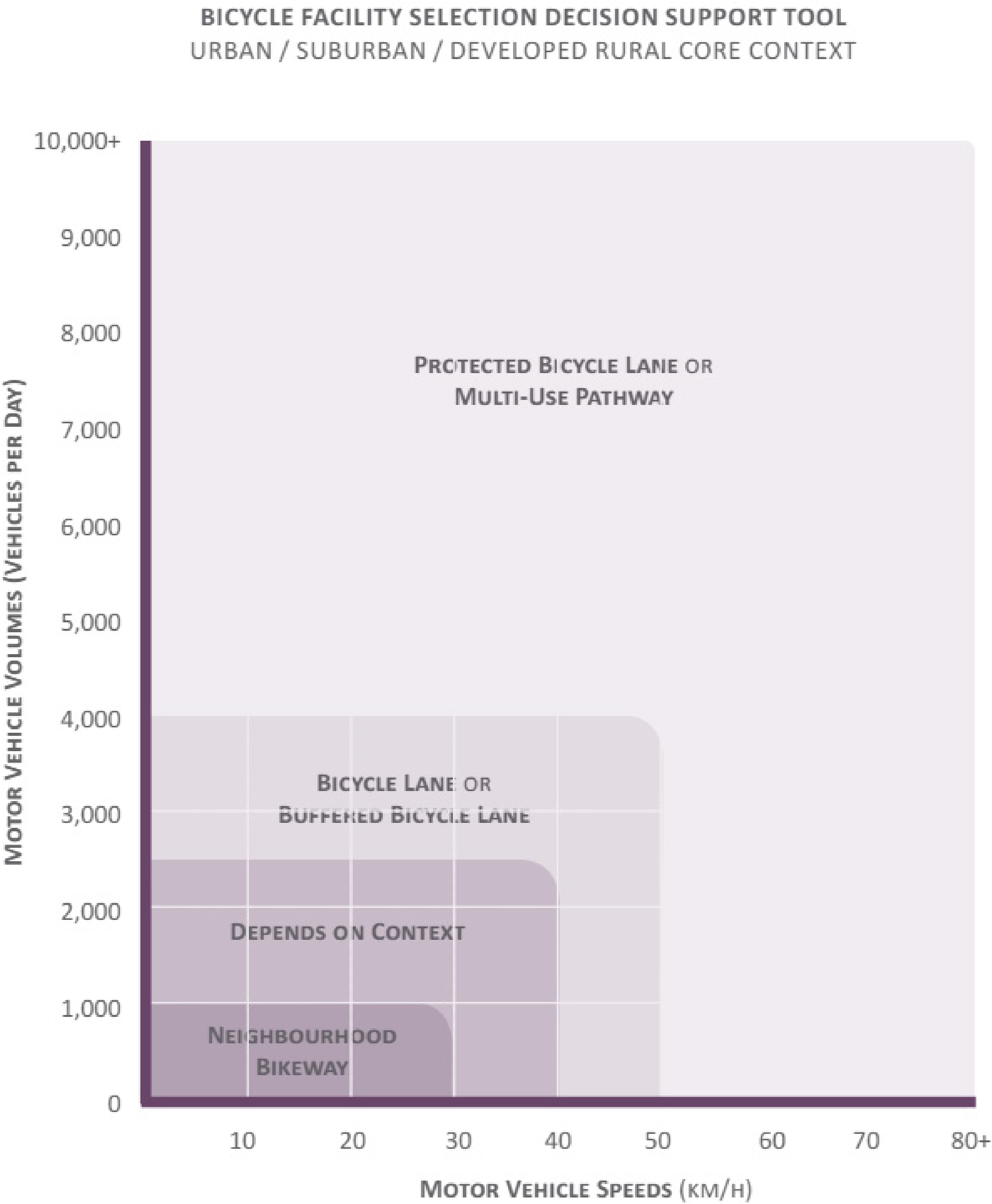
Segment 8. Fruitvale



Facility Selection Approach

In developing the South Kootenay Green Link, the project team adhered to the BC Active Transportation Design Guide to determine the most appropriate All Ages and Abilities (AAA) facilities for the preferred route. This guide provides comprehensive criteria for designing active transportation infrastructure that is safe, accessible, and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities.

Each segment of the preferred route was analyzed, considering factors such as existing infrastructure, traffic volumes, and the surrounding environment. This thorough approach allowed for the selection of the most suitable AAA facilities, whether they are protected bike lanes, multi-use pathways, or other context-appropriate infrastructure. This ensures a cohesive and connected route that promotes active transportation while ensuring the safety and comfort of all users.



Proposed Active Transportation Facilities

The following are examples of the various active transportation facilities being proposed on the preferred route:

Shared Street Facilities



Advisory
Lanes



Neighbourhood
Bikeway

Protected Facilities



Urban Protected
Bike Lane



Urban Multi-Use
Pathway



Separated
Multi-Use Pathway
with Barrier

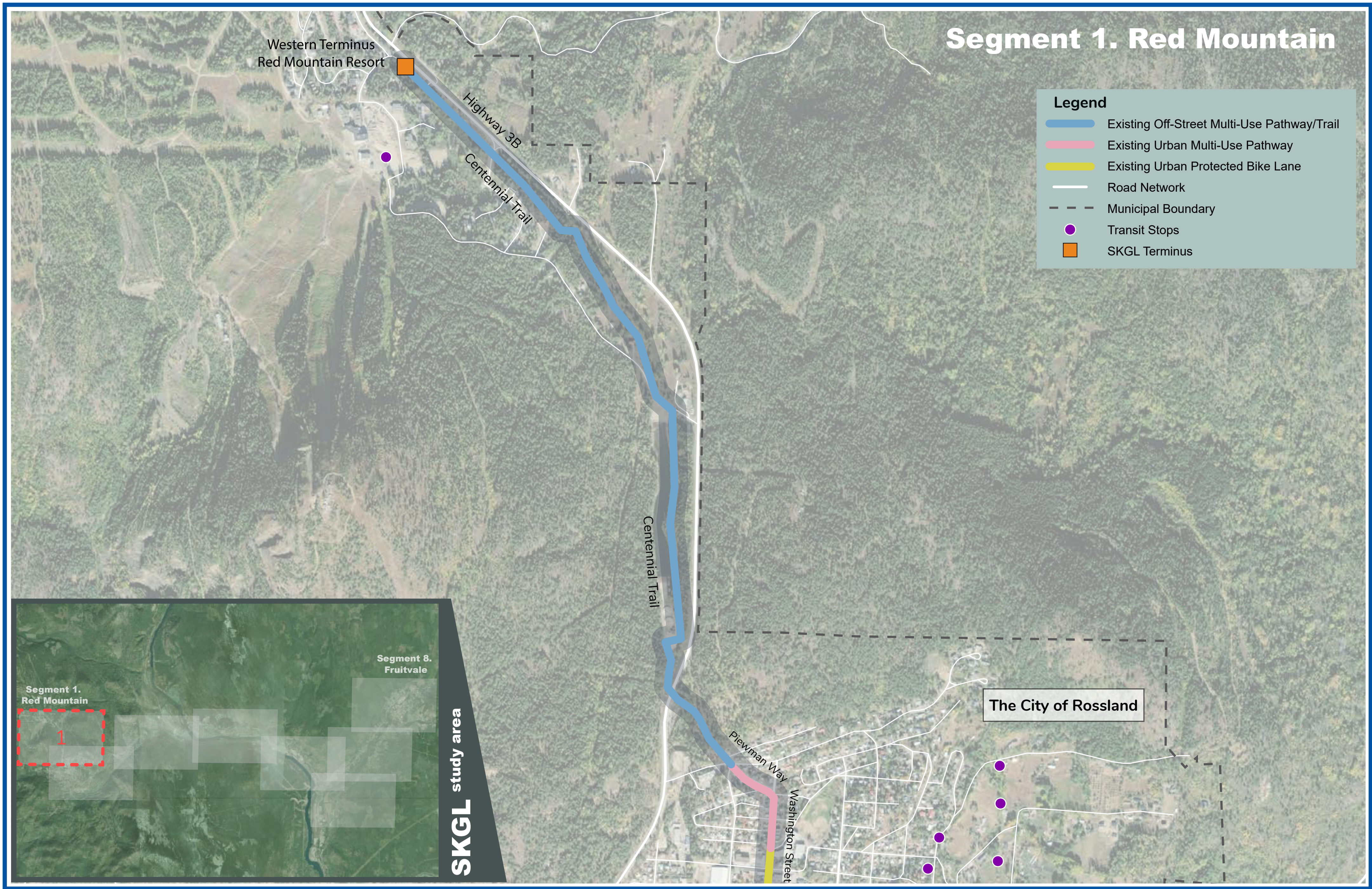


Rural
Multi-Use Pathway
with Ditch



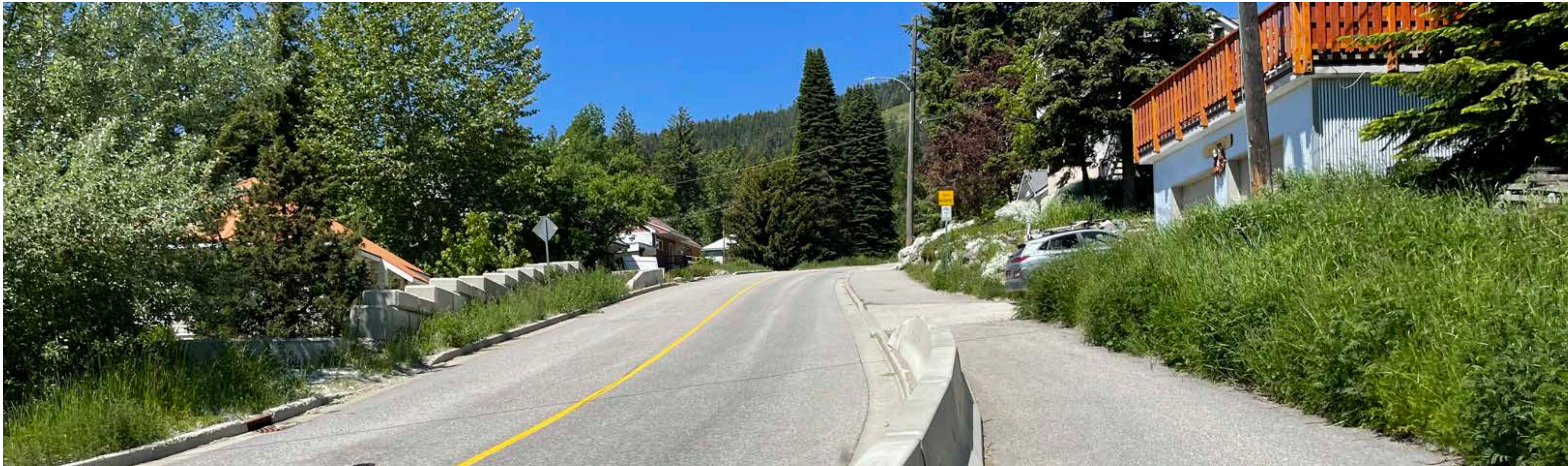
Off-Street
Multi-Use Pathway
/ Trail

Segment 1. Red Mountain

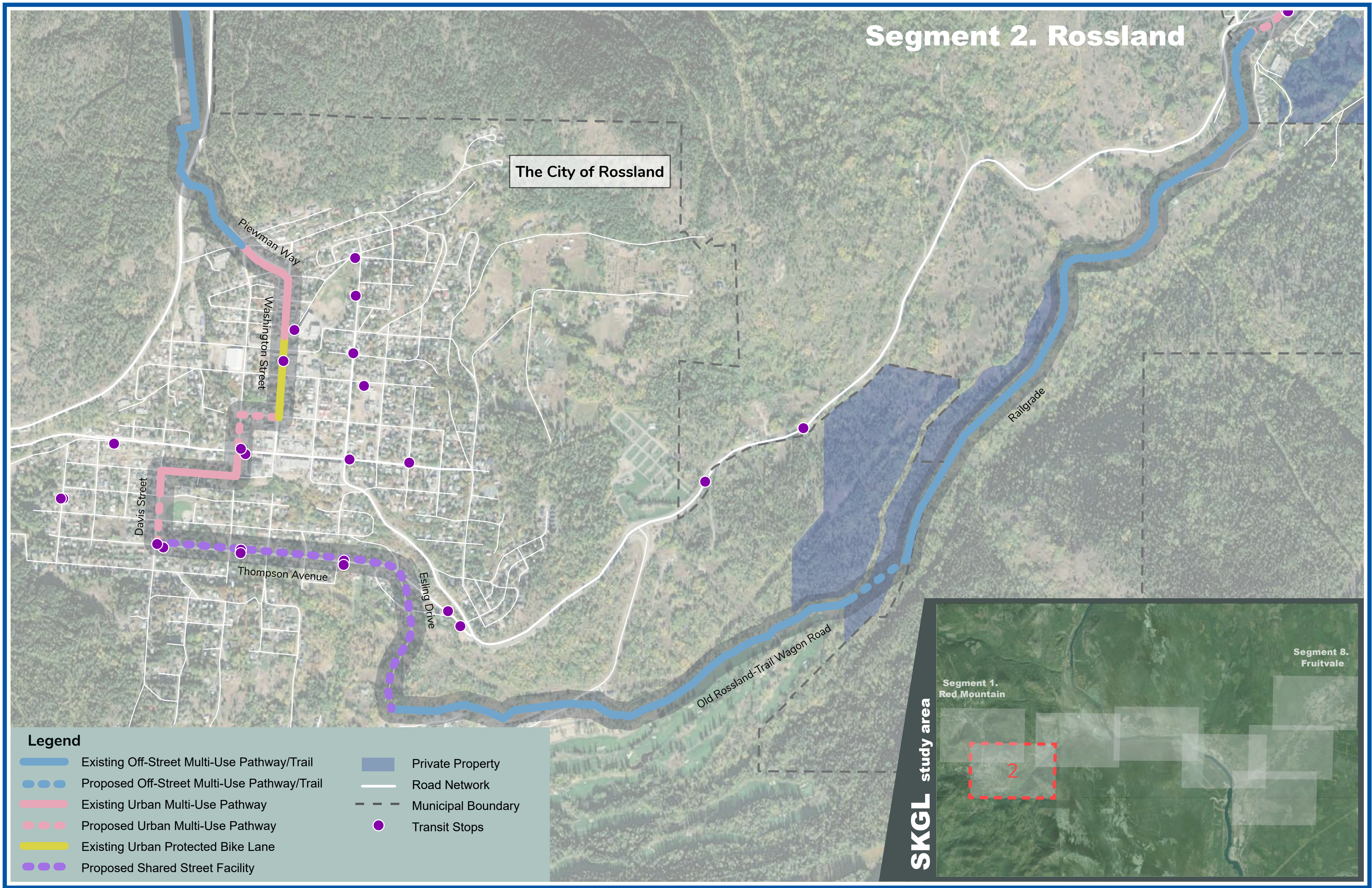


Corridor Description

This segment commences at the SKGL Western Terminus located at Red Mountain Resort and travels south, providing a connection to the City of Rossland. This segment uses multiple different facility types, including an existing off-street multi-use pathway between Red Mountain and Rossland, and an existing urban multi-use pathway as well as an existing urban protected bike lane through the City of Rossland.



Segment 2. Rossland

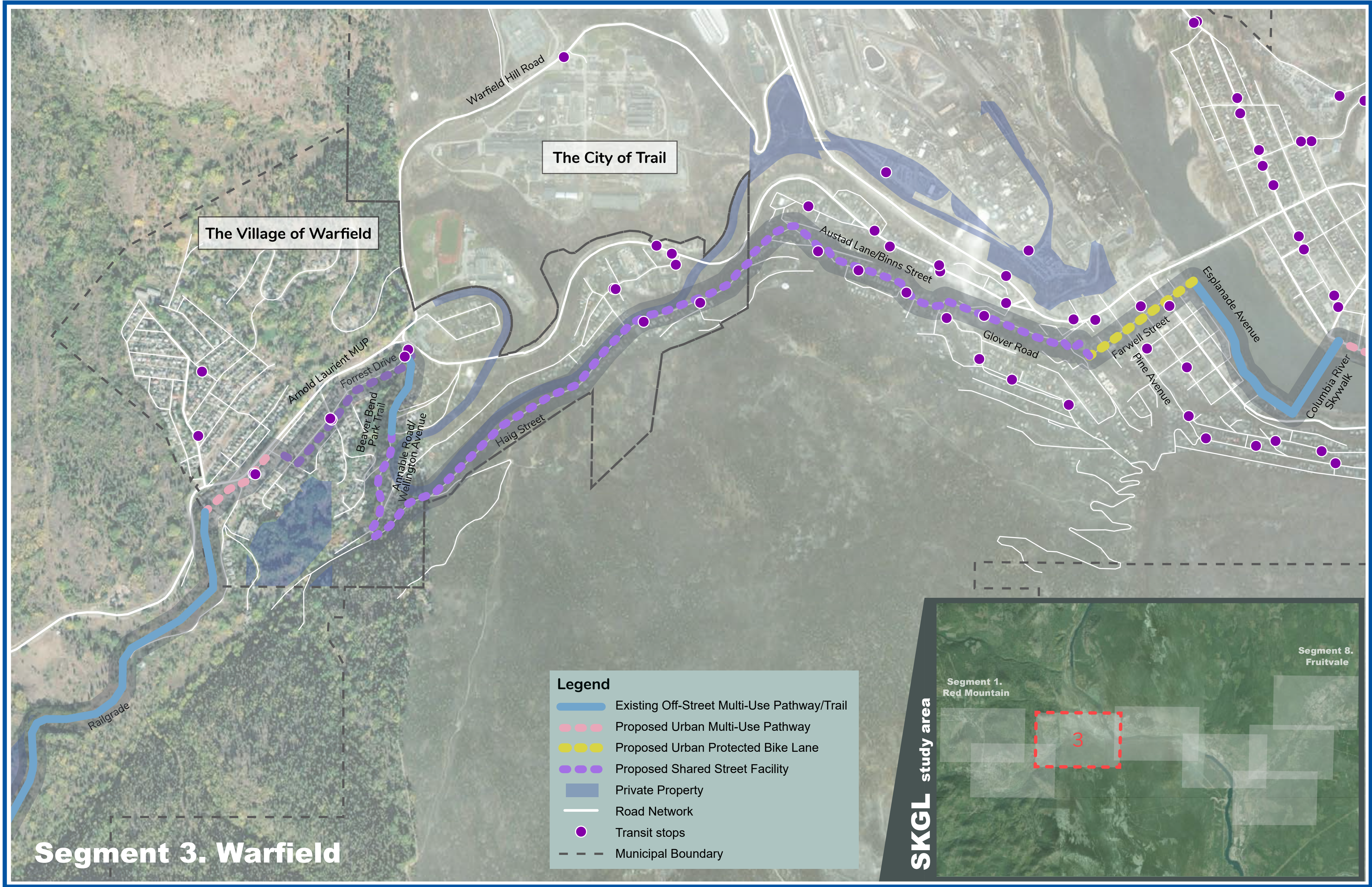


Corridor Description

This segment passes roughly north to south through the City of Rossland, then heads roughly north-east toward the Village of Warfield. While travelling through Rossland this segment makes use of a combination of existing infrastructure in addition to three proposed facilities - an urban multi-use pathway on 1 Avenue, Spokane Street and Davis Street, and a shared street facility on Thompson Avenue and Esling Drive, before connecting to an existing off-street multi-use pathway / trail. It should be noted that there is a gap in the existing multi-use pathway / trail, where it is proposed that this facility be extended.



Segment 3. Warfield



Corridor Description

This segment sees the completion of the connection between Rossland and the Village of Warfield via an existing off-street multi-use pathway. To provide a connection through Warfield several new facilities are proposed, including an urban multi-use pathway, and a shared street facility on Lytton Street, Forrest Drive, Annable Road/Wellington Avenue and Haig Street. Finally, this segment connects Warfield to the City of Trail using a proposed shared street facility on Austad Lane/Binns Street and Glover Road, and a proposed urban protected bike lane on Farwell Street.



Segment 4. Trail

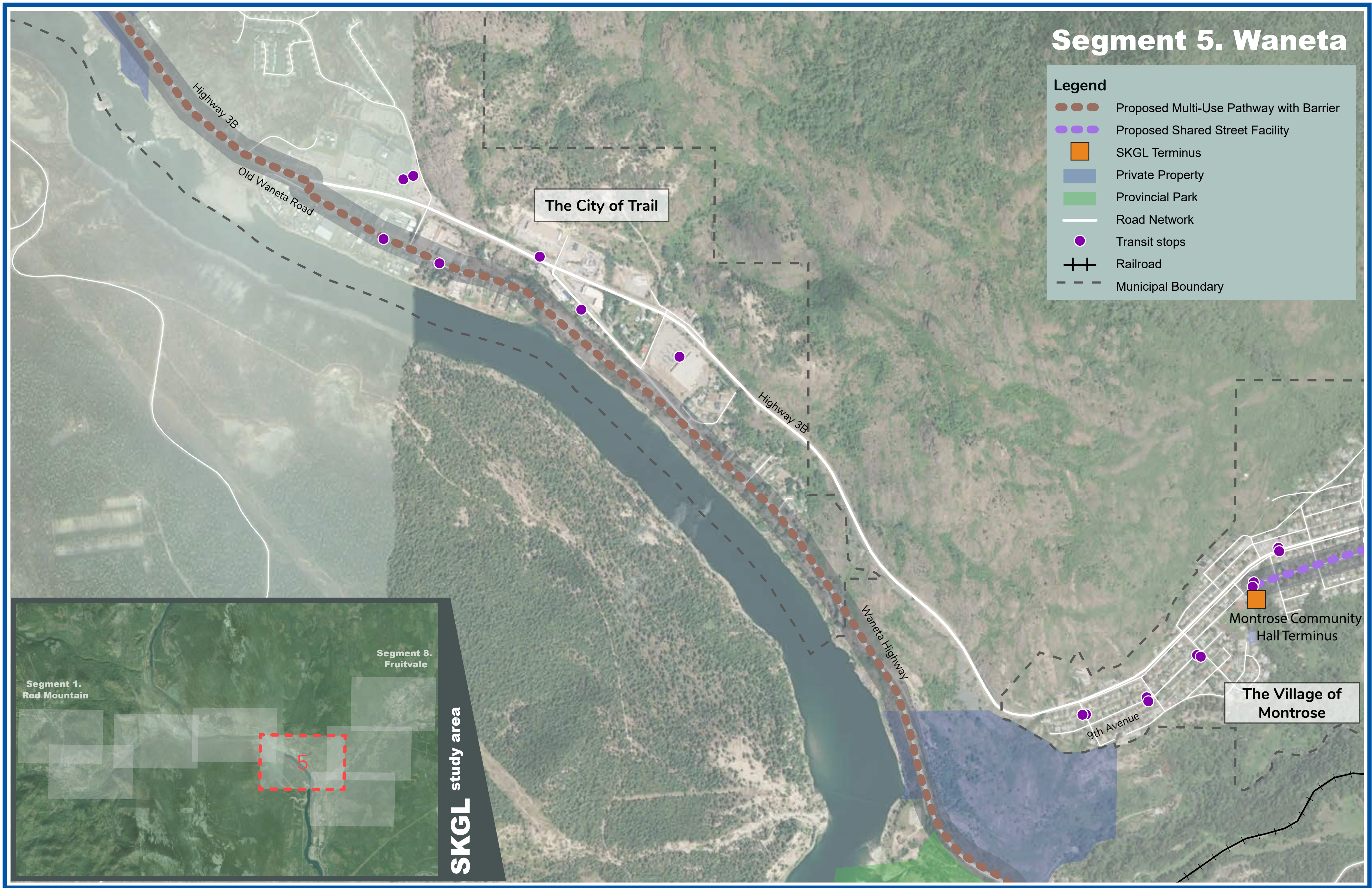


Corridor Description

This segment provides a connection between downtown Trail and Waneta, via Trail’s Glenmerry neighbourhood. The segment makes use of an existing off-street multi-use pathway on Esplanade Avenue and the Columbia River Skywalk, before connecting to several different proposed facilities on Columbia Avenue, Highway Drive, and Highway 3B.



Segment 5. Waneta

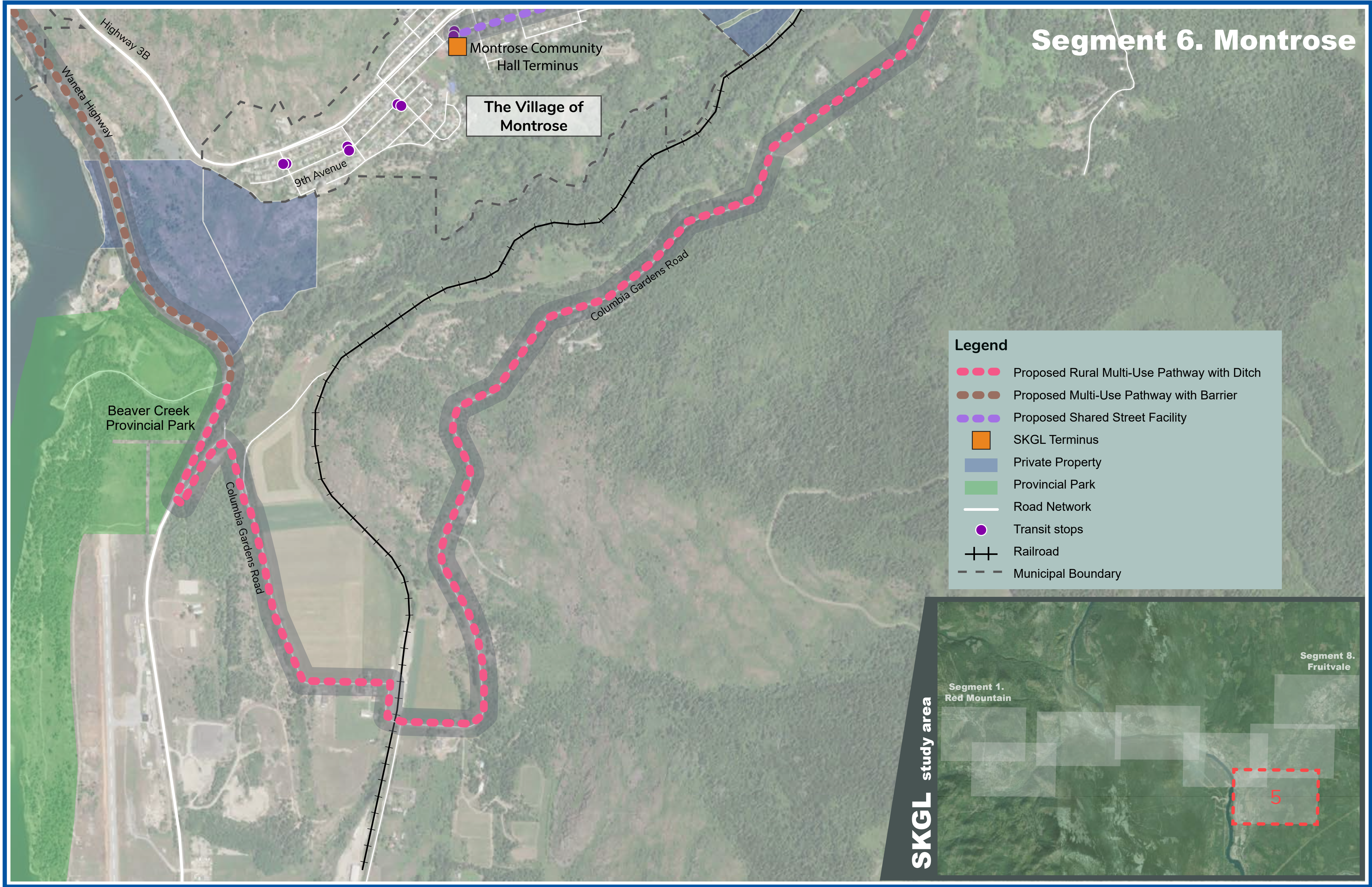


Corridor Description

This segment represents the continuation of the South Kootenay Green Link from Trail toward its next major destinations - the Village of Fruitvale and the Village of Montrose, via Waneta. This segment proposes a multi-use pathway with barrier on Highway 3B and the Waneta Highway.



Segment 6. Montrose

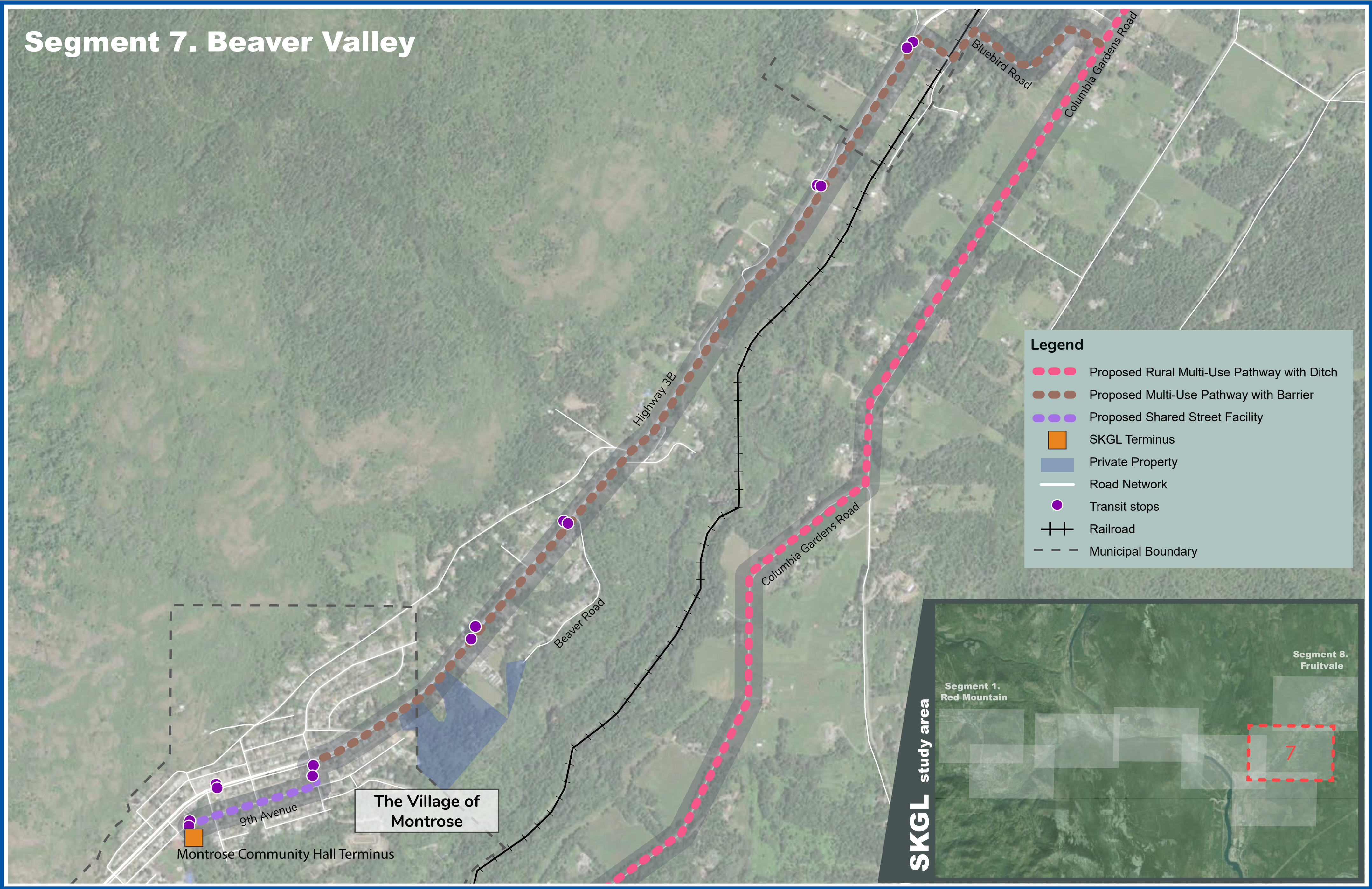


Corridor Description

This segment proposes a multi-use pathway with barrier along Waneta Highway, which transitions into a rural multi-use pathway with ditch along Columbia Gardens Road from Beaver Creek Provincial Park to the west, toward Beaver Valley to the east. Crucially, there is an existing bridge which provides an opportunity to cross at Beaver Creek.



Segment 7. Beaver Valley

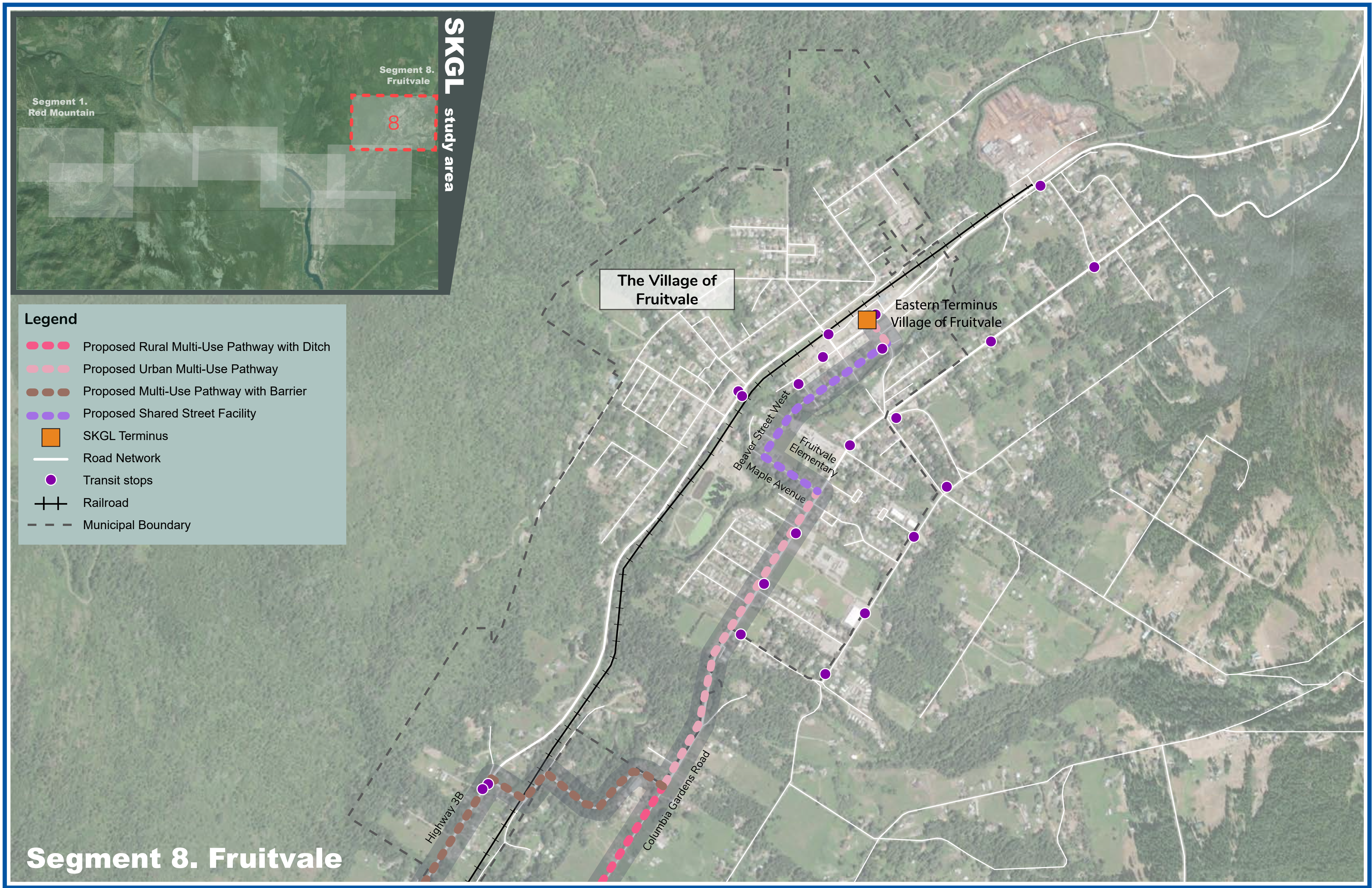


Corridor Description

This segment represents the continuation of a proposed rural multi-use pathway travelling from Beaver Creek Provincial Park toward the Village of Fruitvale on Columbia Gardens Road. Additionally, a multi-use pathway with barrier is proposed for Bluebird Road and Highway 3B, which provides a direct connection to the Village of Montrose. A shared street facility is proposed on 9th Avenue within the Village of Montrose.



Segment 8. Fruitvale



Corridor Description

This segment represents the conclusion of the South Kootenay Green Link at the Eastern Terminus within the Village of Fruitvale. It shows a transition between facility types on Columbia Gardens Road from a proposed rural multi-use pathway to a proposed urban multi-use pathway, which connects to a proposed shared street facility on Maple Avenue, finally arriving within the village core via a proposed urban multi-use pathway.



Overview

To improve safety for road users along the preferred route, traffic calming measures are particularly suited for roads in the study area with lower traffic volumes and speeds, rather than highways or roads with a posted speed limit of 60 km/h or more. These measures can be considered in concert with lowering speed limits and adding active transportation facilities that parallel vehicle travel lanes or require active transportation users to share the road. Some of the potential measures include:



Speed Humps

A vertical traffic calming device that is intended to slow traffic speeds on low volume, low speed roads. While most speed humps are constructed with asphalt materials, less expensive materials such as plastic or rubber speed humps could also be utilized.



Temporary Traffic Calming Curbs

These are yellow concrete slabs that are placed on the road to provide temporary traffic calming. They typically are yellow and have plastic reflective posts or signs installed on them to increase their visibility to people driving. They are intended to narrow the street, which encourages slower speeds. They can also help reduce pedestrian crossings distance.



Hard Plastic Curbs / Delineator Posts

Plastic curbs / delineator posts are a durable material that can serve as a barrier for an active transportation facility or as a traffic calming treatment. When used as a traffic calming treatment, they are typically placed in the centre of a road to narrow the road and make drivers more cautious as they pass them. They can also be used as a barrier to provide protection between an active transportation facility and the roadway.

Active Transportation Amenities and Supporting Programs and Policies

The development of the South Kootenay Green Link is about more than just connecting points A and B — it’s about enhancing the journey in between. To improve the usability and enjoyment of the South Kootenay Green Link and Active Transportation in the region throughout the year, the plan must be supported by amenities, community programs, maintenance, and policies to facilitate a cultural shift towards active transportation.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding involves systems that help individuals orient themselves and reach their destination. Effective wayfinding, including comprehensive signs and maps, could be placed at key points to guide users and highlight notable features along the route.

Lighting

Strategic lighting could be considered in high-priority areas such as intersections and crossings to enhance safety and mitigate light pollution, especially during winter months.

Bicycle Parking

Bicycle racks could be installed at key locations along the South Kootenay Green Link, including community hubs, parks, and popular destinations, to encourage more people to cycle.

Driver and Cyclist Etiquette

A driver and cyclist etiquette program should be developed to teach safety-focused skills and awareness for all road users, particularly in rural areas where vehicles often travel at higher speeds.

Year-Round Maintenance

A commitment to year-round maintenance would help ensure the route remains accessible and in prime condition, addressing snow removal, surface repairs, and debris clearance throughout the year.

Accessibility Features

The South Kootenay Green Link should incorporate features such as smooth surfaces, gentle slopes, and appropriate signage to ensure the route is accessible to all community members, including those with disabilities.

Restrooms

Strategically positioned restrooms along the route would provide a convenient and worry-free experience for users, whether on a short trip or extended exploration.

Benches / Resting Areas

Benches and resting areas could be placed along the route, offering spots to stop, rest, and appreciate the vistas, enhancing the overall experience for all users.

Access Points / Parking Lots

Accessible parking and entry points could be developed as gathering points and trailheads, making it easy to start journeys on the route. Off-street access points could include modal filters (barriers, gates, bollards, etc.) to prevent prohibited vehicle use, enhancing safety and comfort for active transportation users.

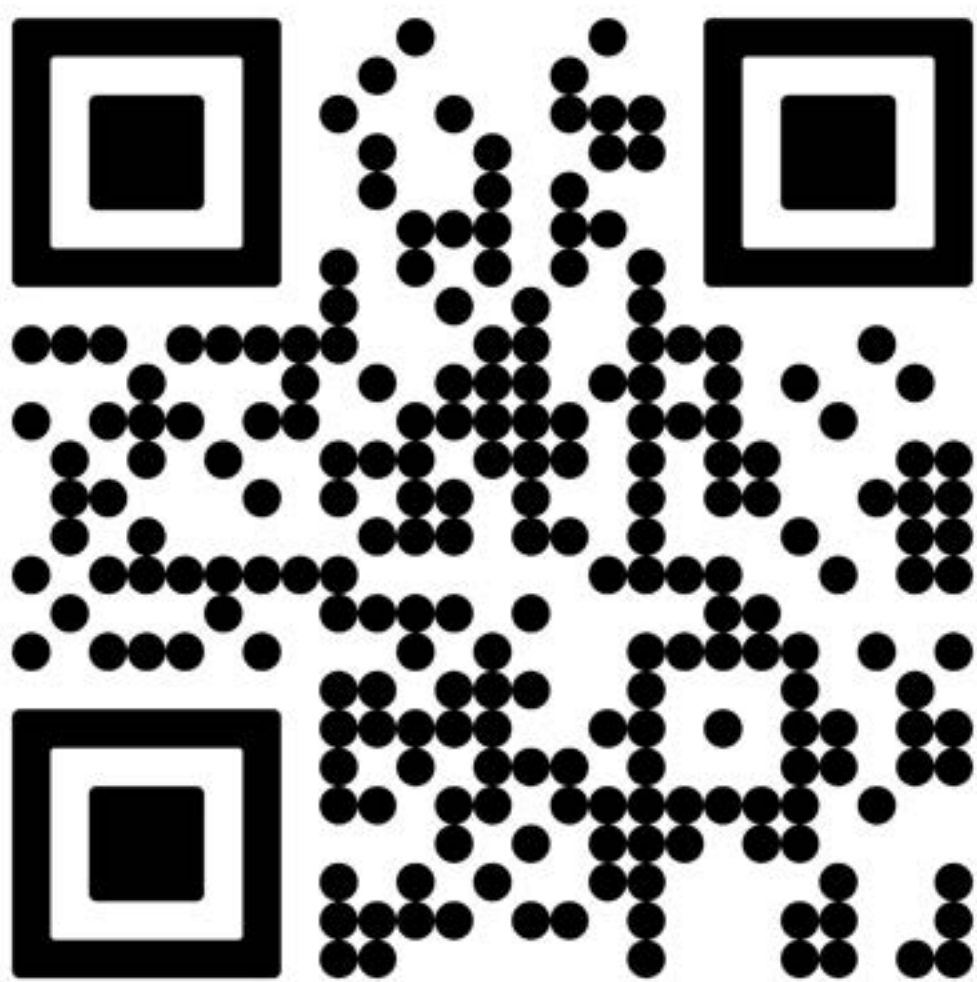
Summary

The South Kootenay Green Link Active Transportation Plan represents a significant opportunity to enhance connectivity and promote active transportation in the region. By committing to the implementation of the preferred route, residents and visitors will enjoy safer and more convenient connections to key destinations, including schools, parks, and community hubs.

The Active Transportation Plan is not just about infrastructure improvements. It will encompass a range of policies and programs designed to support the active transportation network. From wayfinding signage and bicycle parking to improving driver and cyclist etiquette and implementing traffic calming measures, there are multiple opportunities to make active transportation a more attractive and viable option for all ages and abilities.

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to review this information. Please take a moment to fill out a survey! Scan the QR code below or visit the URL to be taken to the project page.



<https://jointheconversation.rdkb.com/greenlink-active-transportation-plan>