



**CITY OF RICHMOND**

**REPORT TO COMMITTEE**

**TO:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **DATE:** August 16, 2001  
**FROM:** Cathy Carlile **FILE:**  
General Manager - Parks, Recreation & Cultural  
Svcs  
**RE: Former Canadian National Railway Right-of-Way Trail Concept 475 Meters East  
of No. 2 Road**

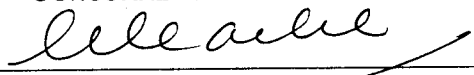
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council approve the trail concept for this section of the former Canadian National Rail right-of-way as presented in this report dated August 16, 2001.

Cathy Carlile  
General Manager - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Svcs

Att. 5

<b>FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY</b>
<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>


## STAFF REPORT

### ORIGIN

In 1998 staff presented a report to Council on options for constructing a trail on the former Canadian National Rail (CNR) right-of-way between No. 2 Road and Garden City Road. Due to concerns brought up by the farmers about developing this trail adjacent to agricultural land Council moved (R98/19-6):

1. *That no further action be taken to proceed with the trail options...*
2. *That staff report to the Community Services Committee on more appropriate options, such as the use of (i) the Princess Street/London Landing area when that area is developed..."*

The first rezoning application RZ 99-163044 for 13020 No. 2 Road is now under review by the City. As part of the rezoning requirements, the applicant is to provide a landscape buffer and a trail on the former CNR right-of-way. The issue of providing recreational trails adjacent to agricultural land was once again brought up by the applicant.

To resolve this issue and provide guidance for the future developments in the London Princess area, staff has developed a concept plan for this 475 meter section of the former rail right-of-way.

This trail concept plan is described in this report and presented for approval.

### ANALYSIS

#### Finding of Facts

The CPR right-of-way (r.o.w.) in this area is 100 feet (30.4meters) wide. The south 50 feet (15.2 m.) of the r.o.w. is zoned industrial, as is the majority of the land in the London-Princess area, while the northern 50 feet (15.2m) is zoned agricultural.

A new London/Princess Land Use Plan was developed as part of the Steveston Area Plan and adopted in the Official Community Plan in 1999. This plan allows for residential development along the southern edge of the former CNR. The land north of the former rail right-of-way remains agricultural and is actively farmed.

#### Existing Site Conditions

The former rail right-of-way in this area has been left vacant for many years and is predominately overgrown with blackberries, hardhack bushes, and a few trees. Some of the larger trees visible from No. 2 Road are located on the property line shared with the property being rezoned. As a result of this redevelopment most of these trees will need to be removed as they are either hazardous or will become so with the construction and changing ground elevations of the new development. These trees will be replaced at a 3 to 1 ratio.

The southern half of the right-of-way closest to the industrial area has unfortunately been used to store equipment, build storage sheds, deposit industrial and household materials, concrete, wood and other materials over the years. Without clearing the land it is difficult to assess the

degree of debris that has been dumped as much of it has been covered with shrubs or if there are any contaminants in this area.

### The Concept Plan

One of the main goals of the Richmond trail system is to provide continuous and contiguous trails throughout the island. Trail use is very popular in Richmond and especially along the Steveston Greenways and South Dyke Trails.

The former rail right-of-way provides an excellent opportunity to continue the Greenways Trail from Southcove and connect through the future residential development down to the South Dyke Trail (Appendix 1). As well, the trail could potentially connect to London Farm. Beyond this point the corridor is being actively farmed. As Council's directive was to focus on making trail connections in the London-Princess area this concept plan takes into consideration only the first 475 meters east of No. 2 Road.

### Assumptions

To create a trail that is a benefit to the larger community of Richmond and at the same time addresses the concerns of the adjacent farmers, staff met twice with representatives of the Farmers Institute to discuss the concept presented in this report.

The basic premise of the plan is that:

1. The land zoned agricultural within the northern 50 feet ( 15.2 meters) will be utilized to assist the adjacent farmers and address their concerns by providing a drainage ditch for their fields and by maintaining or creating a buffer zone;
2. The designated recreational corridor and any trail development and improvements will occur in the southern 50 feet (15.2 meters) adjacent to the future residential lands in the London-Princess area.

### Landscape Features

The plan for the trail corridor is to create a *country lane* environment that includes:

- flowering hedgerows and native shrub plantings including wild rose species, dogwood, flowering currant
- open grass areas with wildflowers and massive plantings of naturalizing bulbs such as daffodils
- a meandering 3.0 meter aggregate path
- small berms planted with either grasses or shrubs
- a mix of conifer and deciduous trees of different heights including western hemlock, douglas fir, mountain ash, birch, a few ornamental trees along the residential edge, and existing cottonwood (Appendix 2, 3)

On the north agricultural side the intention is to:

- retain the majority of the dense existing blackberry and hardhack cover as a buffer (this conforms with the Landscaped Buffer Specifications by the B.C. Agricultural Land Commission 1993)

- build a 1.2 meter high split rail fence to create the country ambience and to keep dogs, horses and people from intruding into the crop area ( a wire mesh detail would be added to the fence so that dogs could not climb through)
- maintain or add a few trees
- create the occasional small clearing within that dense buffer to allow for view corridors to the agricultural land from the trail while keeping a barrier with the fence and low growing shrubs
- clean out the existing swale and construct a small drainage ditch on the northern edge to improve field drainage (Appendix 4, 5).

Once approved this plan can be used as a guide for future trail development as the London/Princess begins to redevelop. The intent is that it can be used as a guideline for City staff when negotiating with the development community during the rezoning process. A condition of rezoning may include making a contribution to the construction of this trail.

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

The only financial impact at this time is the construction of the drainage ditch for agricultural use that is estimated at \$7,000 and will be taken from an existing Public Works drainage improvement budget.

### CONCLUSION

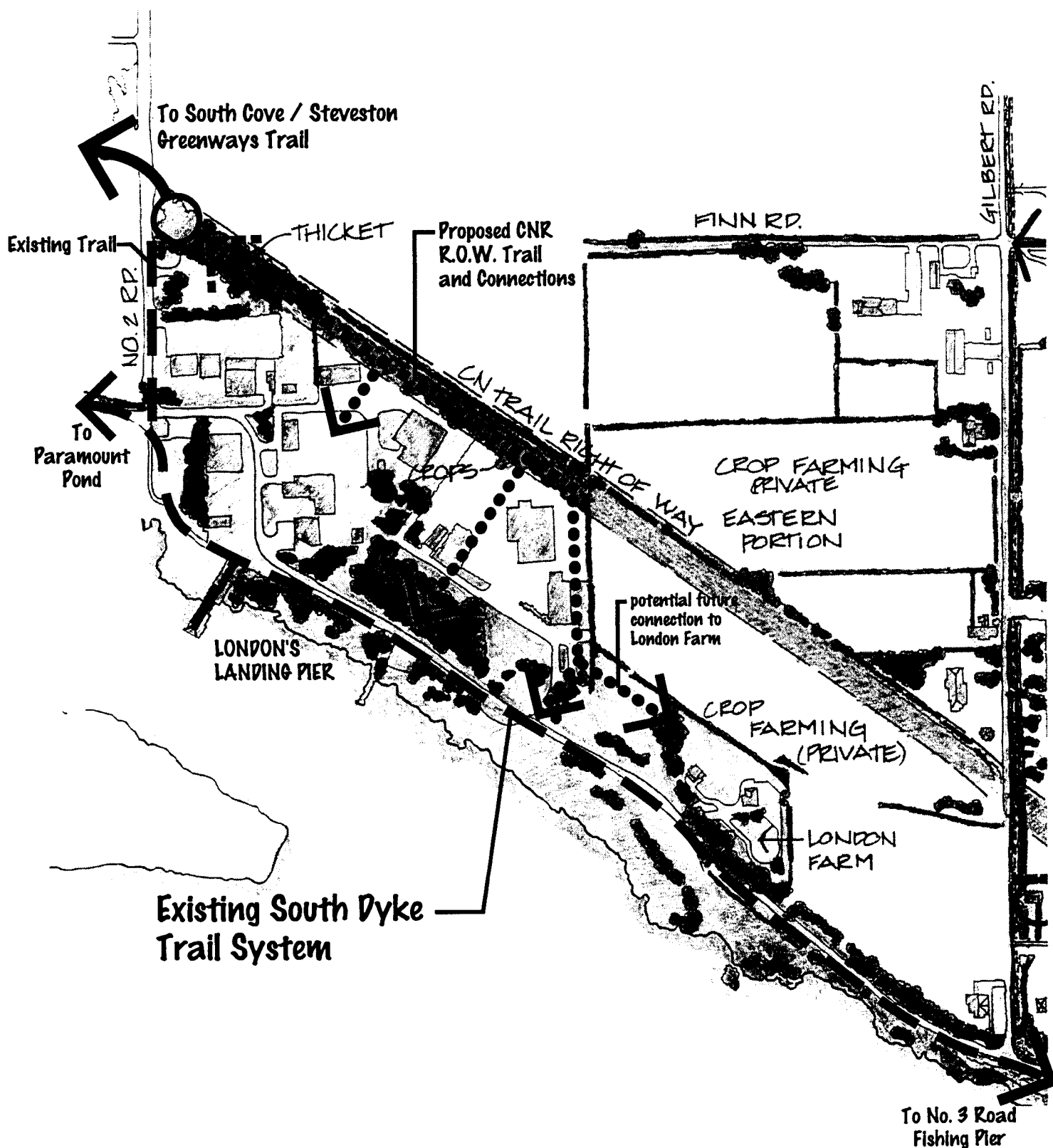
The trail concept plan for this section of the former Canadian National Rail right-of-way, 475 meters east of No. 2 Road, is designed to provide a community amenity at the same time ensure that the agricultural land is buffered and that the farmers' concerns are met. The trail will be designed as a country lane with predominately native and naturalizing plants. It is intended that the plan will be used as a guideline for future development in the London/Princess area.

This trail plan is presented for approval by Council.



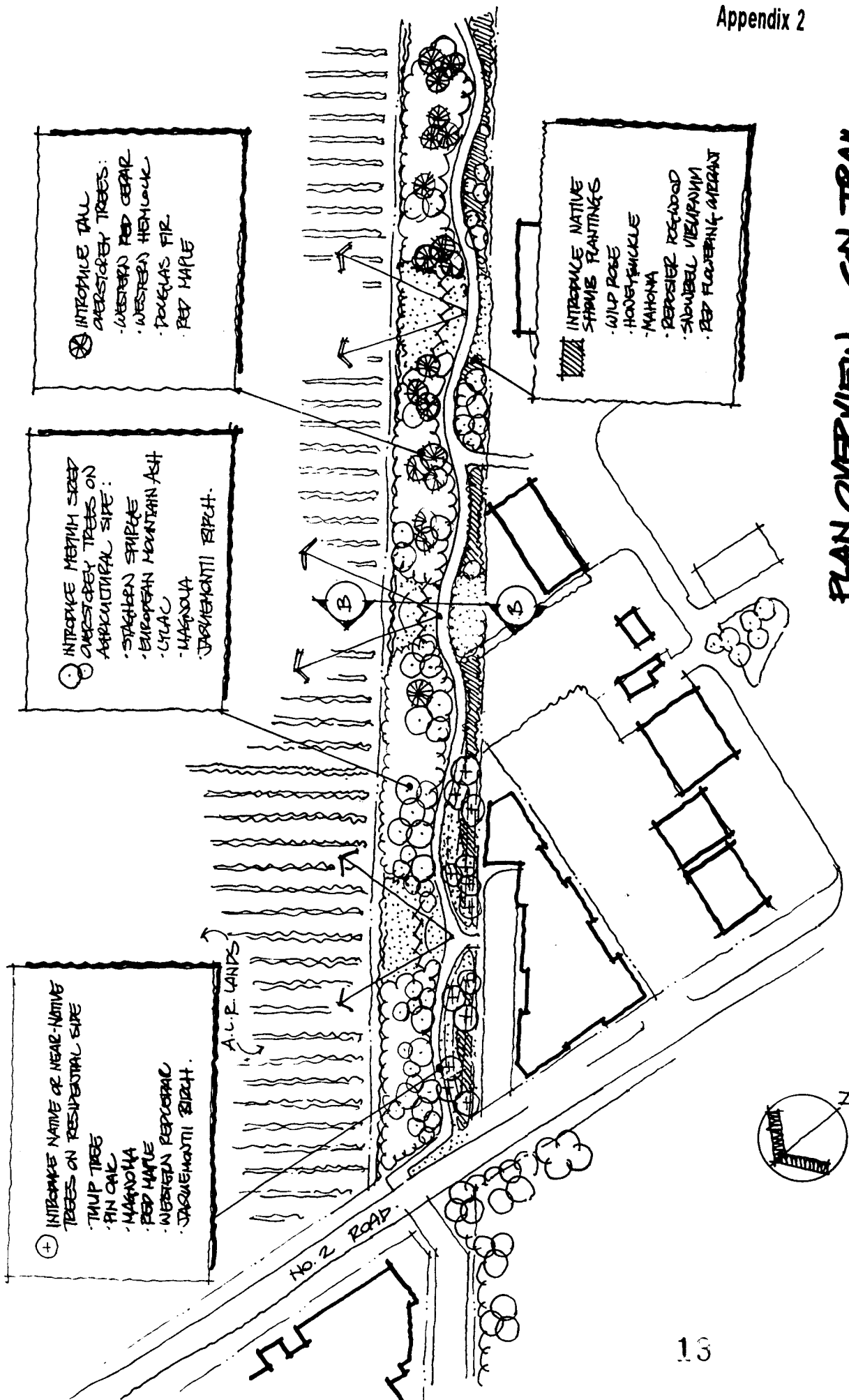
Yvonne Stich  
Park Planner

YS:cr



# Proposed Former CNR R.O.W. Trail and Connections London / Princess Area Node

Updated: August 15/01

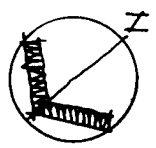


⊗ INTRODUCE TALL OVERSTORY TREES:  
 · WESTERN RED CEDAR  
 · WESTERN HEMLOCK  
 · DOUGLAS FIR  
 · RED MAPLE

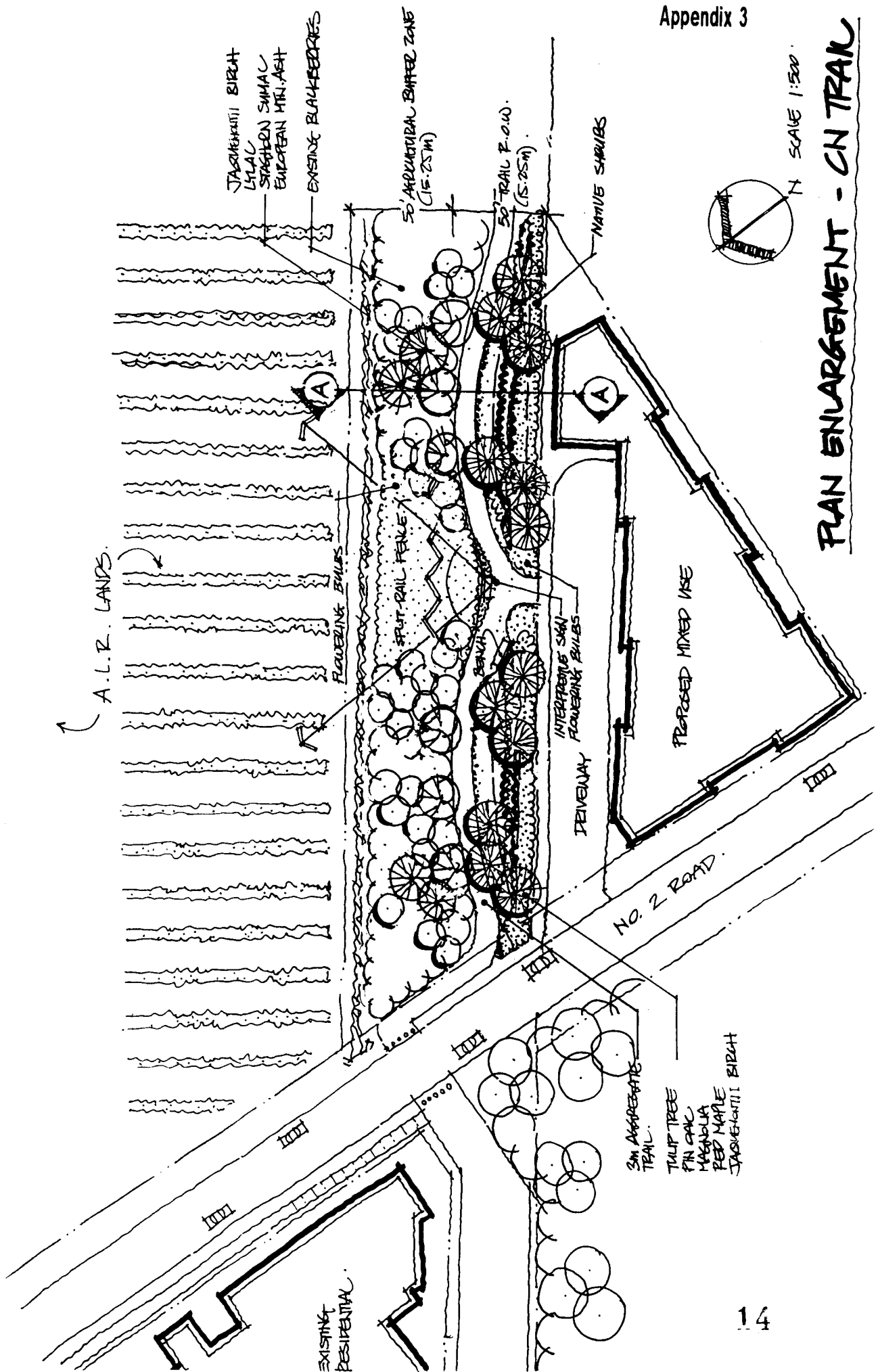
⊙ INTRODUCE MEDIUM SIZE OVERSTORY TREES ON APPROPRIATE SITES:  
 · SPARTAN SPRUCE  
 · EUROPEAN MOUNTAIN ASH  
 · LILAC  
 · MAGNOLIA  
 · JASQUENANTII BIRCH.

⊕ INTRODUCE NATIVE OR NEAR-NATIVE TREES ON RESIDENTIAL SITES:  
 · TULIP TREE  
 · PIN OAK  
 · MAGNOLIA  
 · RED MAPLE  
 · WESTERN RED CEDAR  
 · JASQUENANTII BIRCH.

▨ INTRODUCE NATIVE SHRUB PLANTINGS:  
 · WILD ROSE  
 · HOOSIERWICKLE  
 · MAHONIA  
 · PERSISER ROSEWOOD  
 · SNOWBELL VIBURNUM  
 · RED FLOWERING ALIBRAND

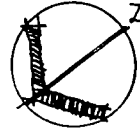


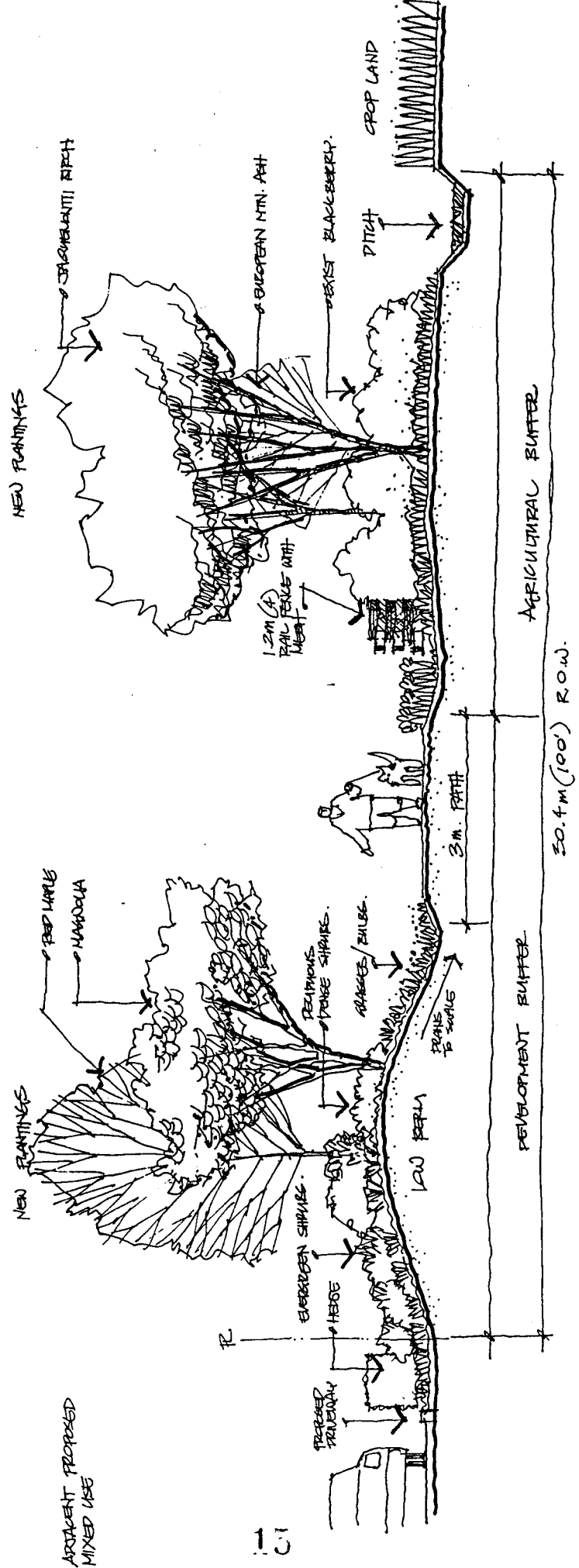
PLAN OVERVIEW - CN TRAIL



TRAIL ENLARGEMENT - CN TRAIL

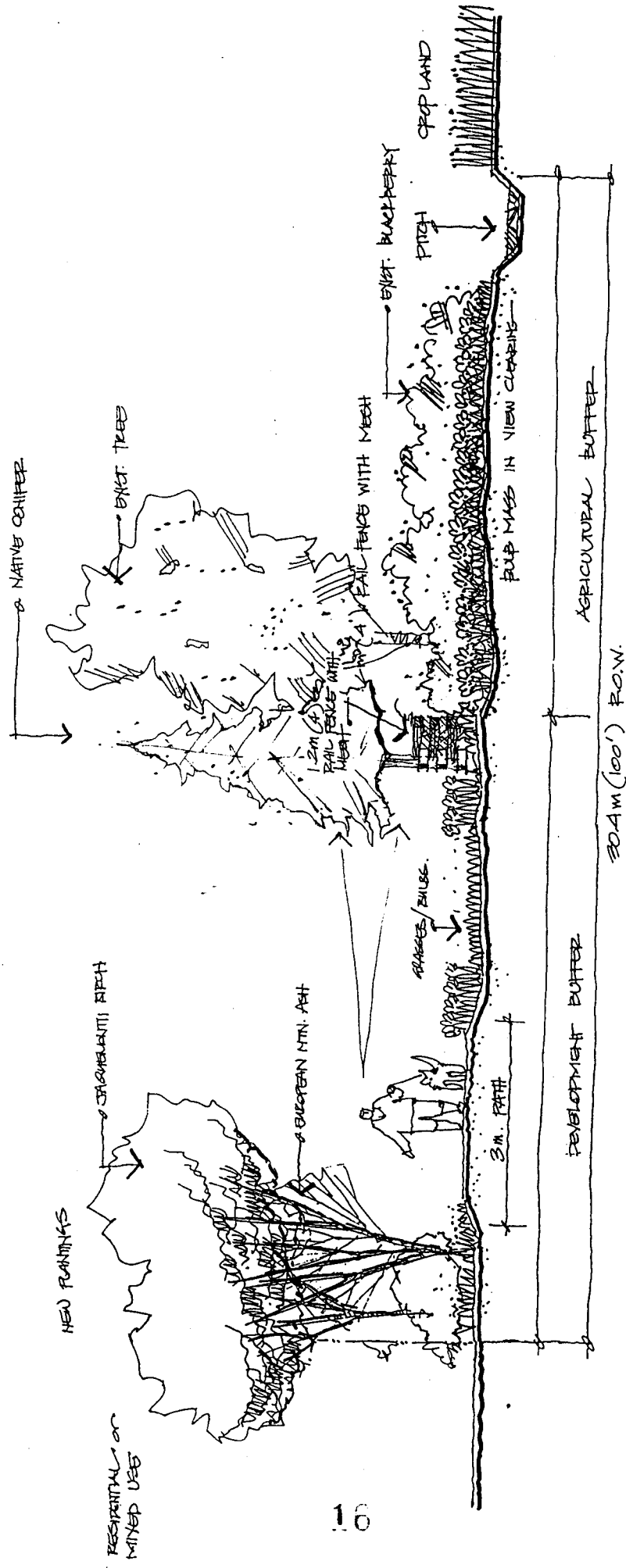
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SECTION AA





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**SECTION BB**