The City of Sugar Creek includes approximately 1.75–2 miles of the historic route, along North River Boulevard from the general location of Independence Landing (later called Wayne City Landing) south to the boundary with the City of Independence at Mallinson Road. It includes one previously developed interpretive site—the Wayne City Landing interpretive site, which overlooks the approximate landing site from a few hundred feet above—and a planned trailhead at “Gilpin Town Hall” on the Mallinson property, which currently offers a parking area and trailhead sign but does not yet access or connect to any developed trail. Both sites are privately owned and made accessible to the public at the convenience of the landowners.

The Wayne City Landing interpretive site is not connected to the flood plain—due to steep forested slopes, private ownership, and an active rail line (see diagram, opposite page)—so the City of Sugar Creek has proposed an alternate route linking the river front to the historic route (segments 1–3). This route is distant from the historic route, but would allow users to connect the approximate riverfront location of the historic trail landing back to the historic route using currently existing public right-of-ways. The option to connect the interpretive site directly to the riverfront via a bridge or other connector over or under the railroad was explored as part of this project, and is considered a long term goal for the city, but presents significant technical and cost challenges.

The City of Sugar Creek is still considering options for connecting the Wayne City Landing interpretive site and the route through the city in close proximity to the actual historic trail alignments while ensuring user safety and selecting routes that are feasible for implementation. Proposed trail segments in Sugar Creek do not intersect any current public transportation routes, although transit can be accessed within a mile to the south in the City of Independence.

Potential trailhead locations include Wayne City Landing interpretive site, Gilpin Town Hall at Mallinson Vineyard, and O’Renick Park at Sterling Avenue and Kentucky Road.

The length of the proposed retracement route within Sugar Creek is between 3.72 and 3.83 miles, depending on which of two options is ultimately selected. Both include the 0.72 mile route approximating the historic route along North River Boulevard from the proposed Gilpin Town Hall Trailhead south (segment 5). Option A consists of a 3 mile route along Cement City Road, Sterling Avenue, Elizabeth Street, and Mallinson Road. Option B, along Kentucky Road rather than Cement City Road, is 3.11 miles.
Sugar Creek: overview

1. North River Boulevard right-of-way issues

North River Boulevard, like the historic trails before it, follows the ridge top connecting the bluffs above Independence Landing to downtown Independence. Although this is an indicator that it is an authentic historic route of the trails, it also presents significant right-of-way challenges when trying to add a safe pedestrian and bicycle route to the existing local residential road. For this reason, the City of Sugar Creek is exploring options for routing the constructed trail off of North River Boulevard, roughly between Kentucky Avenue and the Gilpin Town Hall trailhead, to ensure user safety. This requires diverging from the historic route significantly in this area, but is preferred by the city at this time.

2. Wayne City Landing interpretive site to river

The Wayne City Landing interpretive site has always suffered from a lack of connection to the river. Although the precise site of the original landing is unknown, a clear and consistent visual connection to the river—often obstructed by vegetation—would be invaluable for interpretive purposes, and a physical connection would allow visitors and residents access to the true starting point of the trails, the Missouri River waterfront. However, the drop from North River Boulevard to the river flood plain is nearly 300' of elevation, and at its steepest points exceeds a 10% slope. In addition, the railroad line paralleling Cement City Road cuts through this proposed alignment. For this reason, while this connection is considered a future project of interest for the city, it represents significant cost and technical challenges.
Sugar Creek: Segment 1

0.89 Miles. Cement City Road from just downhill of Wayne City Landing interpretive site to at-grade crossing of railroad line (This is part of one of two options under review (A), see page 21).

ISSUES:
- Narrow right-of-way space along Cement City Road
- Implementation of this segment implies a trailhead, interpretive site, or other beginning at the northeast end of the segment
- Challenge to connect to Wayne City Landing

CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS:
- Connects to the proposed Lewis and Clark Marina
- Follows proposed linear riverfront trail, as indicated in Sugar Creek’s Conceptual River Trail Master Plan
- Links to a trail/on-street connector headed east, which could provide regional trail connections, as noted in the Trails KC Plan (see note 1, page 21)

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Provides potential views and access to the Missouri River
- Future development of the riverfront in this area could provide opportunities to create a trailhead and/or interpretive site at the approximate historic location of Independence Landing

RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC ROUTE:
This segment is northwest of the historic route, passing along the edge of the floodplain of the Missouri River, where the historic route climbed the bluffs directly toward Independence (see segment 4). This route (segments 1–3) was considered by the City of Sugar Creek and could provide an alternate connection to the riverfront, and follow an old non-NHT wagon road route from the floodplain to the bluffs.
Two options are under review.

- **A**: 1.24 Miles. Sterling Avenue from Cement City Road to Elizabeth Street, then Elizabeth to Vermont Street (this segment, in combination with Segment 1).
- **B**: 2.97 Miles. Kentucky Road from North River Road to Sterling Avenue, then Sterling Avenue to Elizabeth Street, then Elizabeth to Vermont Street (part of this segment, with Segment 4, page 23)

**ISSUES:**

- Option A will need to safely cross railroad, current road crossing is at-grade

**CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS:**

- Leads people through downtown Sugar Creek
- Connects to John C. O'Renick Park, Kaw Field Park, and William Henry Harrison Park
- By connecting Cement City Road to Sterling Avenue, the Sugar Creek Bicycle Circuit Race (an annual road bicycling race held on Sugar Creek streets) could be extended to travel along the riverside
- Links to a trail/on-street connector headed west, which could provide regional trail connections, as noted in the Trails KC Plan

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Opportunity to interpret how mules/oxen pulling wagons were led along this alternative path because it was less steep than traveling up the bluff along the river
- Celebrates history of former “Wayne City Road,” which was later renamed Elizabeth Street

**RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC ROUTE:**

This segment is west of the historic route, climbing from the Missouri River floodplain to the bluffs by way of Sterling Avenue and Elizabeth Street, and downtown Sugar Creek. This route (segments 1-3) was considered by the City of Sugar Creek to provide an alternate connection to the riverfront, and follow an old non-NHT wagon road route from the floodplain to the bluffs. Kentucky Road (segment 4) is another option to provide a connection from the Wayne City Landing interpretive site to O'Renick Park and downtown Sugar Creek.

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Sugar Creek: Segment 3

0.88 Miles, Mallinson Road from Vermont Avenue to North River Boulevard.

ISSUES:
- There are no existing sidewalks in most areas here
- Retaining walls and drainage channels will need consideration alongside roadway

CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS:
- Connects to Mound Grove Cemetery
- Could provide safe connection to nearby Abraham Mallinson Elementary

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Opportunity to interpret how mules/oxen pulling wagons were led along this alternative path because it was less steep than traveling up the bluff along the river

RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC ROUTE:
This segment is west of the historic route, climbing from the Missouri River floodplain to the bluffs by way of Sterling and Elizabeth Streets, and downtown Sugar Creek. This route (segments 1–3) was proposed by the City of Sugar Creek to provide an alternate connection to the riverfront, and follow an old non-NHT wagon road route from the floodplain to the bluffs.
Sugar Creek: Segment 4

1.76 Miles. North River Boulevard from Wayne City Landing interpretive site to Kentucky Road, Kentucky southwest to North Sterling Avenue. (This is part of one of two options under review (B), see page 21).

ISSUES:
• North River Boulevard does not yet have sewer system for development on the north end, and a trail could be demolished if sewer system is later constructed
• Narrow right-of-way space along North River Boulevard
• Connection to river from Wayne City Landing interpretive site extremely challenging due to steep slopes and active rail line

CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS:
• Connects to Wayne City Landing interpretive site

OPPORTUNITIES:
• Wayne City Landing offers limited parking, trail interpretation, and some view to the Missouri River (could be improved by more regular clearing of vegetation), and is an opportunity for an NHT trailhead
• The City of Sugar Creek is interested in, at some point in the future, pursuing a bridge or other safe pedestrian crossing from the Wayne City Landing interpretive site to Cement City Road, segment 1, and the riverfront
• Either segment 4 or 5 would be an appropriate location to interpret the Independence & Missouri River Railroad, an 1850s freight and passenger rail line that ascended the bluffs and connected Independence Landing to Independence Square

RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC ROUTE:
This segment follows the historic route from the approximate location of Independence Landing to the top of the bluffs and as far south as the junction of Kentucky Avenue and North River Boulevard. South of that point, North River Boulevard is the historic route of the trail. The City of Sugar Creek is considering alternate route options for a constructed trail to avoid issues with limited right-of-way on this segment of road.
Sugar Creek: Segment 5

0.72 Miles. North River Boulevard from River Boulevard Baptist Church property to Mallinson Road.

ISSUES:
• North River Boulevard does not yet have sewer system for development on the north end, and a trail could be demolished if sewer system is later constructed
• Narrow right-of-way space along North River Boulevard

CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS:
• Connects to Gilpin Town Hall trailhead
• Additional connection to northern side of Mound Grove Cemetery and to northwest entrance of Mill Creek Park

OPPORTUNITIES:
• Opportunity to interpret the story of how settlers would travel along the ridgeline trail into Independence
• Either segment 4 or 5 would be an appropriate location to interpret the Independence & Missouri River Railroad, an 1850s freight and passenger rail line that ascended the bluffs and connected Independence Landing to Independence Square

RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC ROUTE:
This segment is directly on the historic route throughout its length.