

Welcome to the Location Public Hearing for:

**Southwest Trail
(Bicycle and
Pedestrian Path)**

ARDOT Job 061562

**July 12 - August 26,
2020**



How do I become involved?

- Please complete the sign-in form to register your participation in this meeting.
- Review all of the materials provided in the virtual meeting.
- Written statements may be submitted anytime between July 12 – August 26, 2020 by using the attached comment form and mailing/emailing it to Garver, Attn: Jon Hetzel, 4701 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118; or PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com.
- Your attendance and participation are greatly appreciated!

For more information, please call 501-823-0730 or email

PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com

Garver

Attn: Jon Hetzel

4701 Northshore Drive

North Little Rock, AR 72118

Location Public Hearing Information

What is the purpose of this hearing?

The primary objective of this hearing is to provide an opportunity for you to voice your opinion on this project. Through the materials presented in this hearing, we hope to make you familiar with the proposed project and give you an opportunity to express your opinions which will become part of the formal record. In order to meet this objective, public participation is needed to identify and discuss any problems or controversial issues. Since we are not meeting in person it is important to clearly identify your issues and concerns, and if needed you can call or email us for clarification on any matters related to this project— phone and email contact information is provided in the enclosed meeting materials.

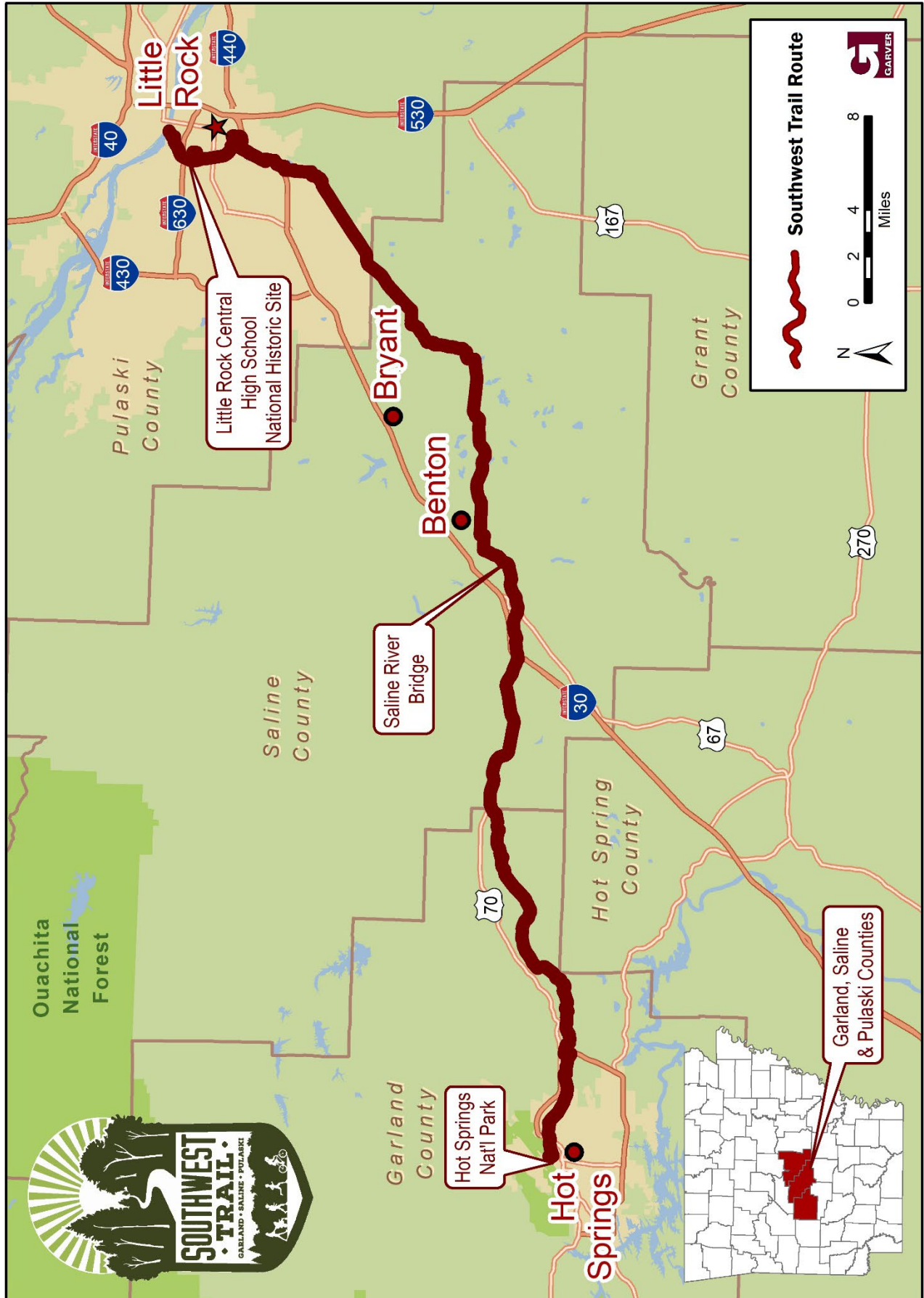
The following information has been prepared to provide an overview and general information about the proposed project. Information has been included pertaining to the design and environmental impacts. Additional information on each of these topics is available in the Environmental Assessment (EA) document.

What is the Southwest Trail (SWT) project?

The purpose of the project is to provide a multi-use, non-motorized recreational trail, known as the Southwest Trail (SWT), from the City of Hot Springs in Garland County to the City of Little Rock in Pulaski County, Arkansas (**Figure 1**). The trail will be approximately 60 miles long and will connect Hot Springs National Park (HSNP) in Hot Springs and the Central High School National Historic Site (CHSNHS) and the Arkansas River Trail (ART) in Little Rock. The SWT will allow pedestrians and bicyclists to safely enjoy outdoor recreation while fostering healthier communities and healthier individuals to enjoy a better quality of life. The SWT also offers a “green” transportation alternative, provides connectivity to existing recreational features, and provides an economic stimulus to the local and regional economies.

Various trail designs were developed for the SWT to fit within the communities and natural areas that the trail would directly affect. These trail types include on-street facilities, off-street facilities, trail within railroad rights-of-way, and boardwalks. Examples of likely trail designs are shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 1: Project Location



42" safety rail adj to slope where separation is <5'

10' Shared Use Path

Existing Travel Lanes

Area of fill to extend path. Could include a backslope graded to match existing slope, or a retaining wall at the right-of-way line.

Existing Pavement Width

Existing Roadway Right-of-Way

Along the route, identification signs or other regulatory signs will indicate the trail route, route destinations, and other pertinent information.

Tube delineators to maintain separation between roadway and path users.

Additional roadway pavement to accommodate shared use path.

> FILL SECTION

SHARED-USE PATH ALONG RURAL, 2-LANE HIGHWAY

This condition is found along a rural trail segment along Highway 88 (Spring Street), between Lonsdale and Hot Springs, where steep adjacent slopes will require modification in order to allow for trail construction along the existing the roadway.

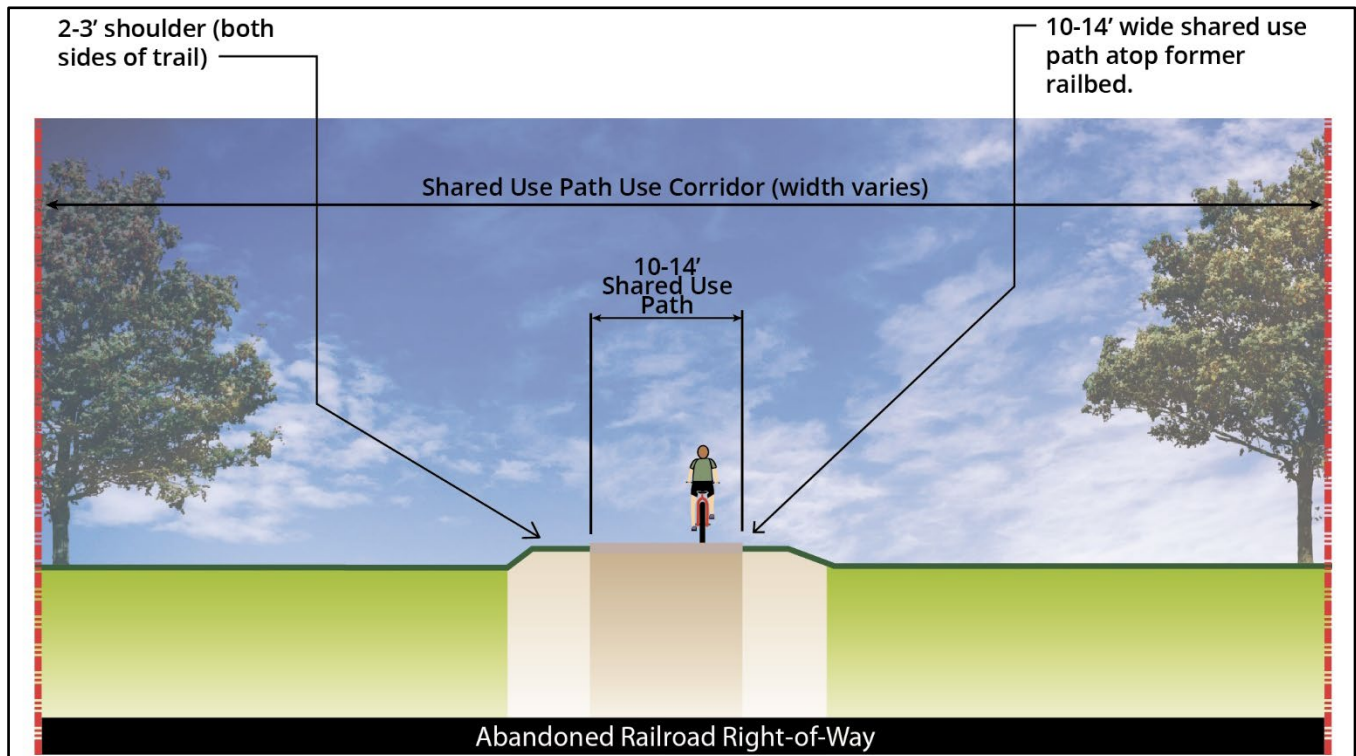
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This condition is typically found in rural trail segments, where the pathway may be located in existing right-of-way and adjacent to an existing road.

Figure 2 Continued: Typical Sections of Some SWT Trail Typologies



SHARED USE PATH WITHIN ABANDONED RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

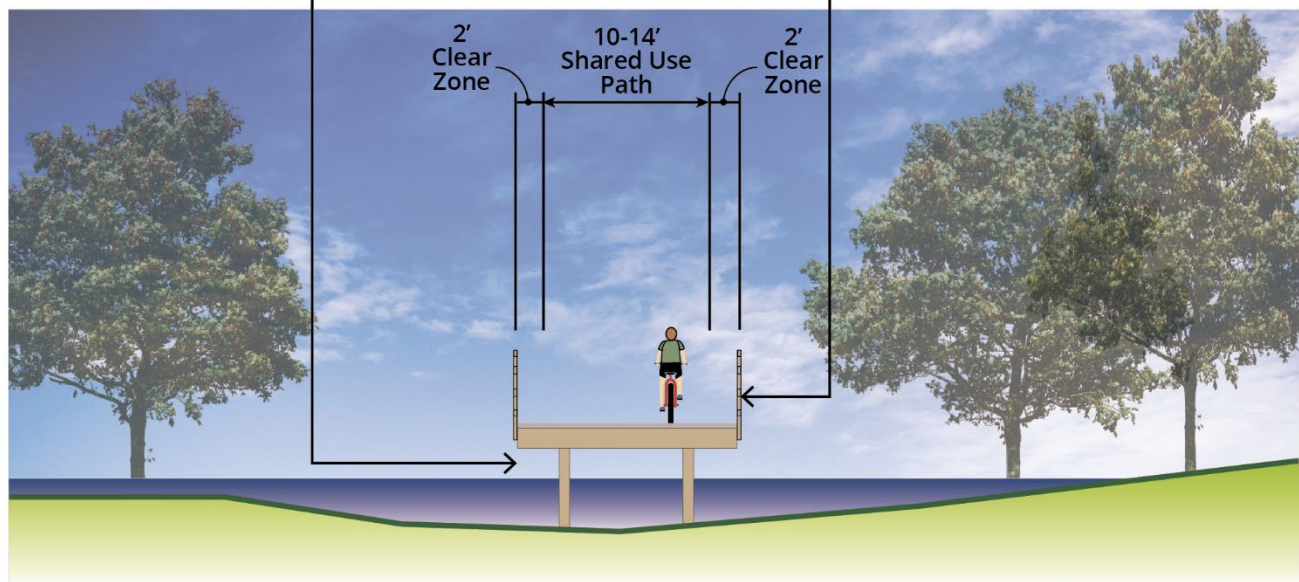
This possible condition is found within abandoned rail corridors in Pulaski County.

Distance of boardwalk surface above existing grade may vary.

Design considerations for longer boardwalk segments:

- Use a wider pathway, esp. in high traffic segments
- Add intermittent pull-outs and seating for pedestrians and slower moving traffic to allow faster cyclists to pass.

Shared use path on boardwalk. Use 42" or 48" tall railings, dependent on design speed, slope on approaches and distance from boardwalk surface to grade below. Consider using textured surface for better traction in wet conditions.



PATHWAY ON BOARDWALK

This condition is typically found in existing parks, open space, or segments passing through areas prone to flooding or periodic inundation.

What are the project alternatives?

Two alternatives were considered for this project: the No Action Alternative and one Build Alternative, with the latter having several Alignment Options that are described below.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not construct the SWT. The No Action Alternative would not construct the SWT. As described in the EA, few existing trails are present within the project extents. Currently, bicyclists and pedestrians are restricted to a limited set of designated areas and are not able to easily move between designated trails and neighboring communities without use of a motorized vehicle. The No Action Alternative would not connect communities and existing bike/ped trails. Additionally, the No Action Alternative would avoid any positive or negative impacts to the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments. Although the No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the proposed project, the No Action Alternative was considered in the EA as a baseline comparison of impacts against the Build Alternative.

Build Alternative

A Build Alternative was developed for this project by designating a Primary Alignment and consideration of Alignment Options. The Primary Alignment was based on previous studies and additional review of current environmental and social constraints, and the Alignment Options were developed and considered in order to minimize negative social or environmental impacts or reduce costs.

A Primary Alignment with 17 Alignment Options were initially developed and presented to the public and local officials in November 2018. The Primary Alignment was approximately 62 miles long, while the 17 Alignment Options ranged from 0.2 mile to 11.2 miles long. Revisions were then made to the Primary Alignment and an explanation of why Alignment Options were added, modified, or removed from further consideration is provided in Appendix A-4 of the EA document.

The Build Alternative carried forward in the EA includes the Primary Alignment with the eight (8) Alignment Options listed below. An overview of the Build Alternative is provided below in **Figures 3-13** and detailed views are provided in Appendix B of the EA.

- Alignment Option 2, Spring Street
- Alignment Option 7, Pawnee Drive
- Alignment Option 18, Edison Avenue
- Alignment Option 12, W. Sardis Road
- Alignment Option 19, Germania
- Alignment Option 20, N. Sardis Road
- Alignment Option 21, Arch Street
- Alignment Option 22, Union Station

Figure 3: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (1 of 11)



Figure 4: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (2 of 11)

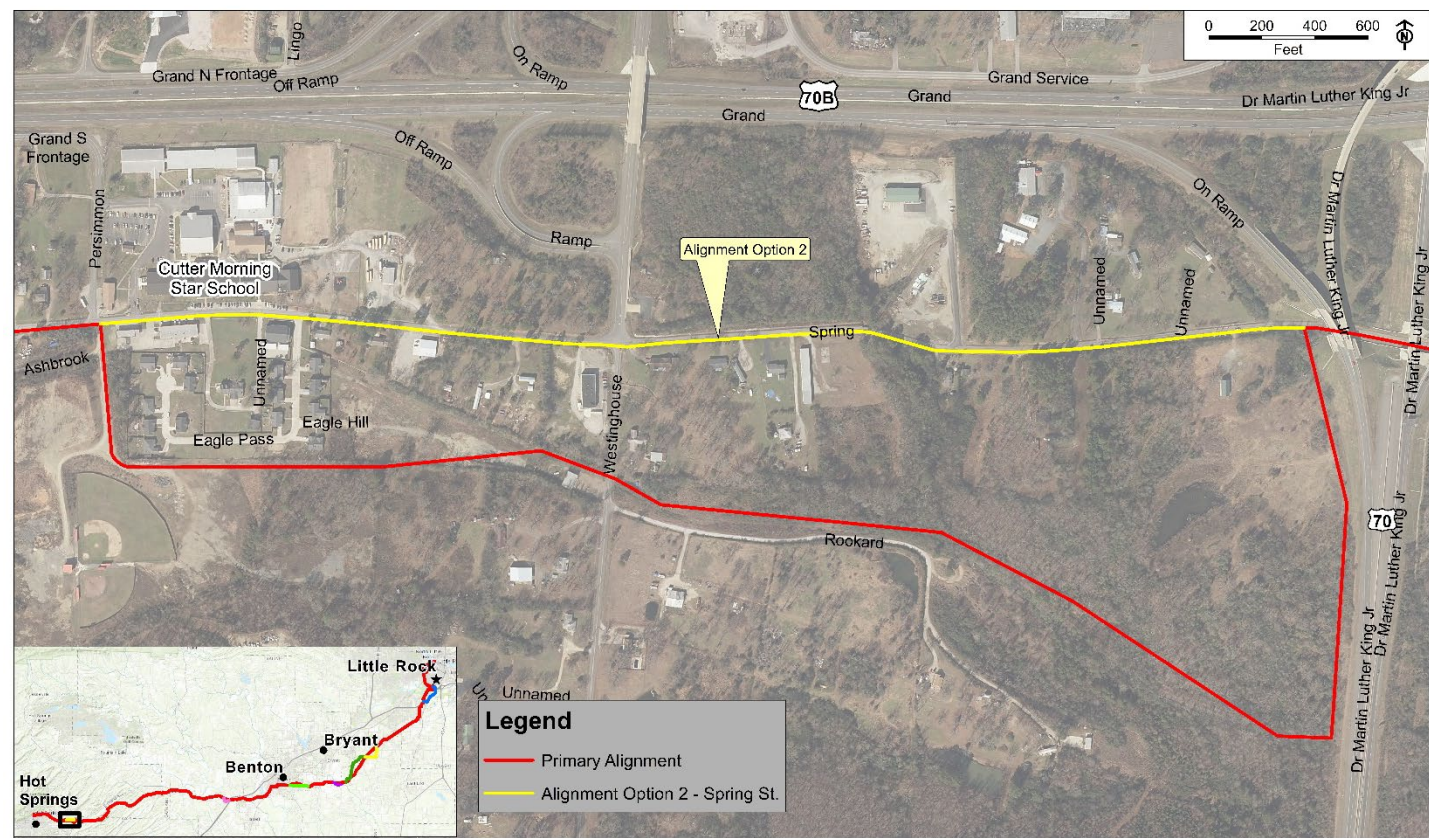


Figure 5: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (3 of 11)

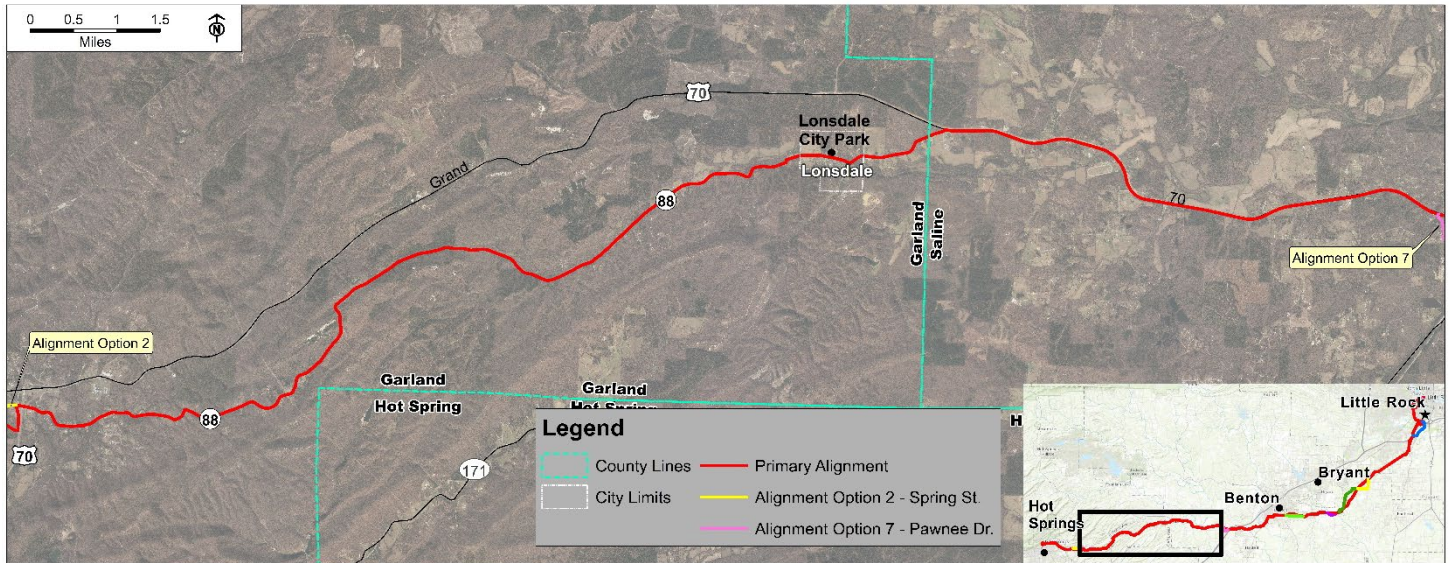


Figure 6: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (4 of 11)

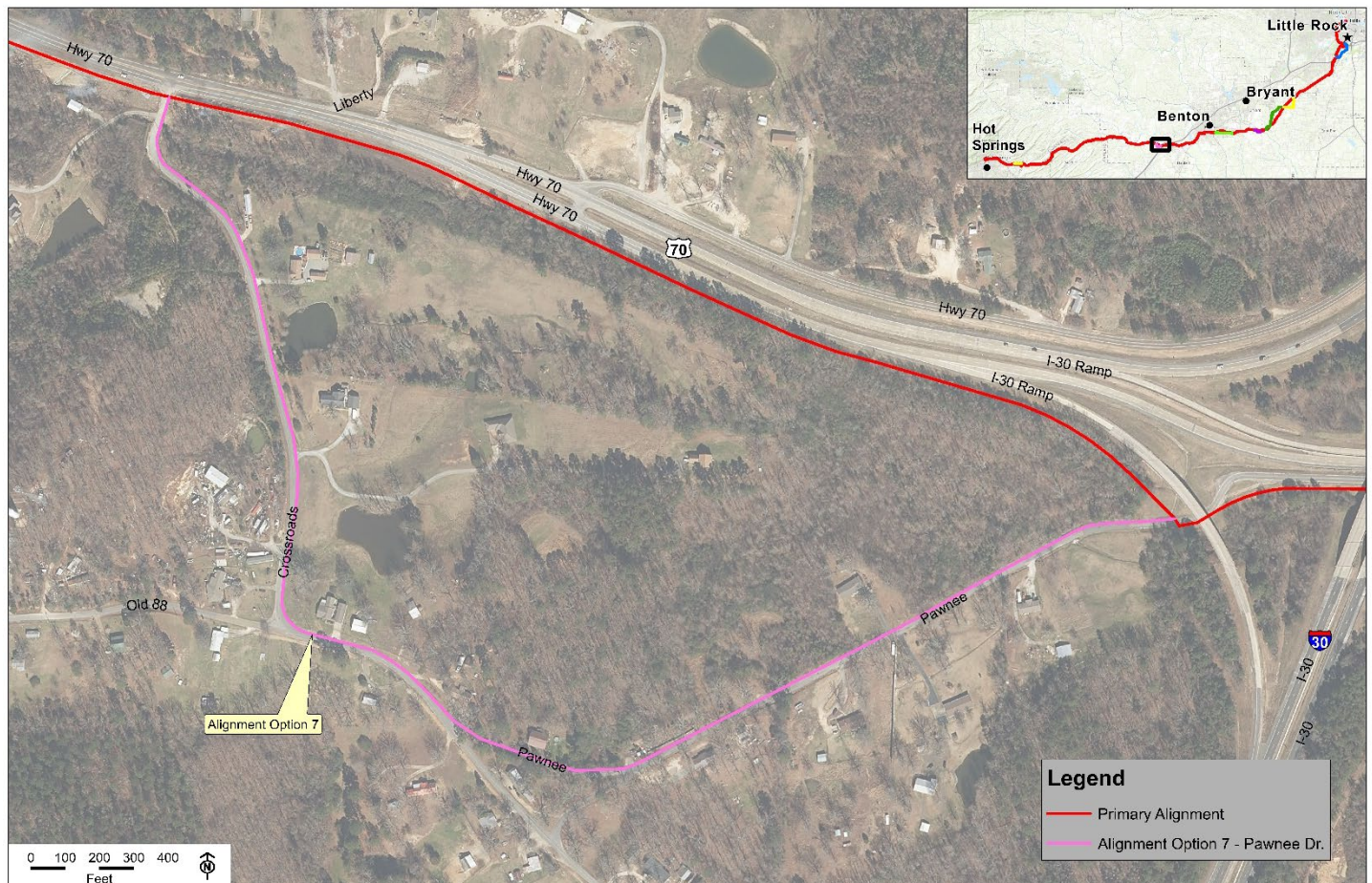


Figure 7: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (5 of 11)

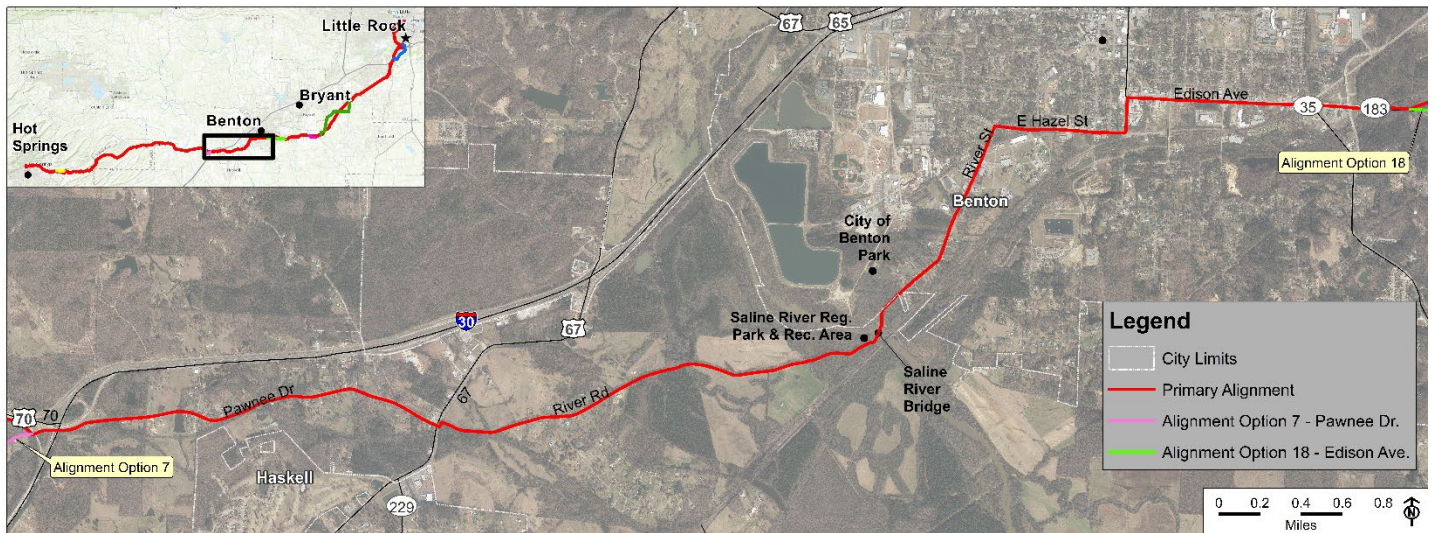


Figure 8: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (6 of 11)

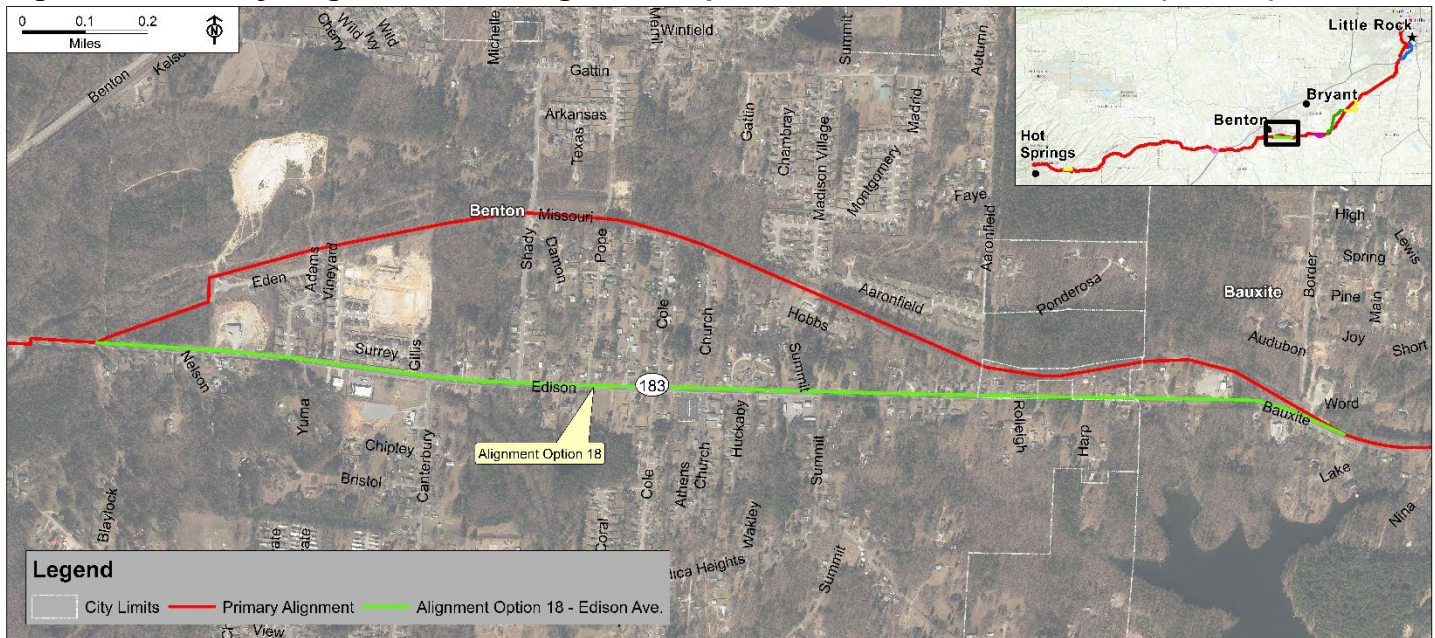


Figure 9: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (7 of 11)

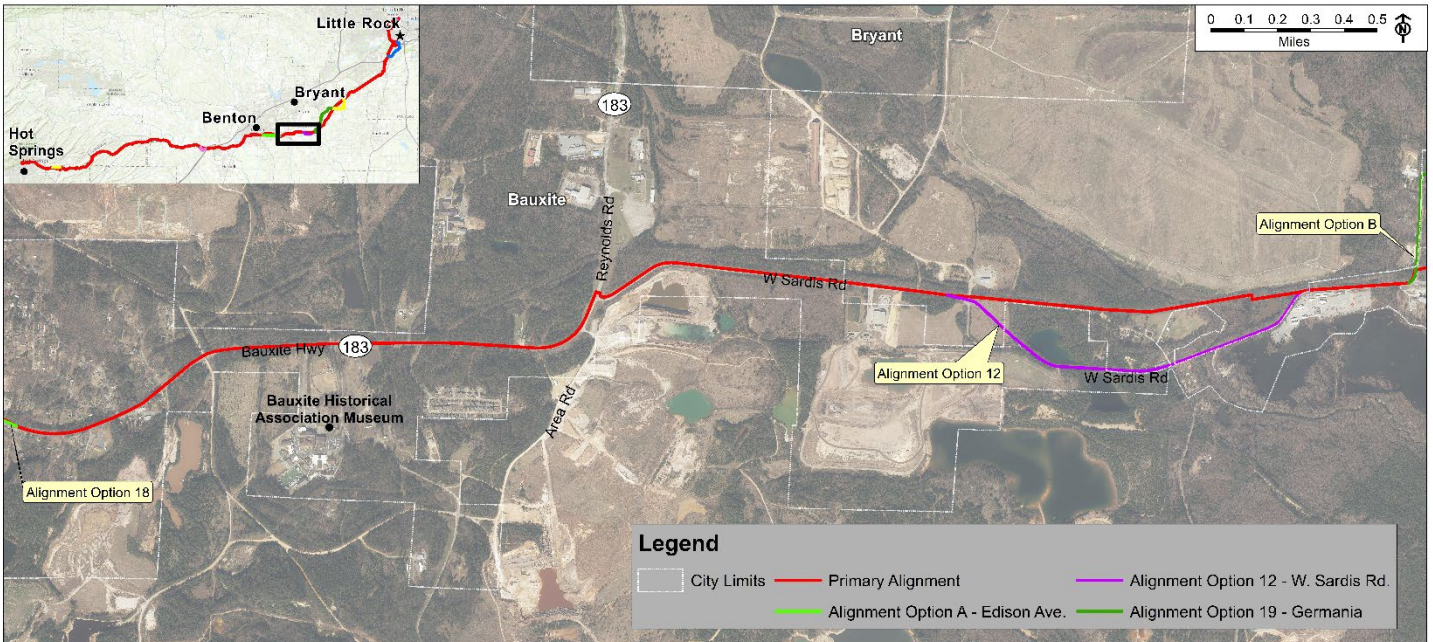


Figure 10: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (8 of 11)

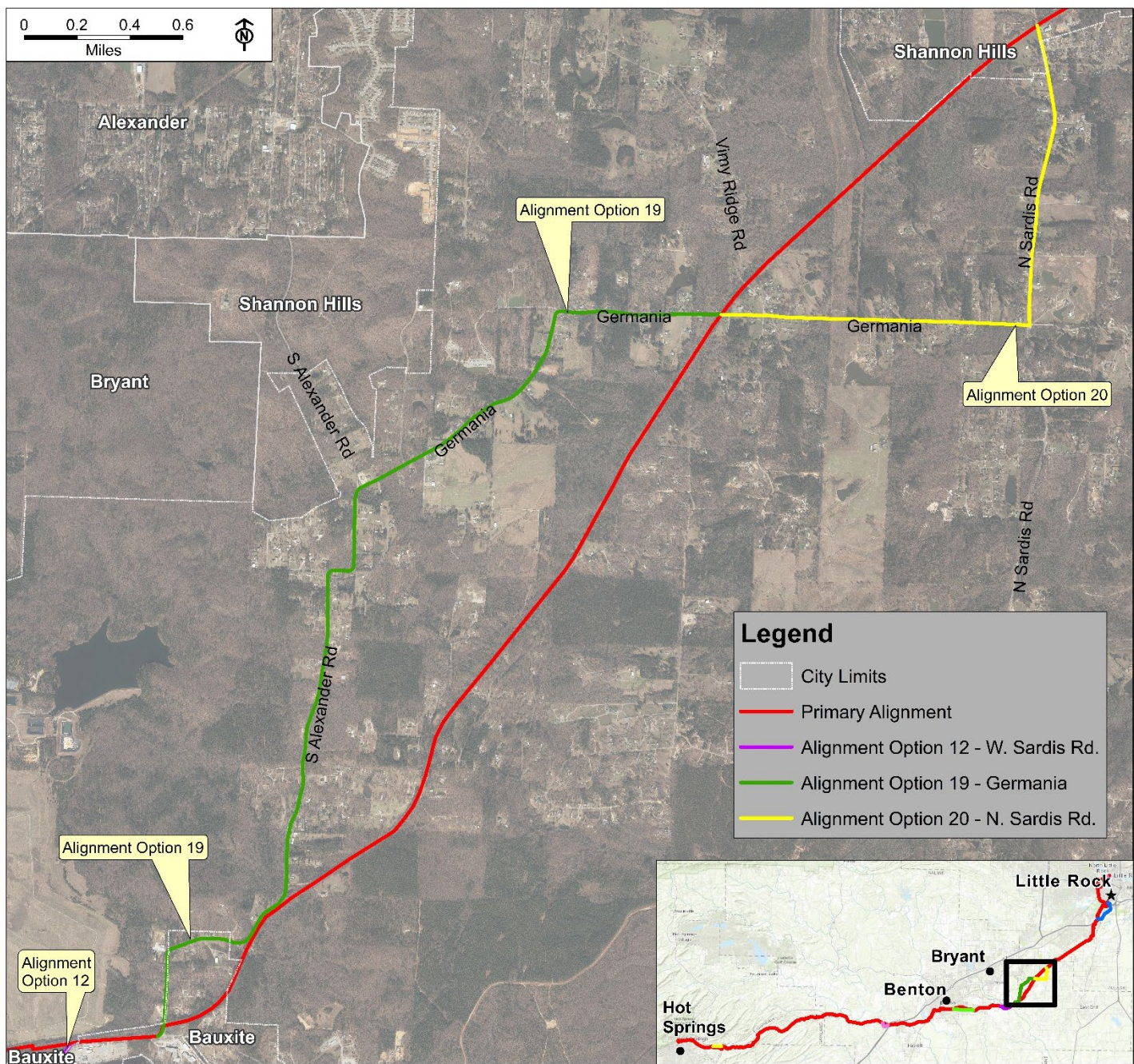


Figure 11: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (9 of 11)

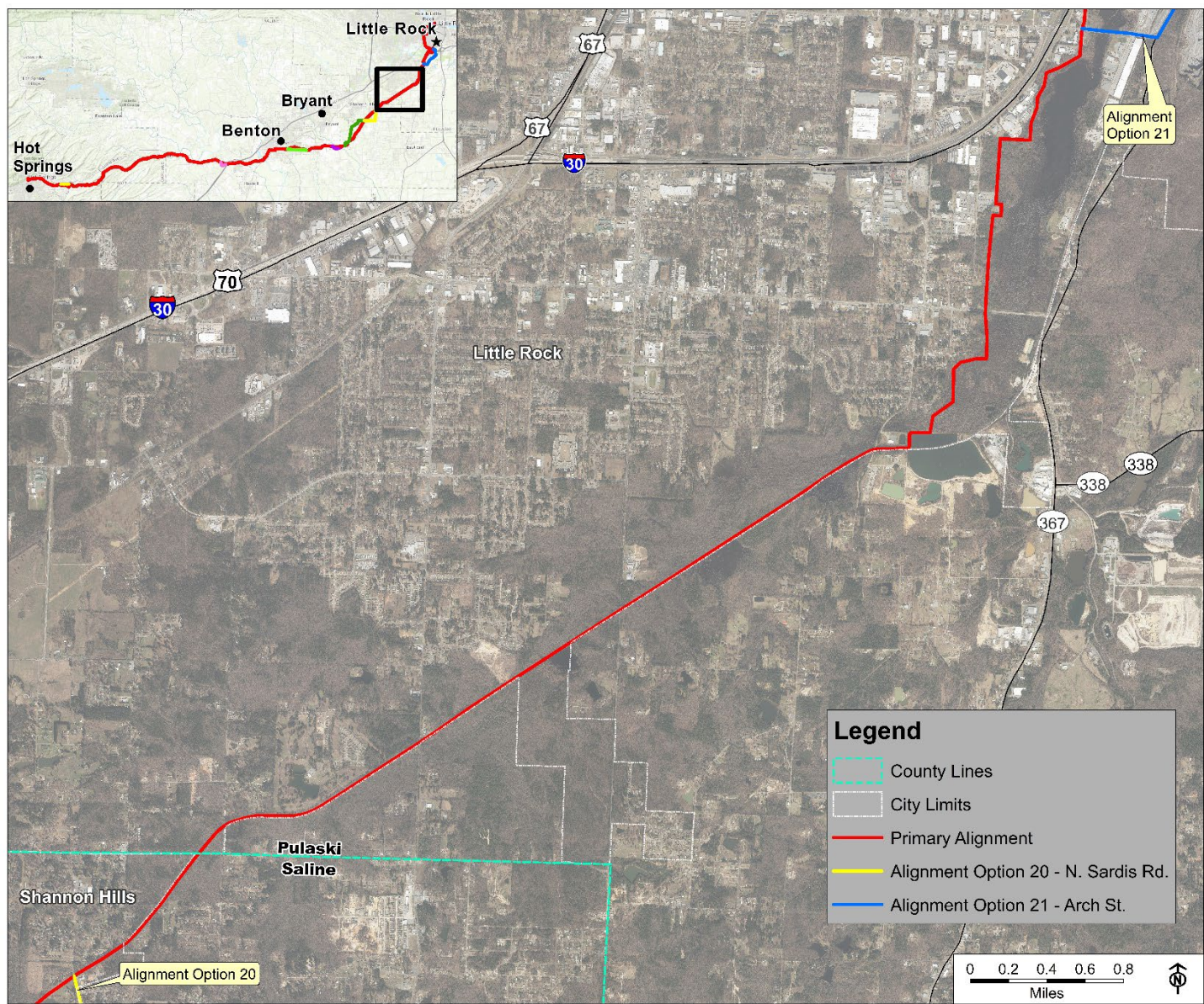


Figure 12: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (10 of 11)

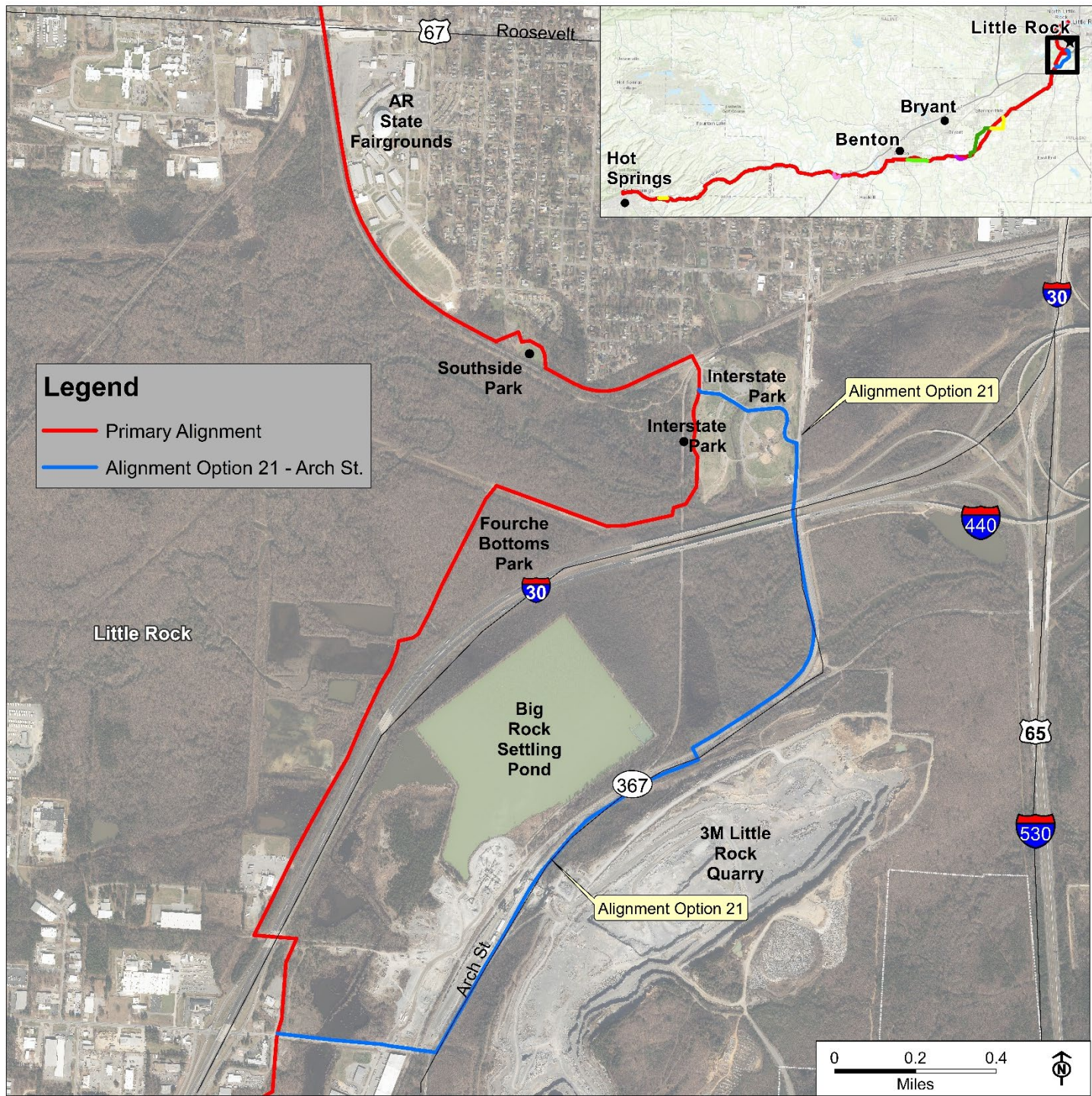
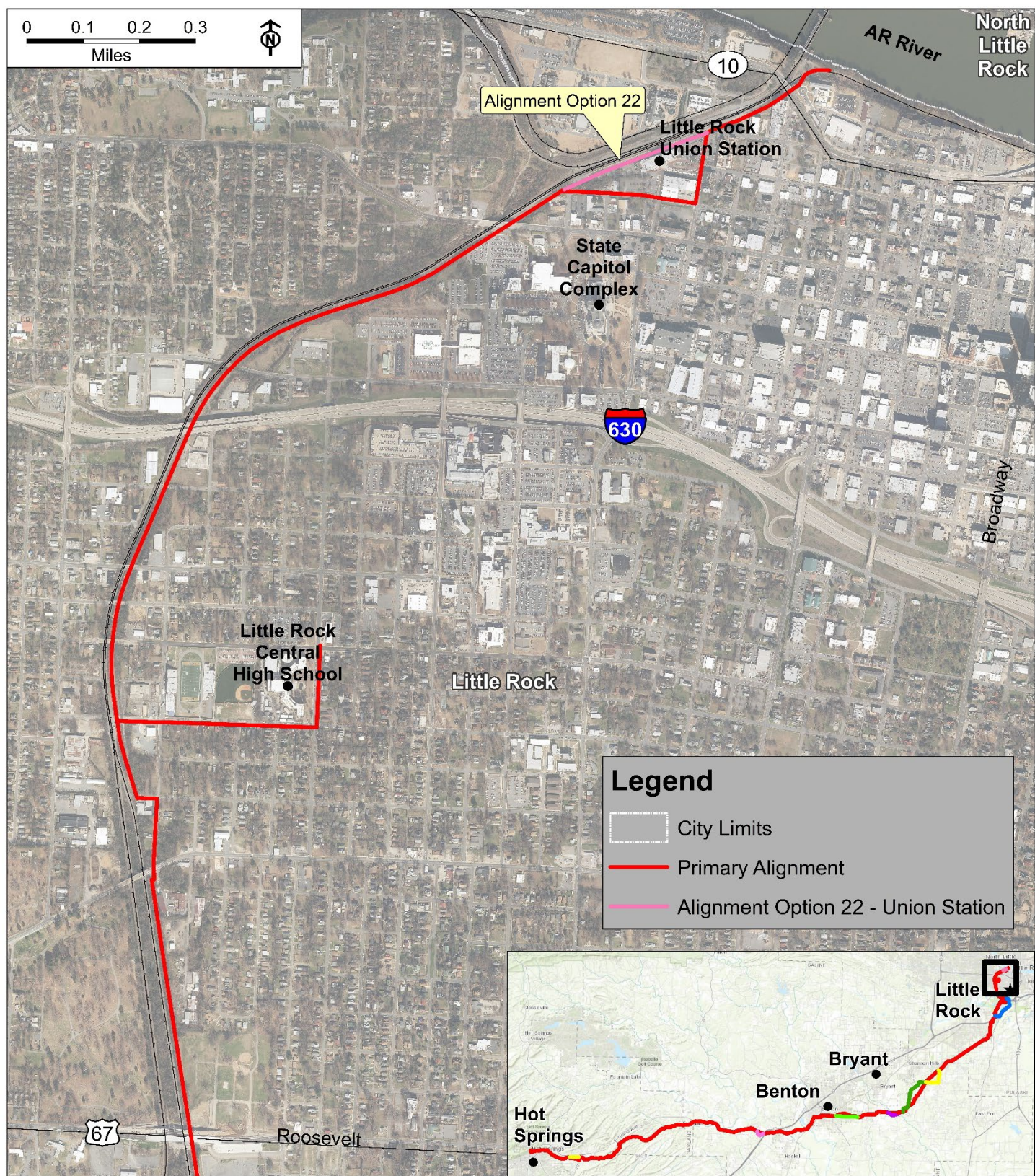


Figure 13: Primary Alignment and Alignment Options Carried Forward in EA (11 of 11)



What has been completed on the project?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the EA for public review and comment in June 2020 and this hearing is the opportunity for the public to provide comments. The EA describes potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of the project alternatives. The EA identifies and describes the Preferred Alternative to be the Primary Alignment with Alignment Option 19. The complete EA document is available for review in the meeting materials.

How would the completed project affect surrounding areas?

The environmental analysis of the proposed project did not identify any significant impacts to the natural and social environment as a result of the No Action Alternative or Build Alternative. The recommended Preferred Alternative meets the project's purpose and need while minimizing adverse impacts. A summary of the impacts of these alternatives can be found in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Impacts Associated with the No Action and Preferred Alternative

Resource Categories	No Action	Preferred Alternative
Construction Cost	\$0	\$42 million
Annual Economic Benefit	\$0	\$4.8 million
Relocations Required	0	0
EJ Block Group Impacts (acres)	0	21
Visual Impacts to Trail Users	No Change	Beneficial Change
Right of Way Required (acres)	0	66
Park Connections	0	8
Known NRHP Sites Impacted	0	0
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	0	11,523
Wetland Impacts (acres)	0	30.4
Floodplain Impacts (acres)	0	89.5
HazMat Sites Impacted/Remediated	0	24
Farmland Impacts (acres)	0	70.7

What happens after this hearing?

After a review of comments received from citizens, public officials, and public agencies, the next step in the environmental process will be to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) document for review by the FHWA. The approved FONSI will identify the Selected Alternative and concludes the National Environmental Policy Act process. Right of way acquisition can then begin.

For additional information, please call us at 501-823-0730 or email us at PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com.

Thank you for your attendance and participation in this hearing!

PULASKI, SALINE & GARLAND COUNTIES
CITIZEN COMMENT FORM
Virtual Location Public Hearing
Southwest Trail (Bicycle & Pedestrian Path)
ARDOT Job No: 061562
July 12 – August 26, 2020

Please Print

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____
Street Address City, State, Zip

• REMEMBER •

Your comments must be in writing or recorded on tape to be considered part of the official record of this virtual public hearing.

Comments:

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

Written Comments should be received on or before August 26, 2020 at the following address:

Garver, Attn: Jon Hetzel

4701 Northshore Drive

North Little Rock, Arkansas 72118

Email: PublicInvolvement@GarverUSA.com

Oral Comments should be received on or before August 26, 2020. Leave a comment by calling:

Telephone: 501-823-0730

For additional information, please visit our website at www.SWTrail.TransportationPlanRoom.com