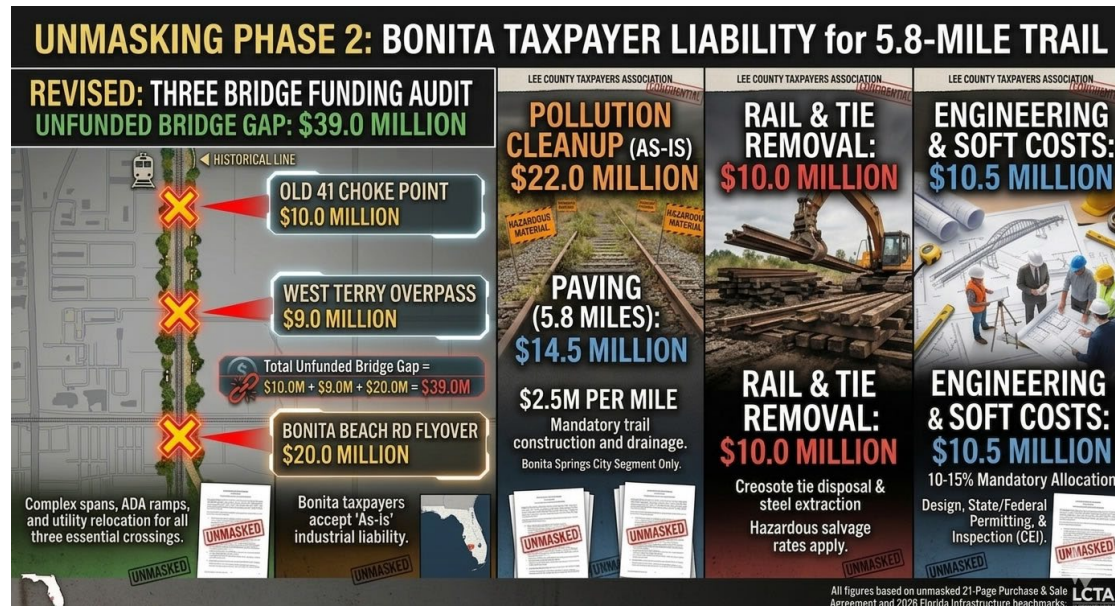




The \$100 Million "Phase 2" Omission: Unfunded Infrastructure & Safety Liabilities: Bonita Springs Rail to Trail 30 year Property Tax Increase

Prepared by: Lee County Taxpayers Association <https://usataxfighters.org/>



Bonita Springs City’s Purchase Agreement funded by a \$70 Million Property tax increase bond only covers the "dirt". To build a safe, functional trail, taxpayers are responsible for approximately **\$100 million** in mandatory construction costs that have been omitted from the public debate.

1. The \$39 Million Bridge Liability

Unlike simple sidewalks, these flyovers must clear major arterial roads. Costs are driven by lane width, utility relocation, and FDOT-required ADA ramping.

Bonita Beach Road Flyover (4-Lane Crossing): \$20.0 Million * Requires the longest span and highest clearance for a 6-lane regional artery.

Old 41 Choke Point Flyover (4-Lane Crossing): \$10.0 Million

Medium-span complexity with significant utility and right-of-way constraints.

West Terry Overpass (2-Lane Crossing): \$9.0 Million

Consistent with the \$9.3M–\$10M benchmarks seen for recent single-span overpasses in Florida.

2. Pollution Cleanup ("As-Is" Penalty): \$22.0 Million

The 21-page contract requires Bonita Springs Taxpayers to accept the land "As-Is".



Contamination Remediation: Rail corridors typically require capping or soil removal due to 100 years of arsenic and herbicide use.

Benchmark: EPA assessments show that "capping" contaminated rail corridors for public trail use averages \$2 million per mile.

Paving and Drainage (5.8 Miles): \$14.5 Million

Cost per Mile: Heavy-duty, 12-foot-wide multi-use paths are currently tracking at \$2.2M to \$2.8M per mile in Florida.

Standard: This estimate follows FDOT "Cost-per-Mile" models for the SUN Trail network.

3. Rail and Tie Removal: \$10.0 Million

Hazardous Disposal: Requires specialized extraction of steel rail and hazmat disposal for thousands of creosote-soaked wooden ties.

Industry Rates: Standard salvage and remediation often exceed \$1M per mile when environmental disposal fees are factored in.

4. Engineering, Soft Costs & Permitting: \$10.5 Million

Design and Oversight: Mandatory 10–15% allocation for civil engineering, state/federal environmental permitting, and construction inspection.

PHASE 2 TOTAL ESTIMATED OMISSION: \$100 Million

"Sarasota's single overpass at I-75 cost nearly \$10 million. Our paving estimates are based on FDOT's own 'Cost-per-Mile' models. These are the government's own numbers that the Bonita Springs City Council and Bicycle shop operator Mayor Mike Gibson are choosing to hide and not discuss before the August 18, 2026, \$70 Million 30 Property Tax Increase vote." — Dave Jaye, Chairman, Lee County Taxpayers Association.

To maintain total transparency and back up our \$100 Million Phase 2 analysis, here is a complete, formatted list of footnotes and citations:

CITATIONS AND TECHNICAL REFERENCES

[1] Bridge Cost Benchmarks (Sarasota): Sarasota County Government, Legacy Trail Extension Segment 3 Overpass Budget (I-75 Overpass actuals tracking at \$9.3M - \$10M per span).

Source: [Sarasota Legacy Trail Overpass Bids and Project Records](#)



<https://sarasotanewsleader.com/county-advertises-for-bids-for-legacy-trail-overpasses-of-beneva-road-and-bahia-vista-street-with-early-january-deadlines/>

[2] Bridge Inflation & Lane-Width Factors: FDOT 2025 Basis of Estimates Manual (BOE). 6-lane arterial spans (Bonita Beach Rd) require significantly higher mobilization and structural clearance costs compared to 2-lane residential crossings.

Source: [FDOT Inflationary Cost Analysis for Pedestrian Bridges](#)

https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/fpo/fpc/publications/boe/2025-boe-manual.pdf?sfvrsn=2c3b7dfa_1

[3] Paving & Construction (Cost-per-Mile): Florida SUN Trail Program and "Coastal High Road" construction tracking. Estimates based on the 12-foot-wide heavy-duty multi-use trail standard (\$2.5M per mile average for 2025/2026).

Source: [FDOT SUN Trail Project Cost Estimator Guide](#)

https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/planning/systems/suntrail/guidance/suntrail_requestforfunding_guidance_2023.pdf?sfvrsn=1483c306_1

Source: [Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: Trail Building Toolbox \(Construction Costs\)](#)

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trail-building-toolbox/funding/>

[4] "As-Is" Environmental Liability: City of Bonita Springs/Seminole Gulf Railway Purchase and Sale Agreement, Section 7 (Environmental Condition & Indemnification). Taxpayers assume 100% responsibility for pre-existing industrial contaminants. See 21 Page Bonita Springs and Seminole Gulf Railroad purchase agreement at <https://usataxfighters.org/>

[5] Soil Remediation Estimates: EPA Brownfields Success Stories for Rail-to-Trail conversions. Costs reflect the standard for "capping" arsenic-contaminated soil and herbicide remediation for recreational use (\$2M per mile).

Source: [EPA Brownfields Rail-Trail Remediation Costs](#)

<https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success-stories>

[6] Rail and Tie Disposal: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Guidance on Creosote-Treated Wood Disposal and Surface Transportation Board (STB) Abandonment Cost Estimates for heavy steel extraction and hazardous salvage.

Source: [FRA Guidance on Creosote-Treated Wood Disposal](#)

https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/fra_net/16607/11276.pdf

Source: Surface Transportation Board: Abandonment Cost Estimates

https://www.stb.gov/proceedings-actions/decisions/?action=stb_hook_table_decisions¤t-page=1&per-page=50&sort-by&sort-order



[7] Engineering & Soft Costs: Standard Infrastructure Project Accounting (10-15% of total construction costs) for Civil Engineering, Environmental Permitting (SFWMD/DEP), and Construction Engineering Inspection (CEI).

Disclaimer: *These figures are based on current 2026 Florida infrastructure benchmarks and the unmasked 21-page Purchase and Sale Agreement obtained via Public Records Request by the Lee County Taxpayers Association. Final costs may vary based on discovery of additional industrial contaminants or further inflationary spikes.*

The Mayor's \$70 Million Bike Trail Tax Increase!

Mayor Mike Gibson Owns a Bike Shop

500 feet from the railroad he is proposing to convert to a bike path—increasing profit at taxpayers expense!

27310 Old 41 Rds
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

LEE COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Exposing Public Corruption and Wasteful Spending

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\$70 MILLION PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

\$3,825 PER HOMEOWNER

VOTE NO

EVERY HOME PAYS FOR THE MAYOR'S BIKE TRAIL

NO on \$70 MILLION PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

\$3,825 PER HOMEOWNER

UNNECESSARY. MISLEADING. RISKY.