

Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail Crossroad Connection Study

Summary Report Introduction

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), in partnership with Albany County, and the Hudson River Valley Greenway determined the need to develop a plan for creating off-road links to fill the gaps in the existing Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail. This effort was viewed as essential for creating an accessible trail system for the region, ultimately providing alternative transportation options, improved recreational facilities, economic development opportunities and significant quality of life advancements for residents of the Capital District. Also, the Greenway has the ultimate goal of developing a completely off-road trail from Battery Park in New York City to the Visitors' Center in Waterford.

The Hudson River Valley Greenway, Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, and Capital District Transportation Committee conducted a public outreach process soliciting input from the municipalities, stakeholders, and residents along this section of the Hudson River. Clark Patterson Associates (CPA) was selected to assist in developing a preliminary action plan that analyzes the feasibility, phasing and design alternatives for the study area.

The importance of creating a north-south link from Albany to Waterford was identified as the primary focus for the first phase of the Crossroads Connection Study. Discussions with the municipalities along the Hudson River and other stakeholders led to the establishment of three priority study areas where off-road connections would fill critical gaps in the existing trail system. These priority areas include: 1) Menands/Colonie where the goals were to connect the Village of Menands and the Broadway corridor to the Hudson River and the existing Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail. 2) Watervliet that looked at an off-road connection between the Fourth Street trailhead and the Henry Hudson Shores Park and 3) Green Island/Cohoes that looked at an off-road connection between the Village of Green Island and the Waterford Visitors' Center.

Several other links were also examined including:

- Tivoli Preserve to the Corning Preserve
- An east-west connection from Peebles Island to the existing Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail in Colonie
- A link from the newly realigned Albany Shaker Road to Route 7
- A waterfront trail connecting the Coeymans' Landing Park to the Hannacroix Preserve.

It was determined that each of these possible connections could be stand-alone planning projects and that the significant analysis of routing options, land purchase and easement considerations and significant cost estimations were beyond the scope of the Connections Study.

Another component of this study looked at the idea of regional maintenance. A roundtable meeting was held with elected officials, planners, and bicycle advocates to discuss the opportunities of regional trail maintenance in the Capital District. The benefit of regional cooperation includes cost and resource savings that would provide a much needed benefit to the

municipalities that currently have maintenance responsibilities and create a regional identity along the entire length of the trail.

Summary Recommendations

The Village of Menands/Town of Colonie Study Area

The implementation of the recommendations of the Broadway Corridor Master Plan would create functional and visually attractive bicycle and pedestrian facilities through the heart of the Village of Menands. A trail loop is envisioned to create a link connecting the Broadway corridor with the Hudson River and the existing Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail. As seen in Figure 1, a southern trail connection would be created at the Exit 6 interchange and could include an on-road path on the existing roadway or a series of tunnels and bridges. To the north, a link would be created along the Kromma Kill through the Schuyler Flatts Cultural Park to the existing Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail.

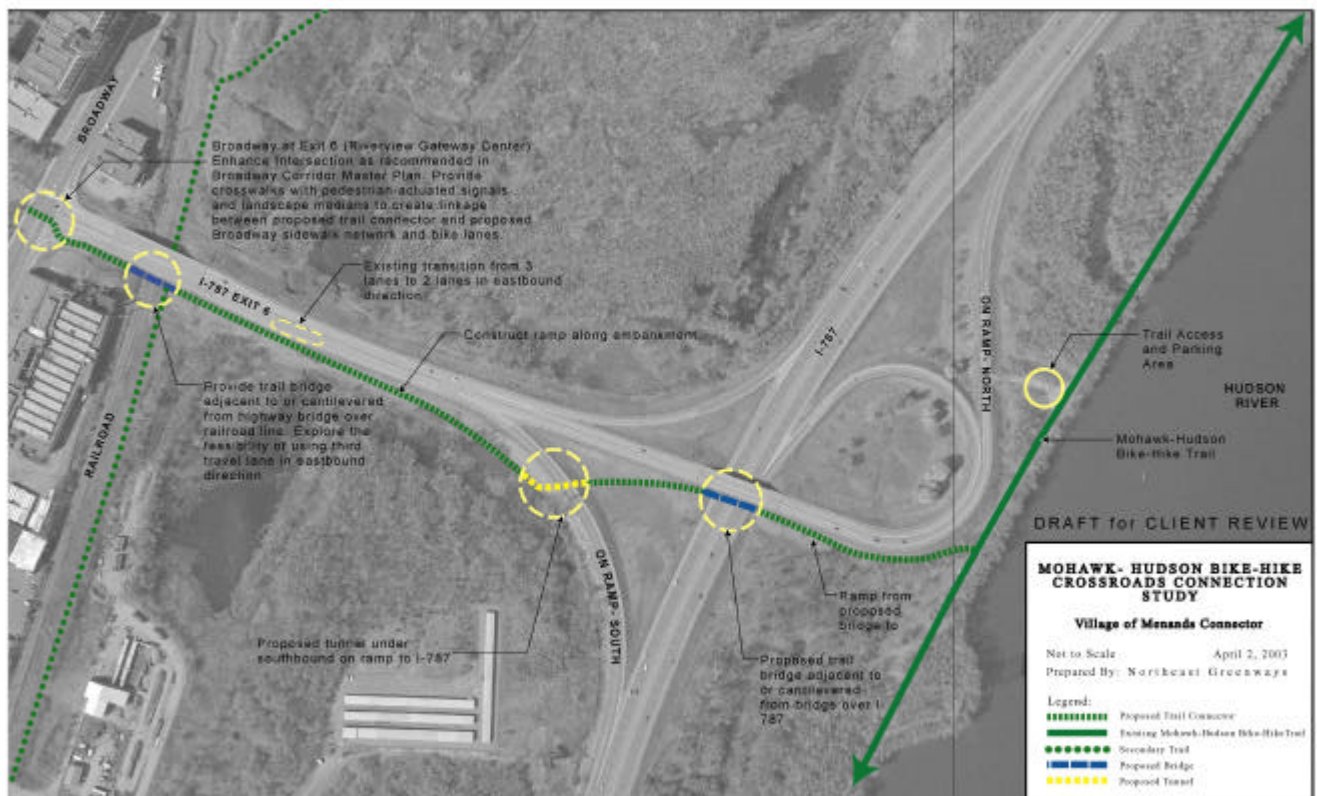


Figure 1: Proposed Trail Plan to Access the Menands Village Center Using Exit 6 as the Linkage.

The City of Watervliet Study Area

The City of Watervliet Fourth Street Parking Area is currently the northern terminus of the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail from the City of Albany. As seen in Figure 2a and 2b, an off-

road connection continuing north to Henry Hudson Shores Park on the waterfront is being proposed. There is an area south of the Henry Hudson Shores Park, Figure 2c, where limited land is available that will require sensitive trail design to create a functional trail that is aesthetically pleasing and will protect the natural resources along this section of the Hudson River.



Figure 2a: Watervliet Section *Before*.

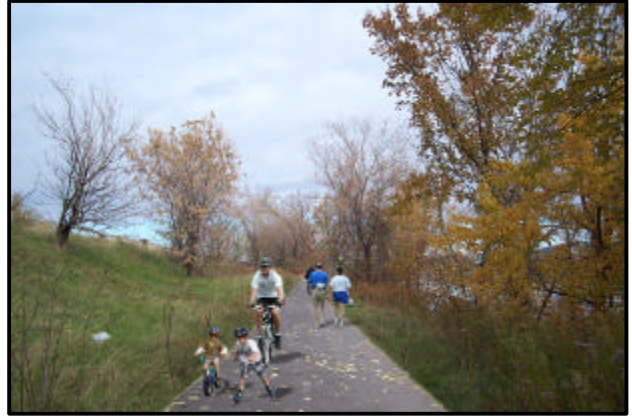


Figure 2b: Watervliet Section *After*.

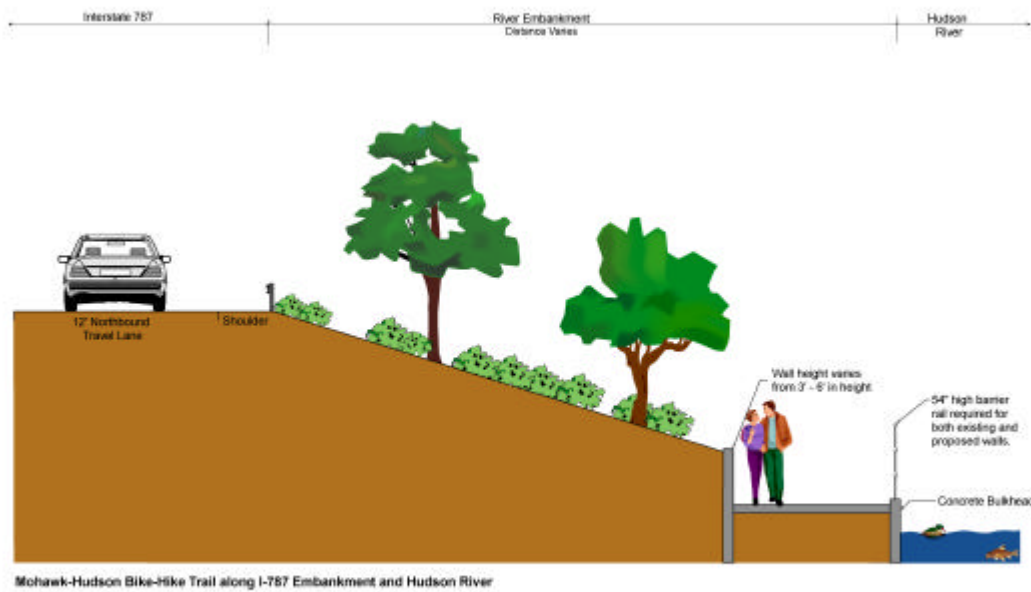


Figure 2c: Conceptual Cross Section in the Watervliet Study Area.

The Village of Green Island/City of Cohoes Study Area

A north-south connection, Figure 3, is proposed along the railroad right-of-way that parallels Cannon Street from Tibbits Road to the Delaware Avenue Bridge. This would create an off-road link between the Henry Hudson Shores Park, through Peebles Island, and the Waterford Visitors' Center.

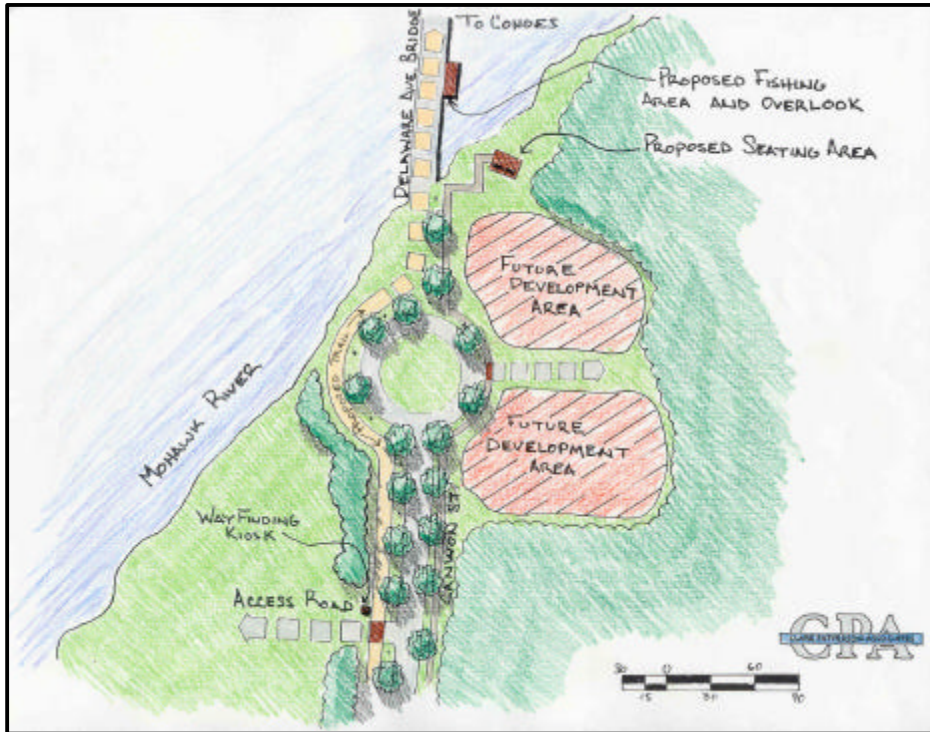


Figure 3: Possible Trail Alignment on Cannon Street in the Green Island/City of Cohoes Study Area.

The Delaware Avenue Bridge, as seen in Figure 4a, will be renovated from its current condition as a railroad bridge to function as a pedestrian bridge, as seen in Figure 4b. A small kiosk and sitting area will be developed on the north side of the bridge, prior to continuation into Delaware Avenue south of Ontario Street. The bridge will include a small overlook and fishing platform on the eastern side.



Figure 4a: Delaware Avenue Bridge Before.



Figure 4b: Delaware Avenue Bridge After.

