



CHAPTER 2

RELATED PLANS + POLICIES

This chapter provides an overview of regional and local plans and policies that are related to and lay the foundation for the Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study. The following plans and policies are described in this chapter:

- Patroon Greenway Linkage Study
- Capital District Trails Plan
- City of Albany Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Washington Avenue Patroon Creek Corridor Study
- City of Albany's Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance
- City of Albany's Complete Streets Policy and Design Manual
- Albany 2030: The City of Albany Comprehensive Plan



CHAPTER 2: RELATED PLANS + POLICIES

RELATED PLANS + POLICIES

The Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study builds upon, expands, and updates the Patroon Greenway Linkage Study completed by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) in 2004. This section provides a brief overview of related planning efforts and local policies to identify key overlaps, opportunities, and regulations pertinent to the Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study.

Plan Name	Plan Elements Related to the Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study
REGIONAL PLANS	
Patroon Greenway Linkage Study (2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies a proposed alignment for the Patroon GreenwayUtilizes state, municipal, utility, and railroad rights-of-way to connect Rensselaer Lake and Tivoli PreserveProposes three options for connecting Tivoli Preserve to Corning Preserve on the Hudson River
New Visions 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies principles, strategies, and budgetary priorities that guide regional investment in transportation systems
Capital District Trails Plan (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishes a vision for a regional trail network that seamlessly connects cities, towns, and villages in the Capital DistrictIdentifies the Patroon Greenway as one of the high priority core trails critical to achieving the plan's vision
CITY POLICIES & PLANS	
City of Albany Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proposes several new bicycle facilities in the Patroon Greenway study area, creating opportunities to connect neighborhoods and local destinations to the future greenway trail
Washington Avenue Patroon Creek Corridor Study (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies complete street improvements along Washington Avenue between the Brevator Street and the I-90 Interchange 2 to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to SUNY Albany and new development along the corridor
Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regulates land uses and the physical form of development, with a focus on creating a pedestrian-friendly environment
City of Albany Complete Streets Policy and Design Manual (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishes complete street design guidelines for all roadway projects to improve connectivity, accessibility, safety, and placemaking
Albany 2030: The City of Albany Comprehensive Plan (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Defines a sustainable and prosperous future vision for the City, including the establishment of multi-modal hubs

Regional Plans

PATROON GREENWAY LINKAGE STUDY (2004)

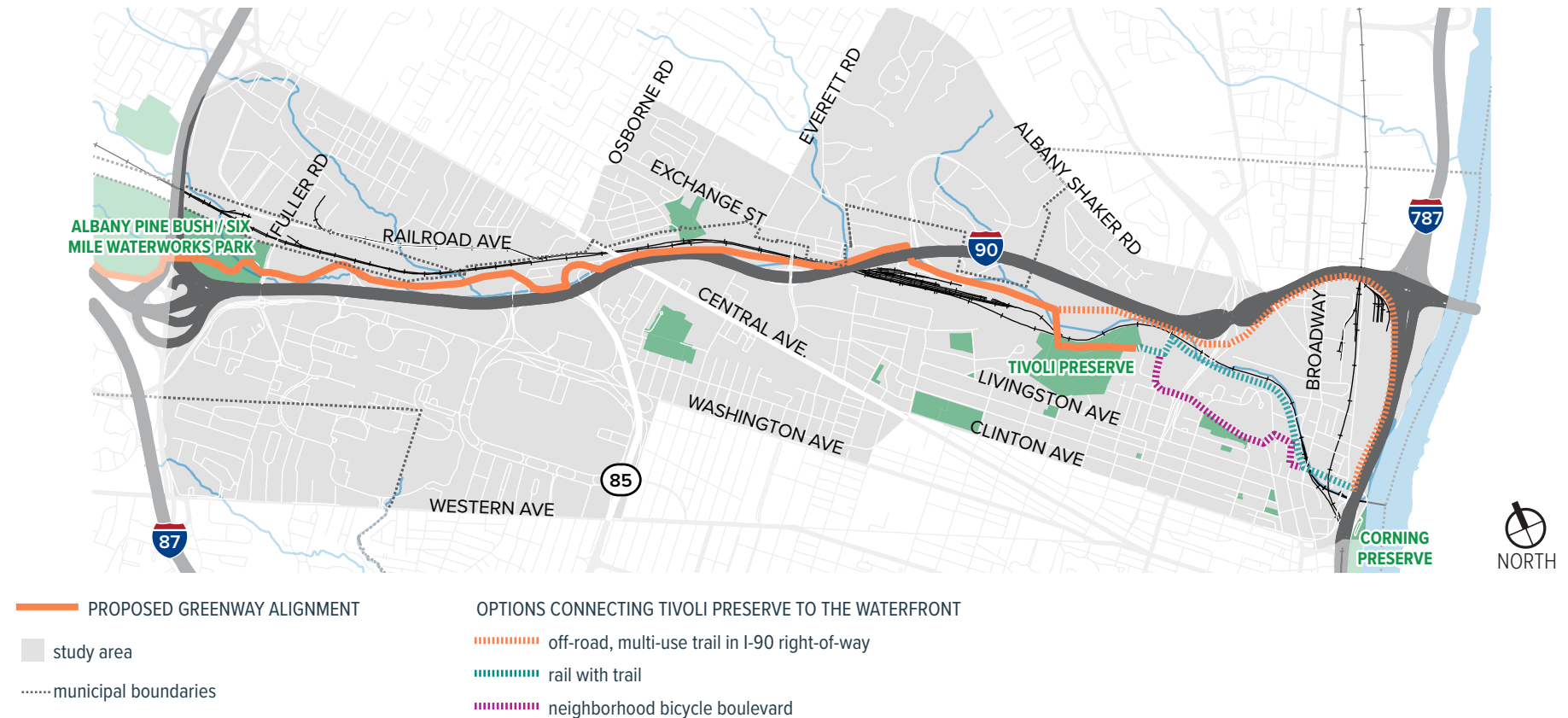
This study identifies an approximately six mile long off-road multi-use trail corridor, generally paralleling Interstate 90 and the CSX rail line, to connect Downtown Albany's Hudson River waterfront west to the Albany Pinebush.

The proposed trail alignment closely follows Patroon Creek and utilizes lands and rights-of-way owned by New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), CSX railroad, Albany County Sewer Authority (now the Albany County Water Purification

District), and Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (now National Grid), as well as public lands and open spaces. Between Rensselaer Lake and Tivoli Preserve, the proposed trail alignment is located on the north side of I-90 west of Everett Road and uses rights-of-way belonging to NYSDOT, Albany County Water Purification District, and National Grid. East of Everett Road, the trail crosses under I-90 at Anderson Drive onto a section of abandoned railroad and then crosses into Tivoli Preserve using an abandoned rail trestle. Between Tivoli Preserve and the Hudson River

waterfront, three complimentary trail corridors were identified and are mapped below:

1. An on-street bicycle boulevard using Manning Boulevard, Arbor Drive, Lark Drive, N. Pearl Street, and Colonie Street;
2. A rail with trail, following the CSX rail line; and,
3. An off-road multi-use trail in the I-90 right-of-way with raised crossings.



SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL POLICIES & PLANNING DOCUMENTS

(CONT.)

This proposed trail corridor for the Patroon Creek Greenway faces several challenges and unresolved issues, including:

- Lack of north-south and neighborhood connectivity to the proposed trail corridor;
- Several constrained road crossings (e.g., Fuller Road and Central Avenue) that will require complex design solutions, such as cantilevered bridges;
- A generally undefined trail corridor between Tivoli Preserve and the Hudson River waterfront;
- Unresolved issues related to use of highway, rail, and utility rights-of-way, including surface access rights;
- Presence of pinch points along I-90 and I-90 crossings;
- Access to the abandoned rail trestle providing a connection to Tivoli Preserve; and,
- The potential use of an inactive rail line to connect the trail between Corning Preserve and I-90.

NEW VISIONS 2050 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

New Visions 2050 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Capital Region. This long-term transportation plan includes principles, strategies, and budgetary priorities that guide regional investment. Principles identified in New Visions 2050 that are aligned with this project include:

- Invest in complete streets;
- Encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel;
- Provide essential mobility for all;
- Prioritize affordable and convenient travel options; and,
- Preserve the environment.

The Capital District Trails Plan was adopted as part of New Visions 2050, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Capital Region. New Visions 2050 highlights the Patroon Greenway as a key regional project.

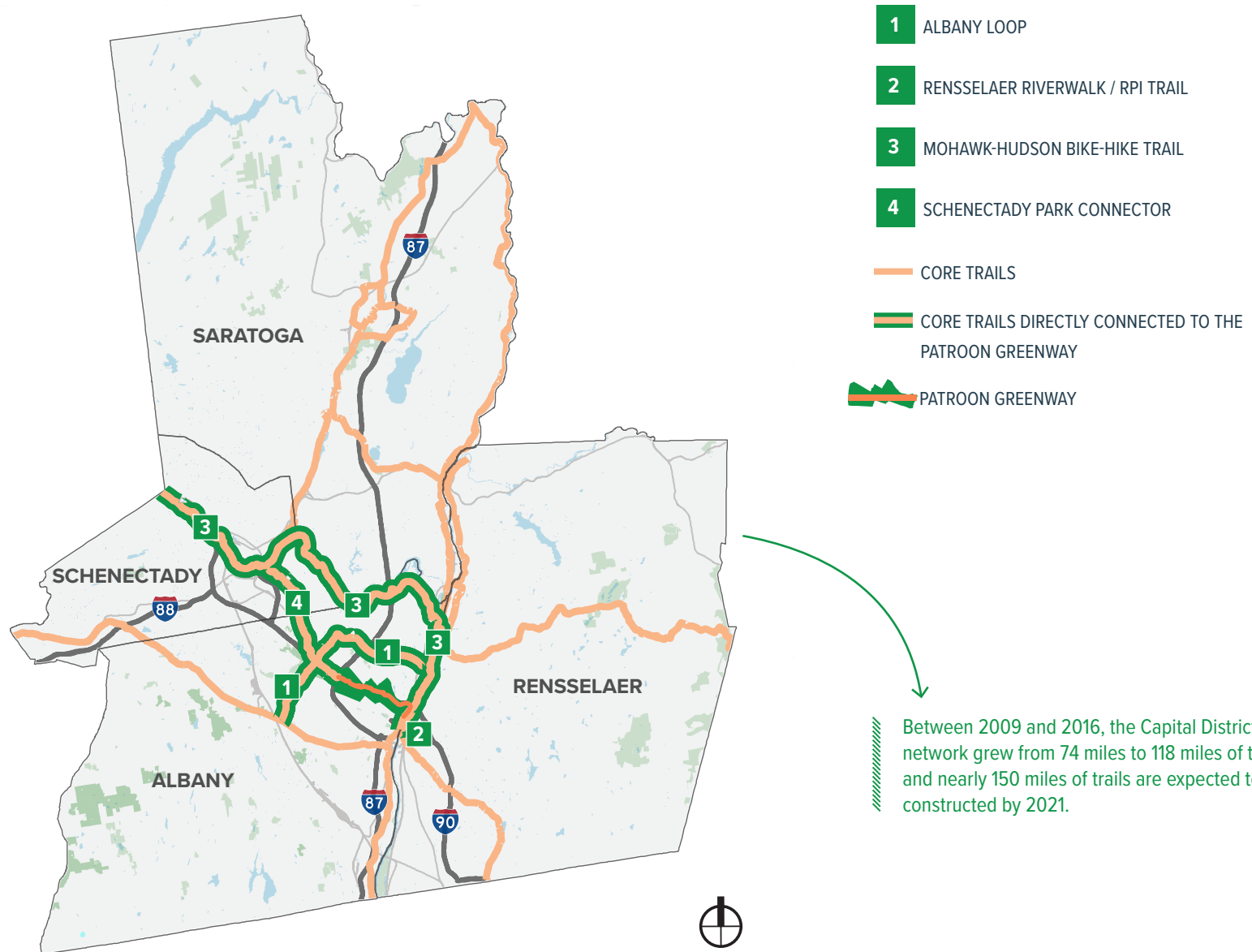
CAPITAL DISTRICT TRAILS PLAN (2019)

In 2019, the CDTC completed a comprehensive regional trails plan that documents existing and planned trails, identifies gaps in existing trail systems, and proposes a prioritized network of new trails to support a seamless regional transportation network connecting cities, towns, and villages in the Capital District. The plan also identifies a wide array of beneficial impacts trails and greenways have on

regional markets, socio-economics, property values, health, and the environment.

This plan identifies 18 core trails and 34 supporting trail network segments, most of which are currently completed, under construction, or have been planned for some time. Once complete, the core trails will provide a robust alternative transportation network connecting Albany, Troy, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Glens Falls, and many other communities. The Patroon Greenway is identified as one of the core trails. Following the I-90 corridor, the nine mile long proposed Patroon Greenway would connect the Albany Hudson River waterfront west to the Pine Bush. From the Pine Bush, the I-90 Patroon Greenway extension, a supporting trail segment, would continue northwest along the I-90 corridor to Rotterdam and the Mohawk River where it would connect with the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail near Dalys Island.

Two overarching priorities of this plan are to expand access to off-road trails that connect Capital Region cities and achieve environmental justice goals. The construction of the Patroon Greenway is identified as a high priority due to its regional connectivity potential as well as its ability to expand mobility options in low-income and minority communities.

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL POLICIES + PLANNING DOCUMENTS: **CAPITAL DISTRICT CORE TRAILS**

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL POLICIES & PLANNING DOCUMENTS

(CONT.)

The proposed Patroon Greenway intersects four other core trails:

- **The Albany Loop:** This 15 mile long on-road bicycle route is proposed to connect the Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail in the southwest to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail in the northeast, providing a complete circle around the greater Albany area. This trail would intersect the Patroon Greenway at Route 155, adjacent to the Pine Bush Preserve. To date, no segments of this loop trail have been constructed.
- **The Rensselaer Riverwalk / RPI Trail:** This proposed five mile long off-road trail connects the Albany Hudson Electric Trail (part of the Empire State Trail system) to the South Troy Riverfront Bikeway. This trail is proposed to connect to the Patroon Greenway across the Hudson River via the Livingston Avenue Bridge. Currently, 2.3 miles of this trail have been constructed.
- **Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail:** This 40 mile long constructed trail follows the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and is a major portion of the Empire State Trail. In Albany, the trail begins at the Dunn Memorial Bridge and follows the Hudson River north, passing through the Corning City Preserve, and continues through Watervliet to Cohoes where it heads west along the Mohawk River to Rotterdam.

- **Schenectady Park Connector:** This proposed 7 mile long trail, of which 1.5 miles is constructed, is a mix of on- and off-road facilities connecting the Pine Bush Preserve and downtown Schenectady. It would also connect to the western terminus of the Patroon Greenway, providing a direct link between downtown Albany and Schenectady.

The proposed Patroon Greenway also intersects several supporting trail network segments, including the:

- **I-90 Patroon Greenway Extension:** This proposed 21.5 mile long, off-road connector trail branches off the core Patroon Greenway trail in the Village of Colonie and continues along the I-90 corridor to Rotterdam and the Mohawk River, where it would connect with the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail.
- **Tivoli Crossing:** This proposed trail would connect to the Patroon Greenway in Tivoli Preserve and head north, crossing I-90 using an existing right-of-way owned by the Albany Water Board, to the proposed Crossing Connections and the Crossings of Colonie Park.
- **Albany-Colonie Connector:** This proposed 4.5 mile long off-road trail provides an important north-south connection between SUNY Albany and Central Avenue in Colonie. This trail is proposed to intersect the Patroon Greenway at Six Mile Waterworks Park.

City Plans

The City of Albany has adopted several policies and plans related to expanding transportation options, implementing complete streets, and improving multi-modal access. The key goals, objectives, and strategies, particularly as they relate to the Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study, are described below and summarized in Table 1.

CITY OF ALBANY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN (2021)

Building on the 2009 City of Albany Bicycle Master Plan and the 2017 Complete Streets Policy and Design Manual, the City of Albany recently completed a citywide bicycle and pedestrian master plan. This master plan recommends several projects, policies, and programs to ensure safe, comfortable, and convenient access to active transportation options for residents and visitors of all ages, abilities, and means. The Patroon Greenway and this study will directly advance several of the goals and objectives identified in the master plan, including:

- Improve walking and biking networks so they are viable transportation options that benefit most people, and in particular those living in high-sensitivity equity areas;
- Provide access to transit;
- Reduce congestion;
- Support inviting places to walk and bike for recreation;



- Educate community members about the pleasures and benefits of incorporating walking and biking into their daily lives;
- Prioritize walking and biking to create resiliency in Albany's transportation network; and,
- Delineate potential private and public funding sources for a strong bicycle and pedestrian network.

The Albany Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan places a strong emphasis on promoting equity and includes an equity analysis that identifies census tracts with high, medium, and low environmental justice sensitivity. The Arbor Hill neighborhood, which is located in the study area for this project, has one of the highest concentrations of highly sensitive census tracts in the city.

Several new bicycle and pedestrian facilities are recommended within the study area for this project. Recommended bicycle facilities include:

- Multi-use paths/trails on Broadway, Brevator Street, and a short section of Washington Avenue (from SUNY Albany to Fuller Road)
- Protected/buffered bike lanes on Central Avenue, Washington Avenue, Western Avenue, S. Manning Boulevard, Everett Road, Broadway, Loudonville Road, and on a short segment of Clinton Avenue (from Broadway to Ten Broeck Street)
- Bicycle boulevards on 2nd Street, 3rd Street, Ontario Street, N. Lake Avenue, Judson Street, Lexington Avenue/Thorton Street, Lark Street, N. Swan Street, Lark Drive, N. Manning Boulevard, Arbor Drive, and Colonie Street.

Several new sidewalks are also proposed throughout the study area for this project. Specifically, sidewalks are proposed on both sides of the road on N. Manning Boulevard between Livingston Avenue and Northern Boulevard and on one or both sides of the street in several locations around Commerce Avenue.

WASHINGTON AVENUE PATROON CREEK CORRIDOR STUDY (2019)

Conducted in partnership with the City of Albany and the CDTC, this study focuses on identifying complete streets improvements within a 1.5 mile study area along Washington Avenue between the I-90 Interchange 2 and Brevator Street to enhance the safety and comfort for all users, while also providing reasonable traffic operations for motor vehicles. The study also includes a special focus on the western segment of Washington Avenue, where changing land uses and redevelopment along the northern side of the corridor, as well as the continued growth of the State University of New York, University at Albany (SUNY Albany), have led to increased pedestrian crossing demand.

The plan identifies a priority improvement to be implemented immediately and several other longer-term recommendations. The priority improvement includes a new raised median and signalized pedestrian crossing at Block 75, across from SUNY Albany, replacement of the eastbound rightmost vehicle lane with striped hatching, and a curb extension at the proposed crossing on the south side of Washington Avenue to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance. A new transit stop is also proposed adjacent to the new crossing on the south side of Washington Avenue. Other proposed improvements include:

- Extend an existing multi-use path along SUNY Albany's frontage on Washington Avenue, from Collins Circle to 1365 Washington Avenue;
- Extend the existing sidewalk along the northern side of Washington Avenue;
- Narrow the western segment of Washington Avenue to create space for a protected bike lane or multi-use path; and,
- Explore the feasibility of reducing number of travel lanes along the eastern segment of Washington Avenue.

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL POLICIES & PLANNING DOCUMENTS

(CONT.)

UNIFIED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (USDO) (2017)

The City adopted the Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance (USDO) in 2017 to create a consistent, integrated, and efficient system of regulating land use and reviewing and facilitating new development. The USDO modernized the City's zoning code and implements the policies identified in the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

The USDO utilizes a form-based approach to not only regulate land uses, but also control the physical form of development. This approach ensures future development engages the streetscape and creates a pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment in key areas. The USDO also establishes streetscape standards, and where applicable, requires development to comply with the provisions of the Albany Complete Streets Policy and Design Manual. The Patroon Greenway study area spans several different zoning districts and also overlaps with five overlay districts. These overlay districts and their purposes are described below:

- **Albany-Colonie Intermunicipal Overlay District (AC):** This overlay district applies to a single parcel bisected by the municipal borders of the City of Albany and Town of Colonie located west of Everett Road Extension and south of Exchange Street. Consistent with the comprehensive plans of each municipality, the purpose of this overlay district is to promote the redevelopment of this parcel using smart growth principles and encourage a mix of land uses (commercial and residential).

- **Combined Sewer Overflow Overlay District (CS):** This overlay district establishes regulations to mitigate the impacts of development on the City's combined sanitary/storm sewer system and ensure the City is in compliance with applicable consent orders. Within the study area, this overlay district includes areas east of Tivoli Preserve and south of Clinton and Washington Avenues.
- **Floodplain Overlay District (FP):** The purpose of this overlay district is to ensure all development complies with all applicable Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations. Within the study area, this overlay district is located within the special flood hazard and five hundred year flood zone along the Hudson River and Patroon Creek.
- **Historic Resources Overlay District (HR):** The purpose of this overlay district is to preserve places, sites, and structures with significant historic, cultural, or architectural value in the city. Within the study area, this overlay district is located along Clinton Avenue in the Clinton Avenue / N. Pearl Street / Clinton Square Historic District.
- **Pine Bush Overlay District (PB):** The purpose of this overlay district is to promote and preserve the unique natural features of the Pine Bush Preserve. Within the study area, this overlay district includes the area west of Fuller Road.

CITY OF ALBANY COMPLETE STREETS POLICY AND DESIGN MANUAL (2016)

Published in 2016 in support of the City's Complete Streets Ordinance (2013) and the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, this manual establishes design guidelines for all future roadway construction, reconstruction, or resurfacing within the City to encourage the incorporation of complete streets elements. Four guiding principles, which should inform all transportation-related improvements, are identified in the manual and include: accessibility, connectivity, safety, and placemaking.

In an effort to improve the integration of land use and transportation systems throughout the city, six different land use/street typologies are identified. Each typology is paired with specific design recommendations for streets, sidewalks, and streetscapes. Instances of all six typologies occur within the study area for this project, and all on-road facility recommendations contained in this study will be informed by and comply with this manual.

ALBANY 2030: THE CITY OF ALBANY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2012)

The City of Albany completed its first comprehensive plan in 2012. This plan defines the City's vision for achieving a more sustainable and prosperous city by 2030. This vision includes six key components, four of which this study and the future Patroon Greenway directly advance:

- **Safe Neighborhoods:** The Patroon Greenway and trail connections would expand recreational facilities and create more walkable streets.
- **Vibrant Urban Center:** The Patroon Greenway would improve connectivity between Albany's neighborhoods, educational institutions, employment centers, and the Hudson River waterfront.
- **Multi-Modal Transportation Hub:** The Patroon Greenway and its associated trail connections would expand multi-modal and active transportation options for residents and visitors.
- **Green City:** The Patroon Greenway would improve public health and increase access to the city's unique natural areas.

