



Capital District Trails Plan

Advancing a Vision for Connecting Communities



Active Transportation & Public Health: Capital District Trails Plan

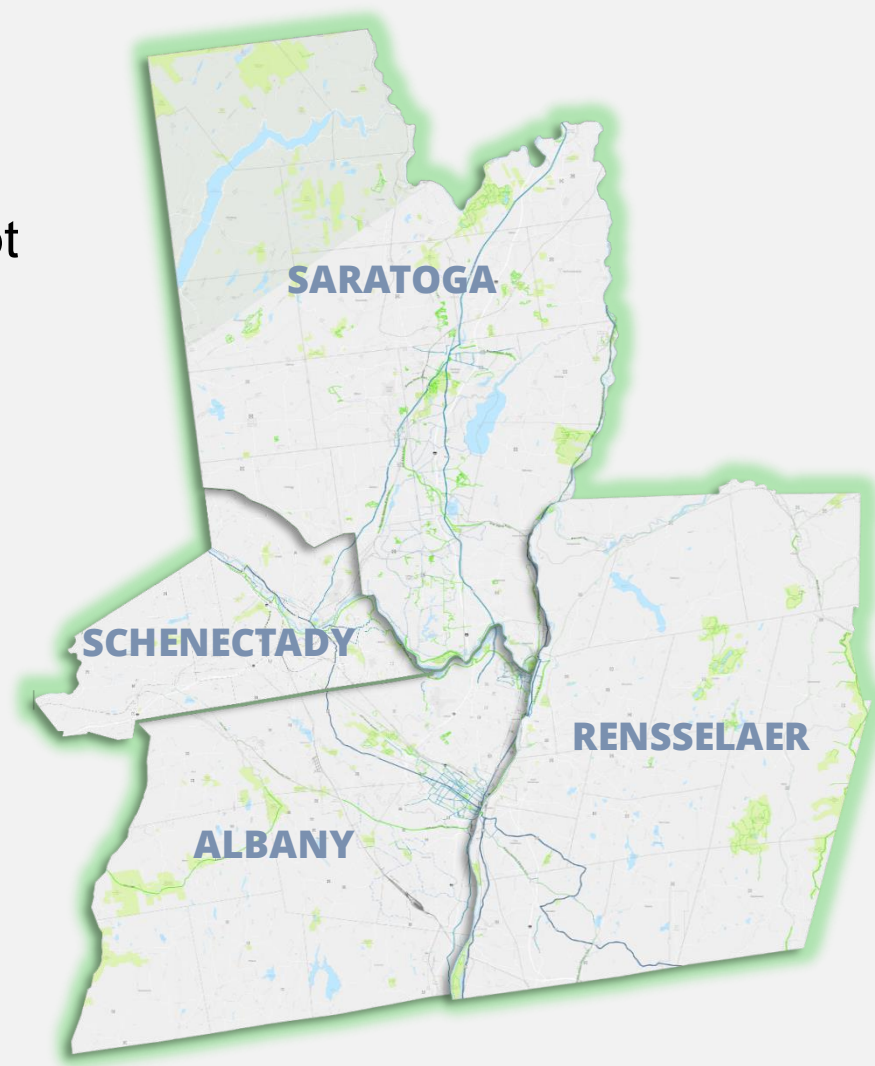


Jennifer Ceponis

July 17, 2019

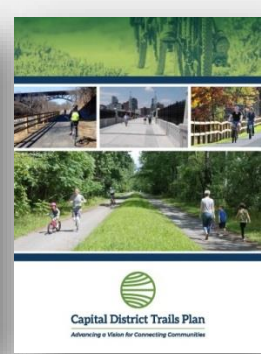
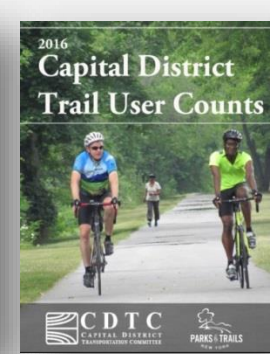
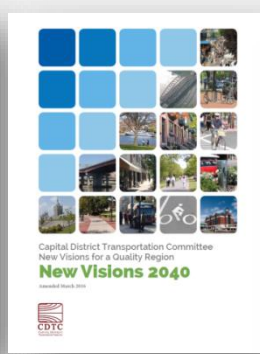
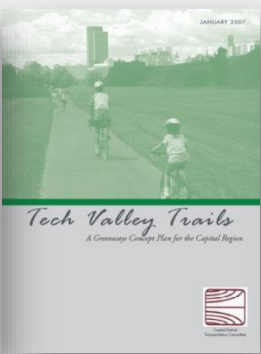
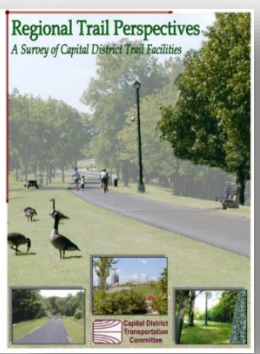
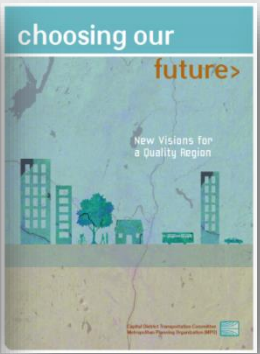
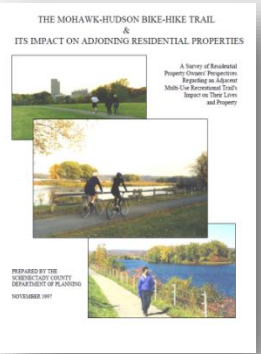


- Capital District Transportation Committee
- Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga (except Moreau & So. Glens Falls) & Schenectady Counties
- Population: ~800,000
- 4 counties, 8 cities



Capital District Trails Planning: A Timeline

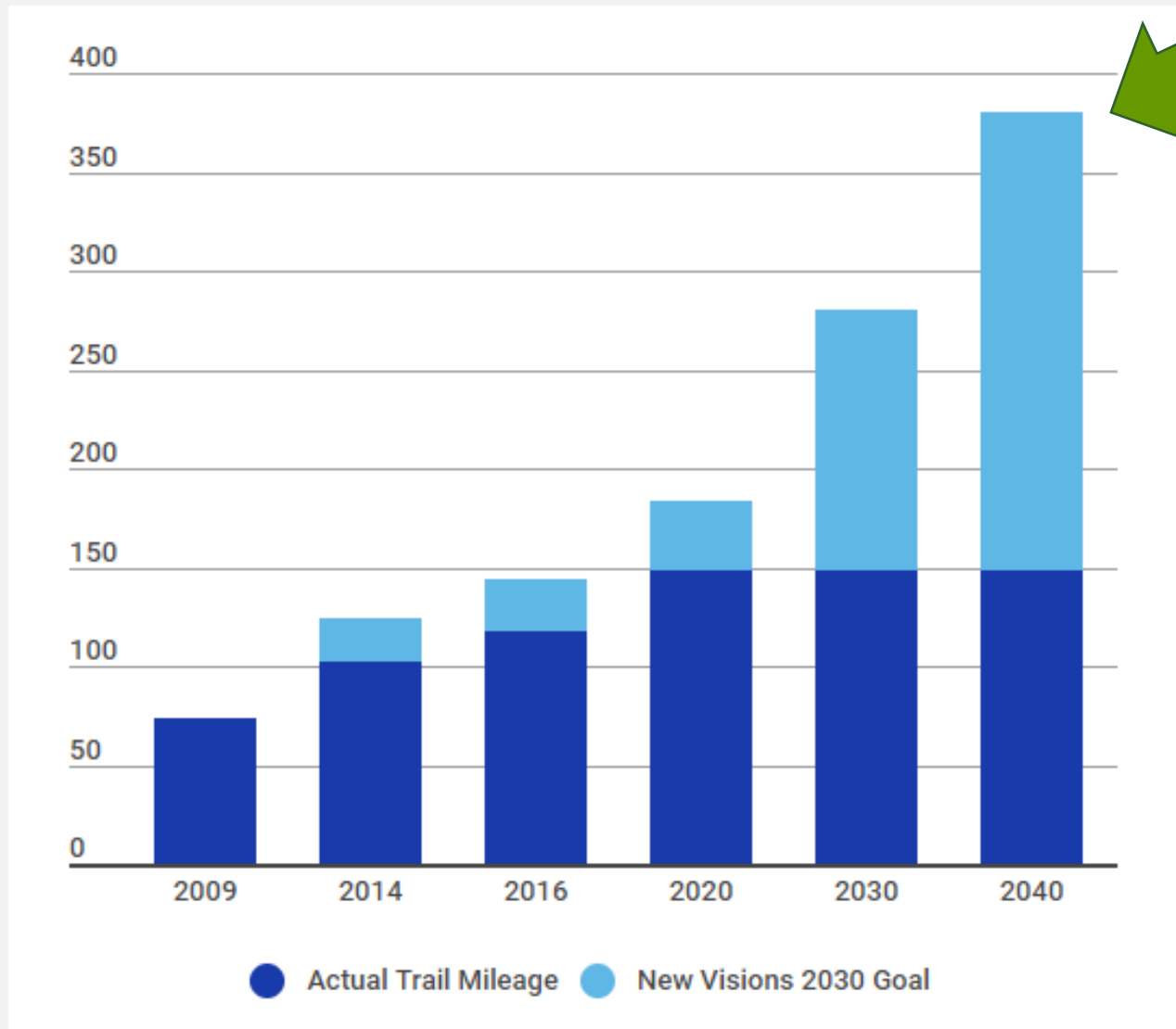
1997 2005 2006 2007 2015 2016 2019



**Announced
 in 2017**

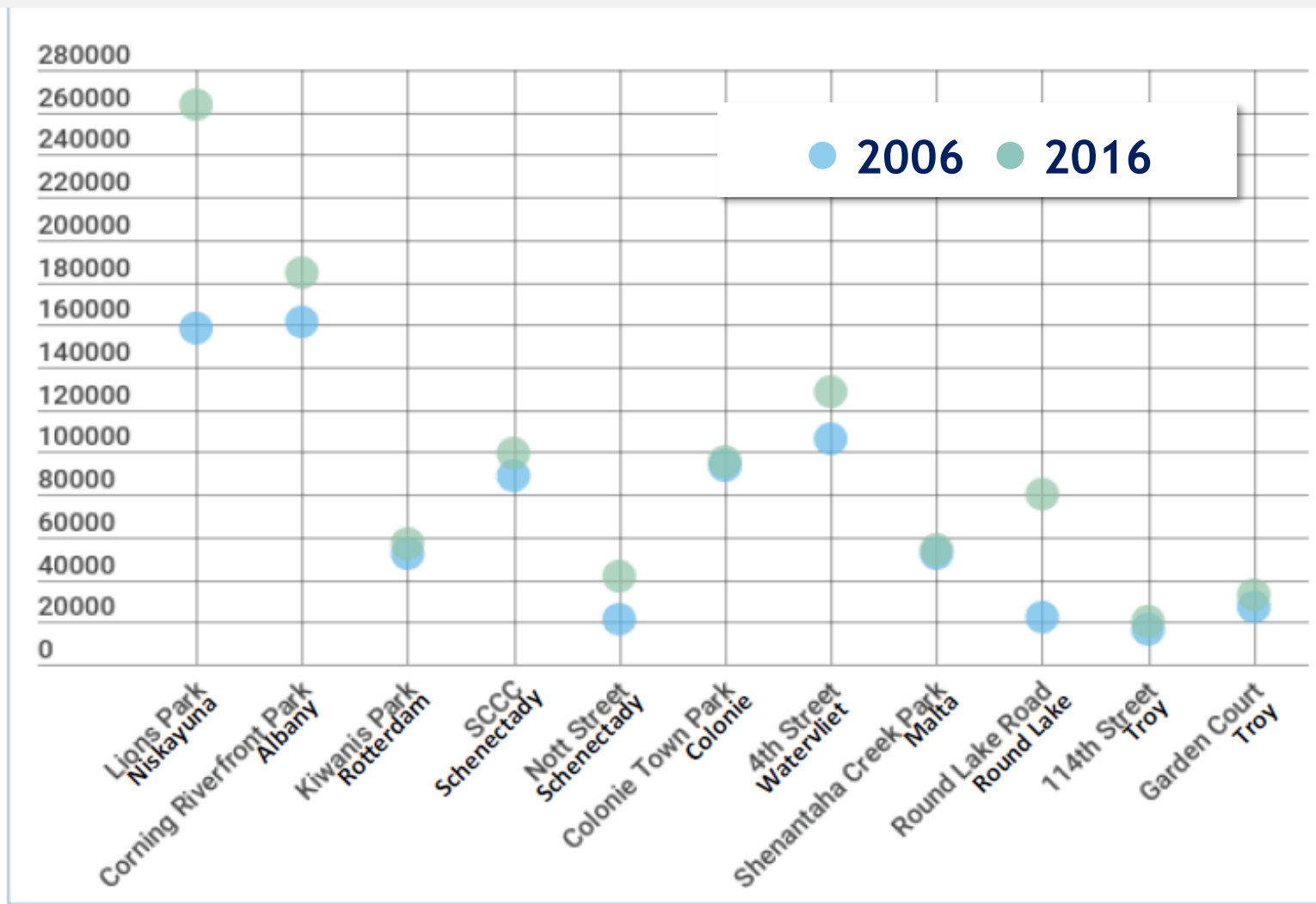


Miles of Trail

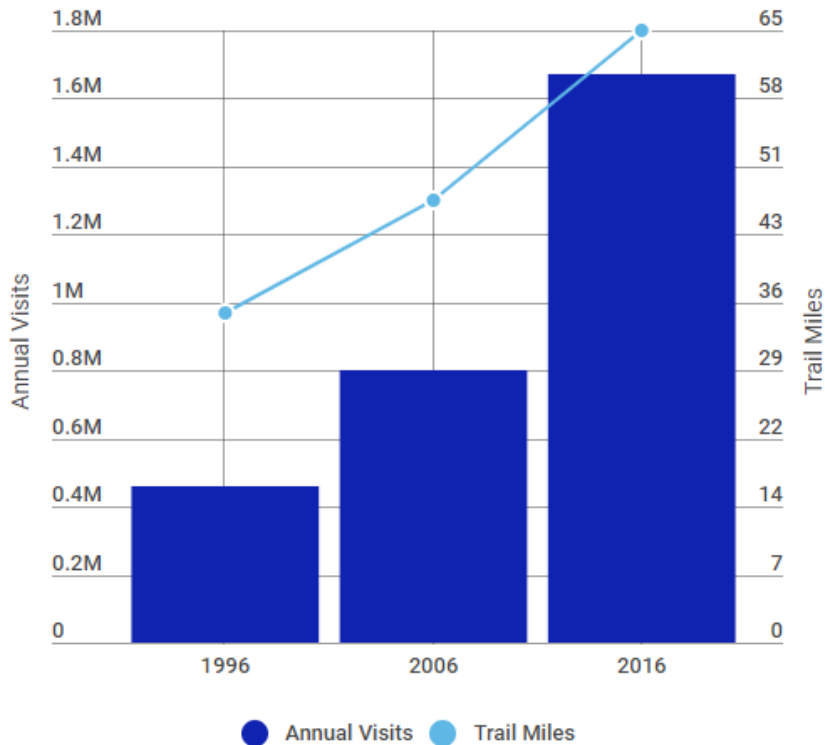




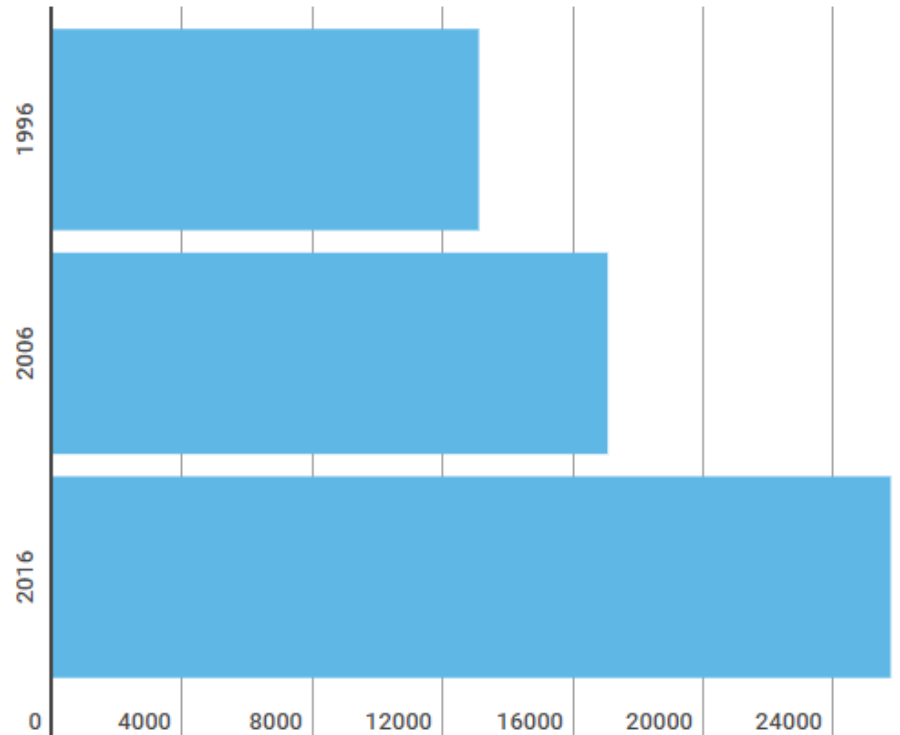
Trail User Estimates



Annual Estimated Visits vs. Miles of Trail Counted



Users per mile of trail





The development of a larger Capital Region trail network which connects to this significant investment would successfully leverage these funds and serve a large audience of people throughout the area.

NEW YORK CITY



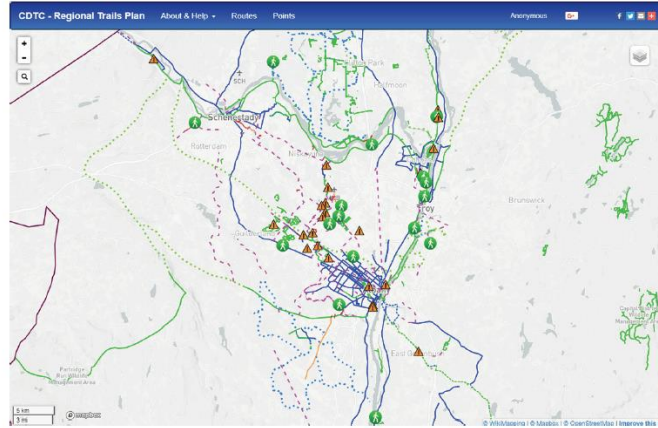
THE OVERALL GOAL OF THIS PLAN IS TO DEVELOP AN UPDATED VISION

**for a seamless regional transportation
network that connects cities, towns
and villages throughout the Capital District.**

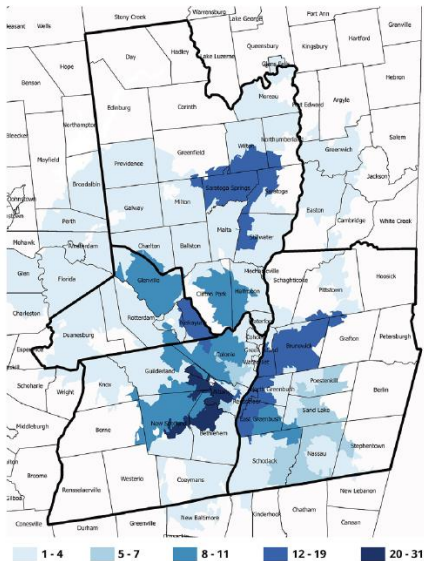
- 1. DOCUMENT EXISTING AND PLANNED TRAILS.** Document the assorted local and regional trails which have already been established throughout the Capital District.
- 2. IDENTIFY GAPS.** Identify missing areas or gaps in the existing trail system which should be connected or could be connected as part of a larger regional network.
- 3. PUBLIC OUTREACH.** Reach out to the public to learn how they are using these existing trails, what new trail linkages they would like to see, and what types of uses or activities would be popular.
- 4. MEASURE ECONOMIC IMPACT AND OTHER BENEFITS.** Identify what the measurable economic benefits are of the local trail system, and project how these benefits might affect the Capital District as part of an expanded network.
- 5. PRIORITIZE DEDICATED OFF-ROAD TRAILS.** Where possible, identify and prioritize the creation of safe off-road trail corridors, while understanding that on-road bike paths may be necessary to help complete connections.
- 6. CONNECT POPULATION CENTERS AND BUSINESS NODES.** Provide trail connections with areas of concentrated residential and business activity to help support commuting travel.
- 7. ILLUSTRATE THE PLAN.** Develop an overall vision plan map and description for the future regional trail network which establishes the “core” regional network trails, and may also include some secondary trail connections which help to augment the core system.
- 8. PRIORITIZE THE NETWORK.** Establish a prioritization matrix for implementation, with emphasis on those connections which are more readily viable or shovel-ready.
- 9. VISUALIZE THE NETWORK.** Develop video footage of existing and planned trail linkages through the use of aerial drone photography which can be used to help support and market the local trail system.
- 10. BRANDING & MARKETING.** Develop an overall branding and marketing plan which would strengthen and support the regional trails network, and help support local economic development.

WIKI MAP

In tandem with the public workshops, an online mapping “Wiki Map” tool was developed which allowed anyone in the public to visit an interactive website where they could draw their ideas for different trail connections and leave comments. This Wiki Map was introduced at the workshops and provided on the project website to allow people who were not able to attend the workshops an opportunity to provide their input. The Wiki Map collected dozens of comments over a two month period which were reviewed to identify trail ideas which could be integrated into the regional plan.



Survey Responses by Zipcode



ONLINE SURVEY

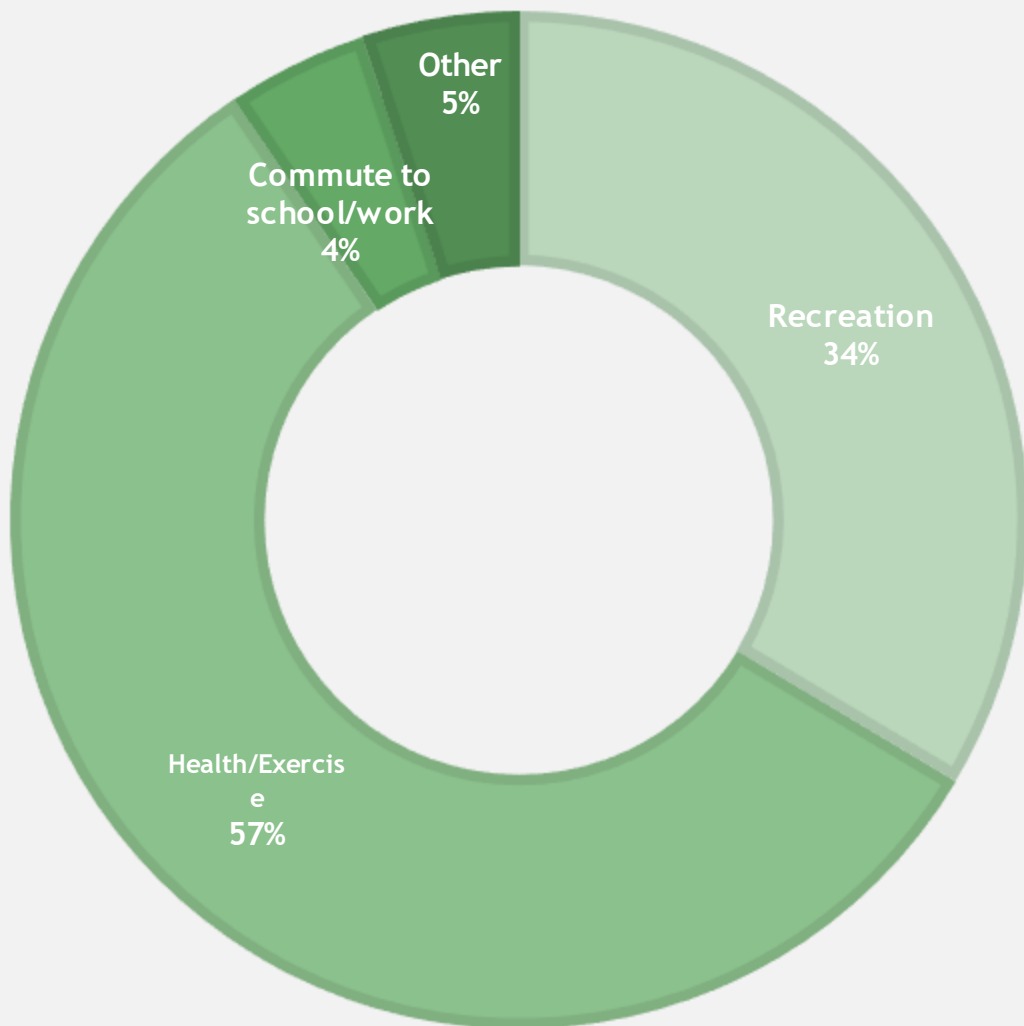
In addition to the public workshops, an online survey was developed which was also provided on the project website and introduced at the public workshops. This survey was open to the general public and inquired about how people use the area trails, what future connections they would like to see, what features or amenities they think need to be added to local trails, and tested out some initial branding and marketing ideas. The online survey was kept open for three months, and collected over 330 responses. A summary of these responses is provided below. (The full results of the survey are provided in the appendix.)

Similar to the trail users survey conducted in 2016, the new online survey asked respondents how many times a year they use a local trail for walking, running, biking, inline skating or other non-motorized travel. The highest percentage of respondents (23%) indicated between 25 – 49 days per year, with 16% indicating they used local trails more than 100 days a year.





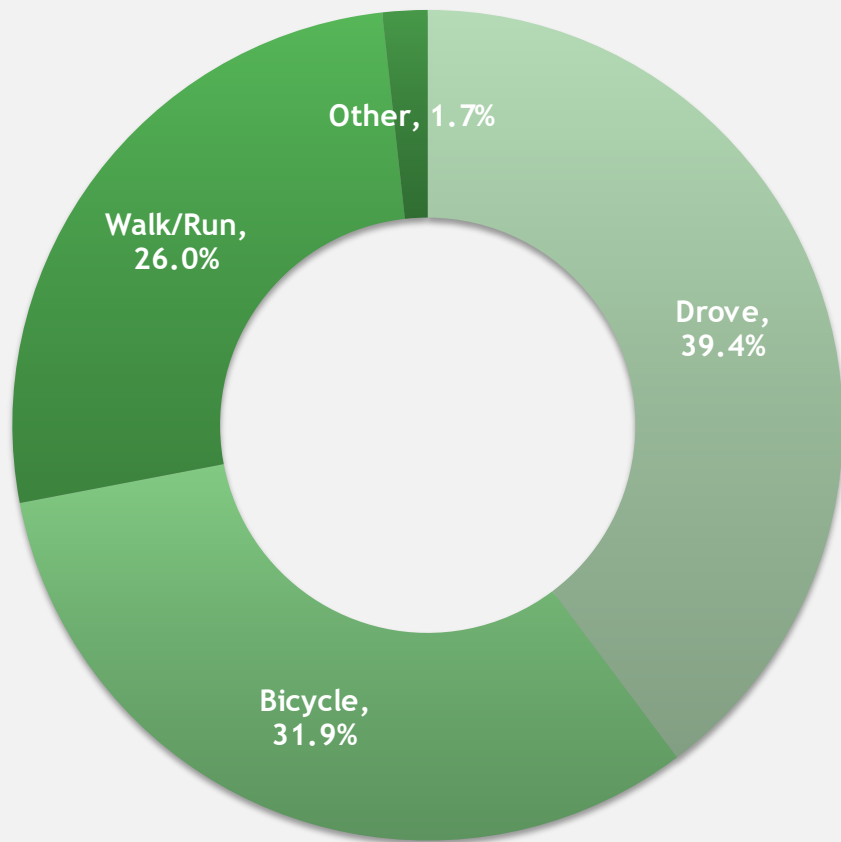
For What Purpose Do You Use the Trail?



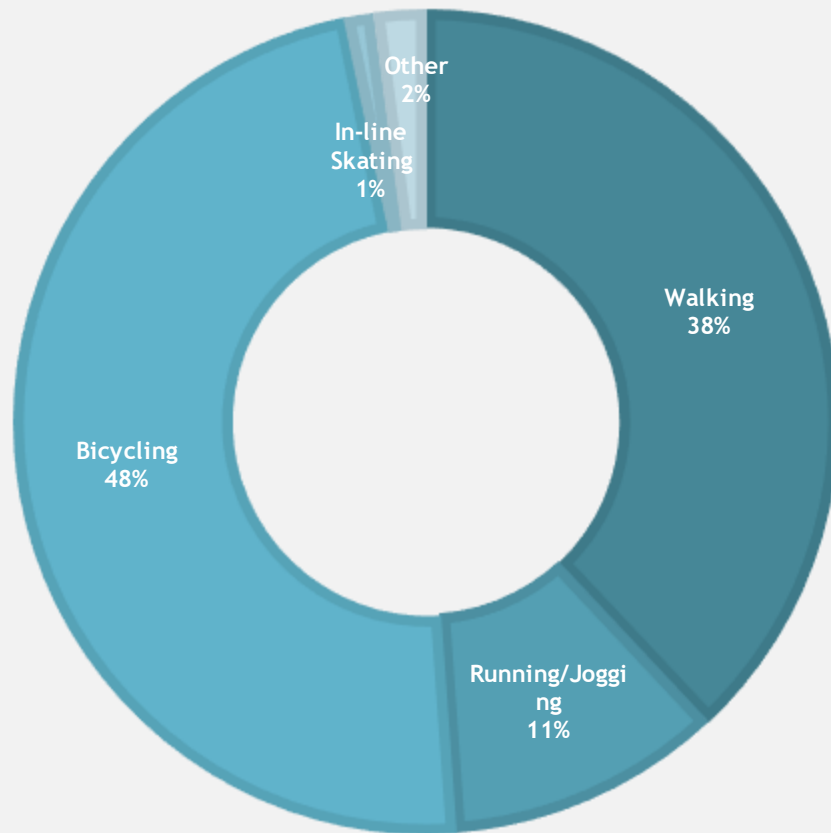
Greenways and trails are a burgeoning national movement, responding to an increased national interest in outdoor recreation and exercise. Bicycling is one of the most popular outdoor sports in America. A recent 2014 benchmarking report from Breakaway Research Group (Breakaway Research Group; 2015) indicates that 34 percent of the U.S. population rode a bike at least once in the prior year. Bicycles are used for commuting to work as well as for pleasure and fitness. The same research indicated that 32 percent rode for recreation and as much as 15 percent rode for the purposes of transportation.



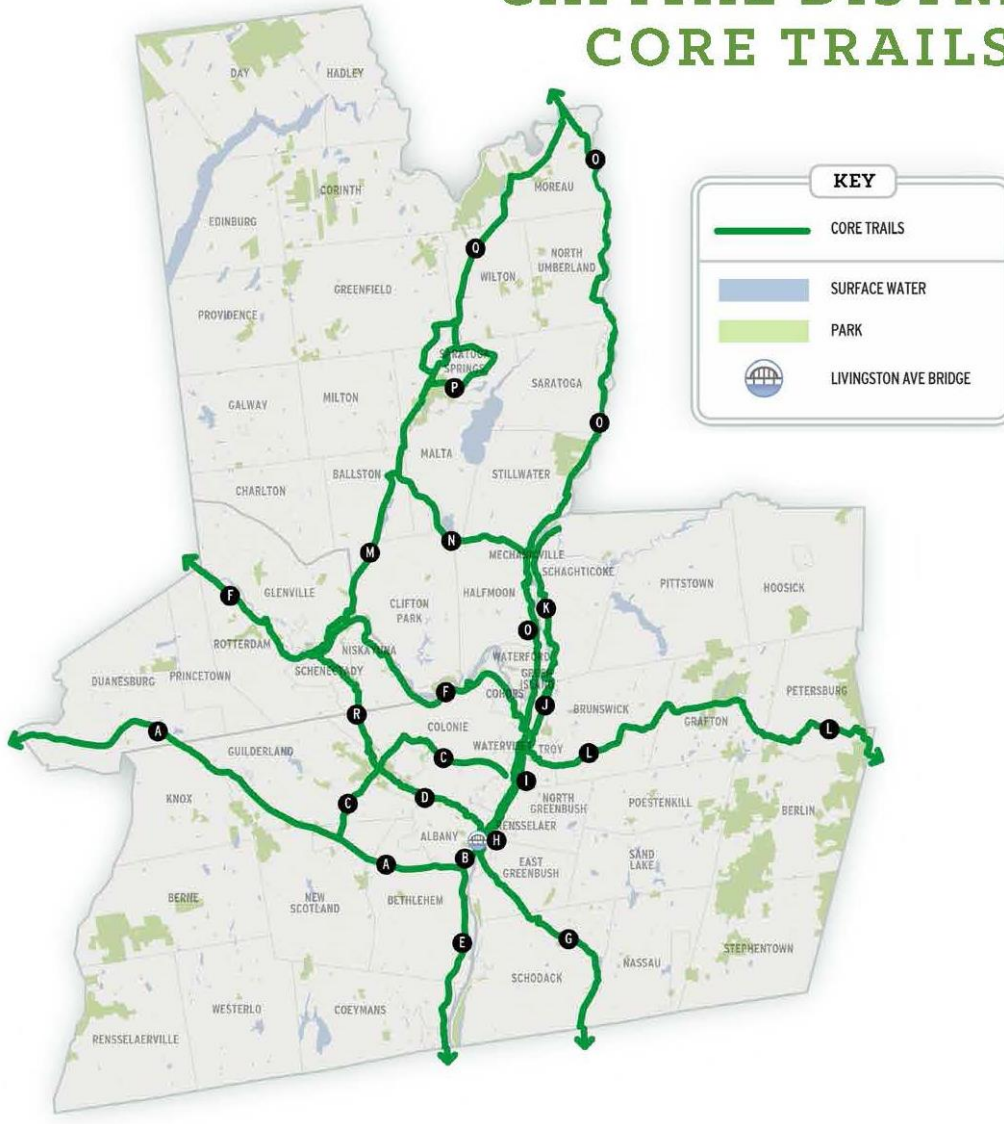
How Trail Users Get to the Trail



How Trail Users Use the Trail



CAPITAL DISTRICT CORE TRAILS



Off-Road



Next to Road



On-Road

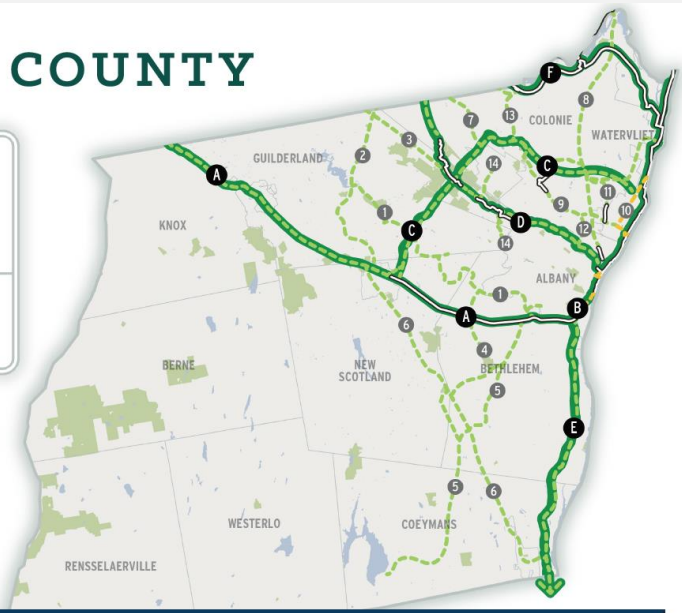


ALBANY COUNTY

KEY

- EXISTING TRAIL
- PLANNED TRAIL
- CORE TRAILS
- TRAIL CONCEPT

- SURFACE WATER
- PARK



Capital District Trails—Albany			
Core Trails		Supporting Trail Network	
A	Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail	1	Normans Kill Greenway
B	South End Bikeway Connector	2	Schenectady-Helderberg Connector
C	Albany Loop	3	I-90 Patroon Greenway Extension
D	Patroon Greenway	4	Elm Avenue Bike Path
E	Hudson Northway	5	Reservoir Run
F	Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail	6	Ravena-Voorheesville Link
		7	Consaul Road Bike Route
		8	Bike Route 9
		9	The Crossings Connection
		10	Route 32 Cycle Track
		11	Van Rensselaer Bike Path
		12	Tivoli Crossing
		13	Shaker Trail
		14	Albany-Colonie Connector

RENSSELAER COUNTY

KEY

- EXISTING TRAIL
- PLANNED TRAIL
- CORE TRAILS
- TRAIL CONCEPT

- SURFACE WATER
- PARK



Capital District Trails—Rensselaer			
Core Trails		Supporting Trail Network	
G	Albany Hudson Electric Trail (AHET)	15	Uncle Sam to Mahican Trail Link
H	Rensselaer Riverwalk/RPI Trail	16	Mahican Trail
I	South Troy Riverfront Bikeway	17	Tomhannock North Ridge Run
J	Uncle Sam Bike Trail	18	Empire State - Rensselaer Plateau Link
K	River Road	19	Wynantskill Trolley Path
L	River to Ridge Path	20	Rensselaer Plateau Ridge
		21	Corkscrew Rail Trail
		22	Nassau - Stephentown Path
		23	Schodack—Papscaene Connection
		24	Hoosick to Bennington



PROJECTED EXPANSION

of the CAPITAL DISTRICT TRAIL SYSTEM

AFTER IMPLEMENTATION



1.1
MILLION
ADDITIONAL TRAIL USERS
per year*

*Midpoint of Range of Use Projected
for the Future Trail System



17,400

NUMBER of POTENTIAL PEAK-HOUR
VEHICLE TRIPS REMOVED
from OUR ROADS



PROJECTED ECONOMIC

IMPACT *to the* CAPITAL REGION

AFTER IMPLEMENTATION



\$23.7

MILLION

ANNUAL INCREASE
in
DIRECT TOURISM
SPENDING
in the
CAPITAL REGION



\$1.4

MILLION

PER YEAR
in
LOCAL TAX
REVENUE



\$48.9

MILLION

PER YEAR *in* TOTAL ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY *in the* CAPITAL DISTRICT



\$1.3

MILLION

INCREASE
in
LOCAL PROPERTY
TAX REVENUE



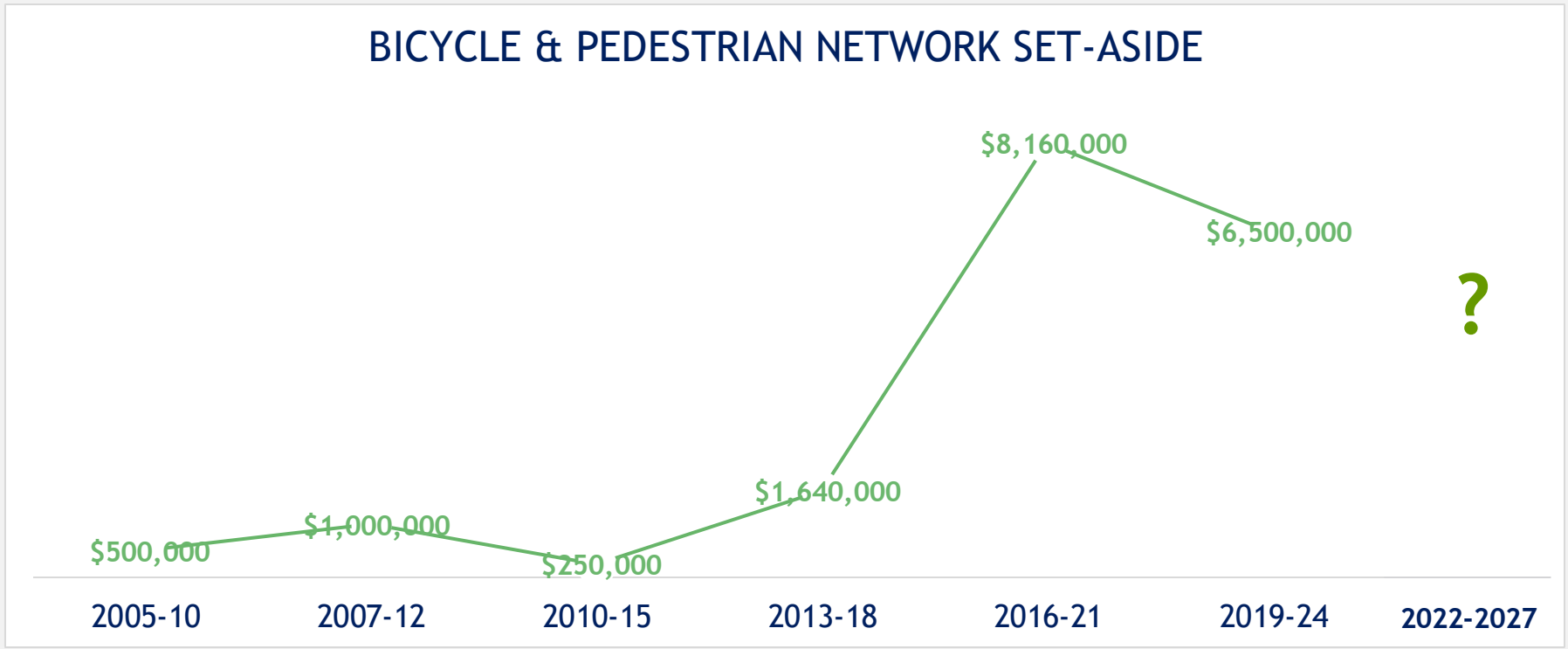
Capital District Core Trails: Prioritization Screening Tool

Map Key	Trail Identification	Primary Type	Potential Peak PM Traffic Bike Trips Per Trail Mile	Population Served Per Trail Mile	Relative Proximity to Environmental Justice Area	Project Readiness for Development	Initial Priority Level
B	South End Bikeway Connector	On-Road	...	...	...	..	I
I	South Troy Riverfront Bikeway	On-Road	...	...	...	..	I
J	Uncle Sam Bike Trail	Off-Road	...	...	...	.	I
R	Schenectady Park Connector	On-Road	...	...	...	.	I
D	Patroon Greenway	Off-Road	...	...	..	.	II
G	Albany Hudson Electric Trail (AHET)	Off-Road	...	..	.	...	II
H	Rensselaer Riverwalk/RPI Trail	Off-Road	...	..	..	..	II
C	Albany Loop	On-Road	...	...	.	.	II
F	Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail	Off-Road	.	..	..	...	II
P	Saratoga Greenbelt Trail	Off-Road	..	..	.	...	II
A	Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail	Off-Road	.	..	.	...	II
N	Zim Smith Trail	Off-Road	.	..	.	...	II
M	Ballston Veterans Bike Trail	Off-Road	..	..	.	.	III
Q	Wilton-Moreau Trail	Off-Road	..	..	.	.	III
E	Hudson Northway	On-Road	.	.	..	.	III
O	Champlain Canal Trail	Off-Road	.	.	.	..	III
K	River Road	On-Road	.	.	.	.	III
L	River to Ridge Path	On-Road	.	.	.	.	III



Capital District Trails Plan				
Cost Category	Per Mile Trail Costs in Current Dollars ^{1/}	Current Dollar Cost for Planned and Concept Trail Implementation	Estimated Percent Expended in New York ^{2/}	Estimated New York Expenditures
Land Acquisition	<i>To be Determined</i>			
Trail Construction				
Materials	\$228,000	\$45,600,000	90%	\$41,040,000
Labor	\$342,000	\$68,400,000	100%	\$68,400,000
Soft Costs - Design & Engineering & Permitting	\$200,000	\$40,000,000	100%	\$40,000,000
Total Trail Costs	\$770,000	\$154,000,000	97%	\$149,440,000

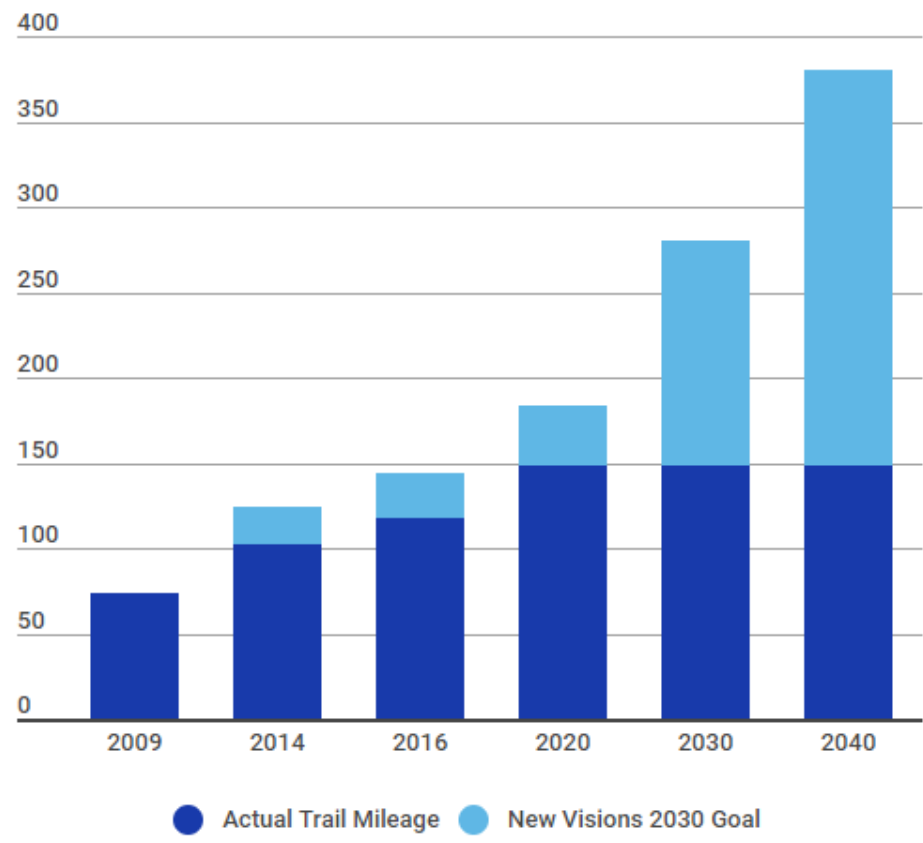
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK SET-ASIDE



- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Other potential funding sources:

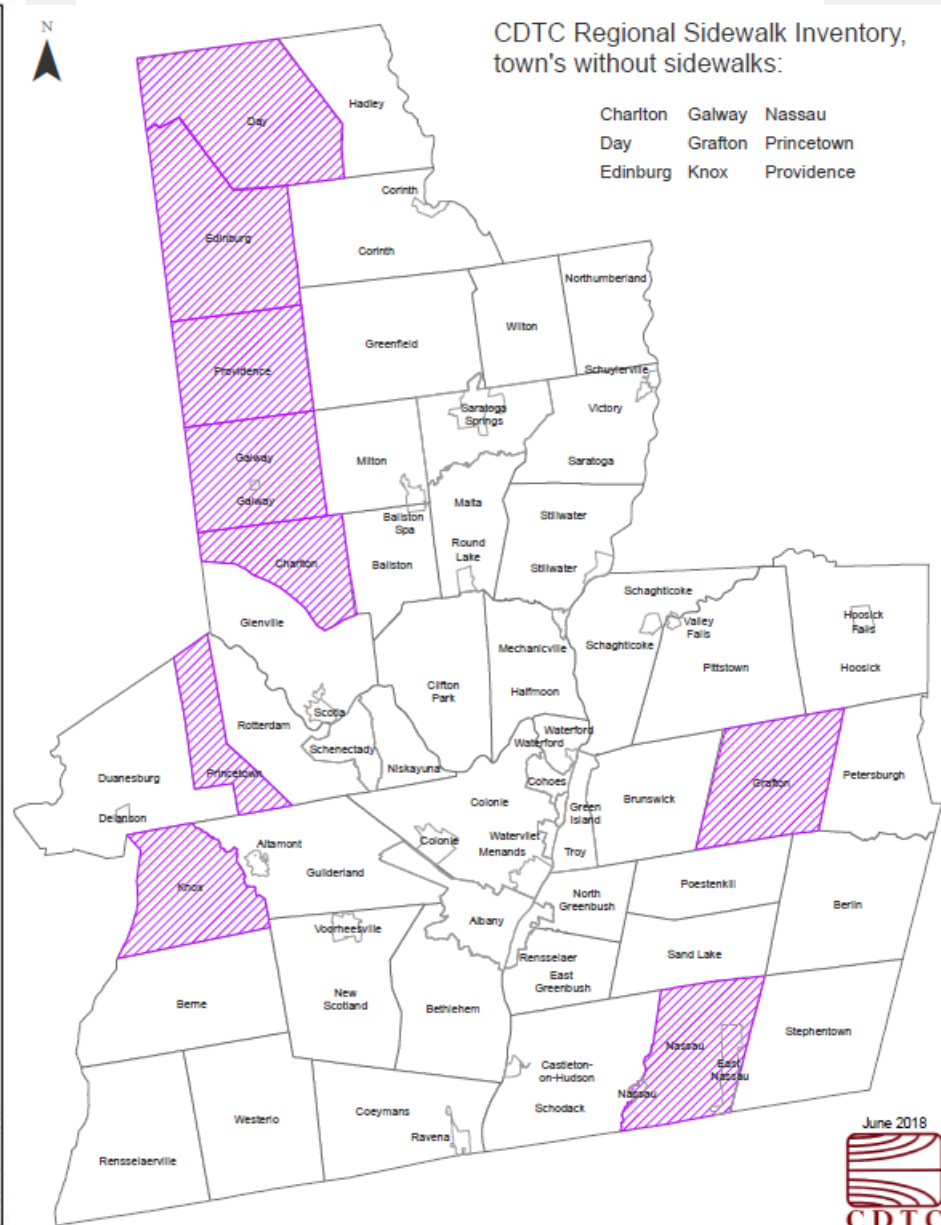
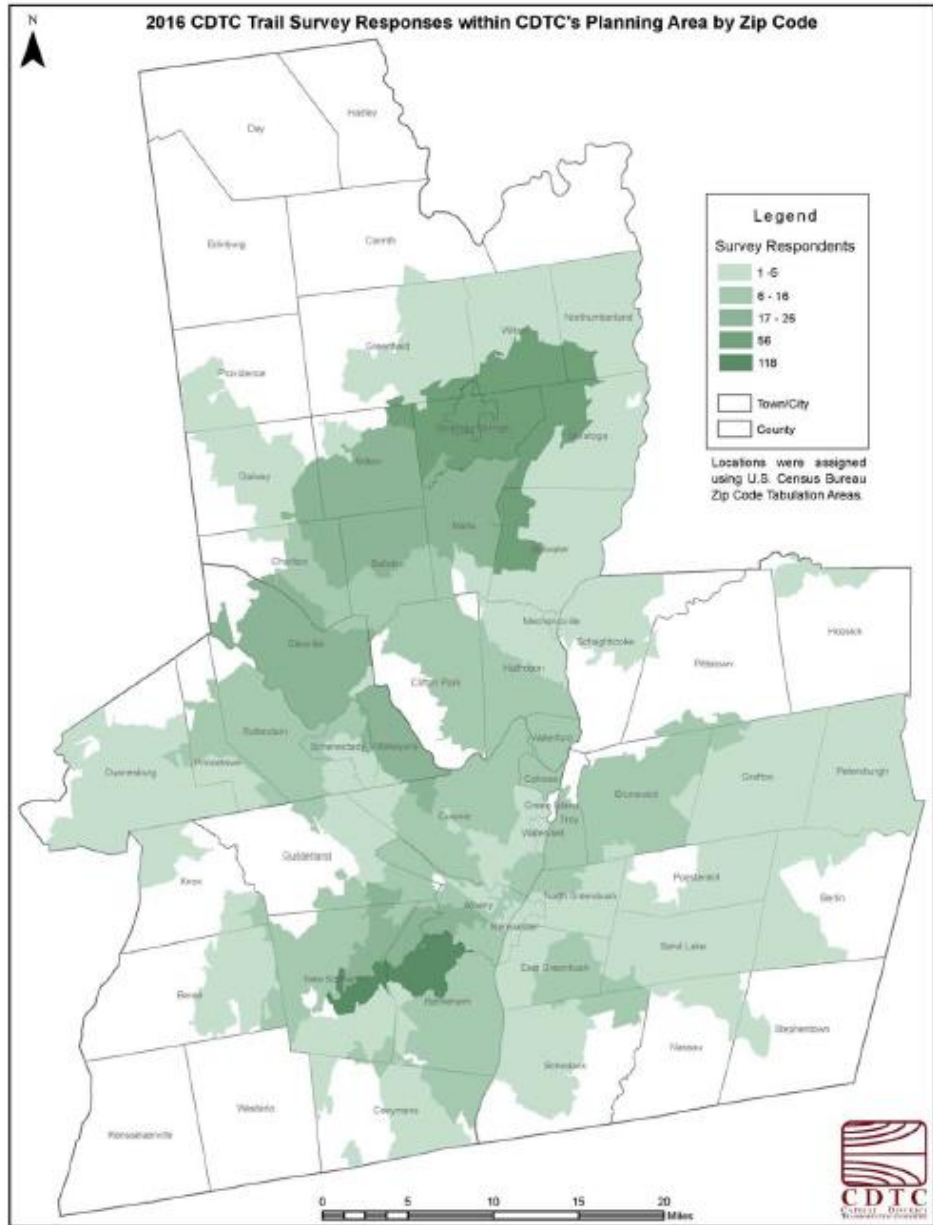
- Transportation Alternatives (TAP) / Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program (CMAQ)
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP)



CURRENT AND TARGET RATE OF TRAIL CONSTRUCTION OF THE CORE TRAIL SYSTEM

CAPITAL DISTRICT GREENWAY AND TRAILS PLAN

Rate of Trail Construction			
	Current	Target	Unit
Miles of Trails that Need to be Constructed Annually	7	10.0	Miles
Number of Years to Full Build Out/Implementation Complete Based on Miles of Trails Constructed Annually	28.5	20.0	Years





County Health Rankings

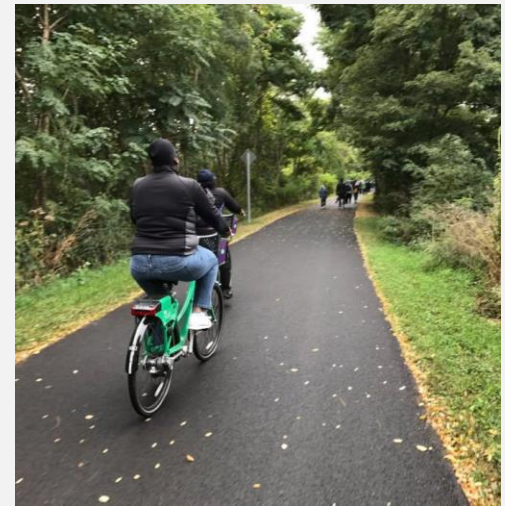
	NY	Albany	Rensselaer	Saratoga	Schenectady
Poor or fair health	16%	13%	14%	11%	14%
Adult Obesity	26%	27%	31%	26%	29%
Physical inactivity	25%	22%	22%	20%	22%
Access to exercise opportunities	93%	92%	69%	92%	96%
Long commute - driving alone	38%	21%	32%	37%	34%

Perception of the Seriousness of Public Health Issues in Community

	Cap Region	Capital Region-Low Income
Obesity in children and adults	29%	30%
Diabetes	27%	31%
Heart Disease	24%	23%



Urban/Suburban/Rural?



SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorship opportunities are a great way to get businesses and residents involved with the development of the trail network and to give back. Sponsorship levels that fit all budgets should be available and multiple levels of sponsor recognition should be developed.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

- Promotion on trail network website, social media and email blasts
- Event sponsorship
- Guided staff hikes
- Hosted volunteer trail upkeep workdays
- Company logo on shirts, brochures, bags, and other trail network merchandise

RESIDENT SPONSORSHIP RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

- Bench plaques
- Pavers
- Tree plaques/signage

ADOPT-A-TRAIL

- This can be offered as a premium level of support. It can be offered both to businesses and individuals to sponsor a trail section with larger donations. Trail adopters can get involved by helping with the upkeep of the trail and they can be recognized by the trail network with signage at each end of their trail segment and with branded merchandise giveaways.



Sponsorship Opportunities Brochure

KEY MARKETING PLAN TAKEAWAYS:

- All project materials should have a cohesive look and message so that the brand becomes easily recognizable.
- Project partners and sponsors should be provided with the tools (and free swag!) they need to help promote the trail network.
- Consistent engagement with the media and the public is key to gaining awareness and building support.
- Signage, print collateral, social media, and all other trail network materials and platforms should be treated as branding and marketing opportunities.

*Marketing will not necessarily be the responsibility of the Capital District Transportation Committee.





Private Sector Support & Buy-In



Clif Bar “Cool Commute” program

- \$500 toward the purchase of a commuter bike or a bike trailer for their child or dog.
- Up to \$1,500 a year in cash or rewards for eliminating the car from their commutes. This includes support for walking, biking, using public transit or carpooling.
- \$6,500 to help them buy an all-electric or fuel-efficient hybrid car.

New Belgium Brewery

- Provides up to \$5,000 bicycle advocacy grants
- Tour de Fat bike festival
- Anniversary bikes





TRAIL SIGNAGE

TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE



TRAIL CONNECTION SIGNAGE



TRAIL BLAZE



Trail Management Best Practices

- **FRIENDS OF THE RAIL TRAIL (“FORT”):**
The Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail
- **FARMINGTON VALLEY TRAILS COUNCIL:**
Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and Farmington River Trail
- **SARATOGA COUNTY:** Zim Smith Trail
- **MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY:**
Minuteman Bikeway Trail

A stand-alone copy of this case study guide—which also includes an Example Trail Proposal and an Example Trail Agreement—is available from the Capital District Transportation Committee as its own guide for distribution and sharing.



TRAIL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail has become a vital part of the communities it passes through. Some of the events hosted by trail groups, not for profits and the FVTC include:

- In the Town of Cheshire community groups organize events like half marathons, bike rides, 5k races and Dog Parades.
- The FVTC celebrates National Bike Month each May by organizing a 30-mile Fun Ride.
- Local “friends of” groups help coordinate annual bulb plantings, statewide trail census data collection days, long range vision information sessions, work days and spring clean ups.
- The New Haven Friends of the Farmington Trail work with community groups to sponsor family fitness programs on the trail including wellness walks and Zumba classes.

MAINTENANCE & UPKEEP

Each municipality along the FCHT is responsible for their own section of trail. The state of Connecticut owns the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail but does not maintain it. The FVTC serves as a clearinghouse for best practices and public works departments plow trailheads, maintain bathrooms and repave the trails. Volunteer groups organized by the FVTC and ‘friends of’ groups help patrol the trails, sponsor clean-up days and perform landscaping along the trails.

The FVTC helps secure grants for trail maintenance and will support municipalities pursuing grants for trail projects. FVTC helps keep municipalities informed of grant opportunities.

FVTC makes recommendations to towns on path and parking lot design and repairs.

ALBANY COUNTY HELDERBERG-HUDSON RAIL TRAIL COMMON TRAIL MAINTENANCE COSTS

EQUIPMENT COST	COST/HOUR	HOURS/DAY	DAYS/WEEK	WEEKS/YEAR	TOTAL EQUIPMENT COST/YEAR
Mower	\$20	6	2	32	\$7,680
Weed Wacker	\$1.65	6	3	32	\$950
Plow Truck	\$40	1	1	20	\$800

SUBTOTAL: \$9,430 PER YEAR EQUIPMENT COSTS

LABOR COST	COST/HOUR	HOURS/DAY	DAYS/WEEK	WEEKS/YEAR	TOTAL EQUIPMENT COST/YEAR
Mowing	3 @\$20/hr	6	2	32	\$23,040
Weed Wacking	3 @\$20/hr	6	3	32	\$34,560
Inspection	1 @\$20/hr	1	5	32	\$3,200
Plowing	1 @\$20/hr	1	1	30	\$400

SUBTOTAL: \$61,200 PER YEAR LABOR COSTS

TOTAL: \$70,630 PER YEAR TOTAL EQUIPMENT AND LABOR COSTS

Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail



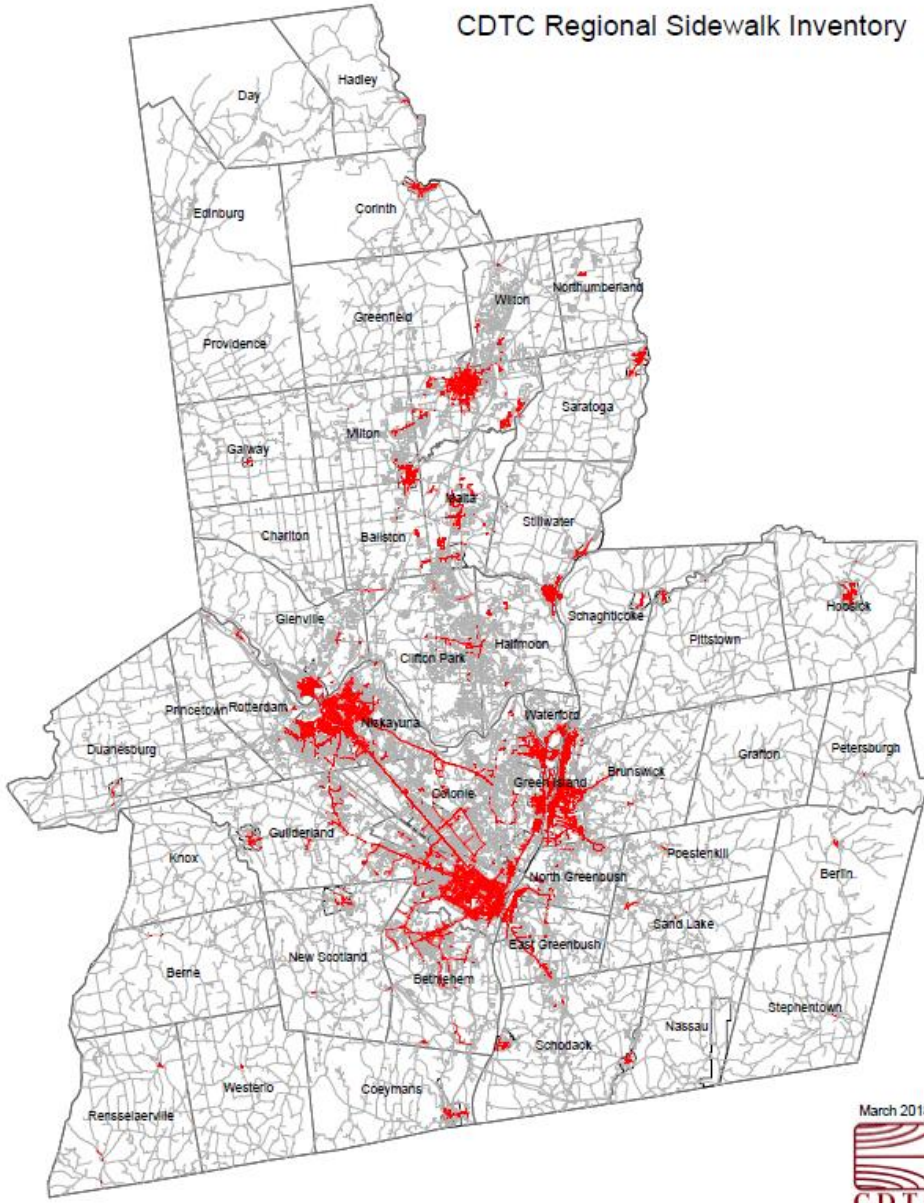
2012



2016



CDTC Regional Sidewalk Inventory



March 2018

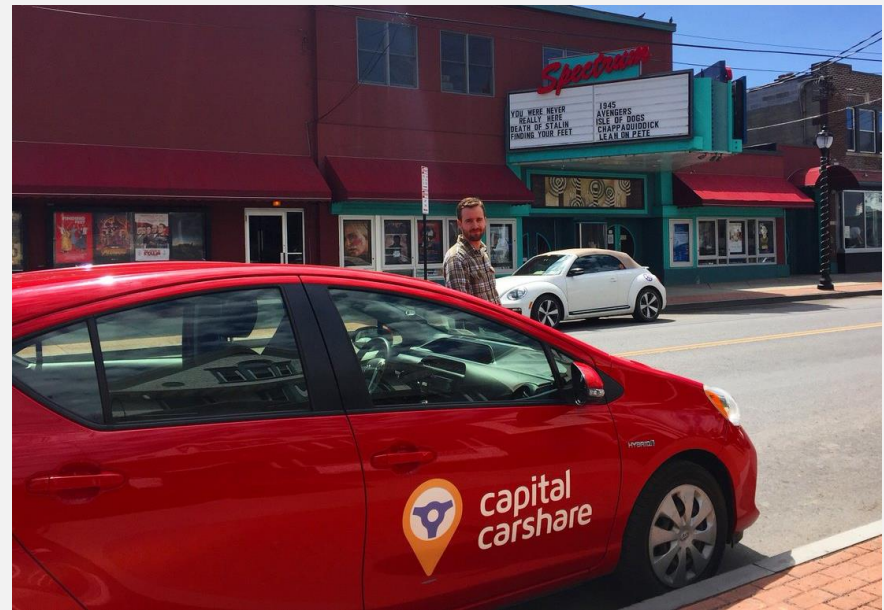
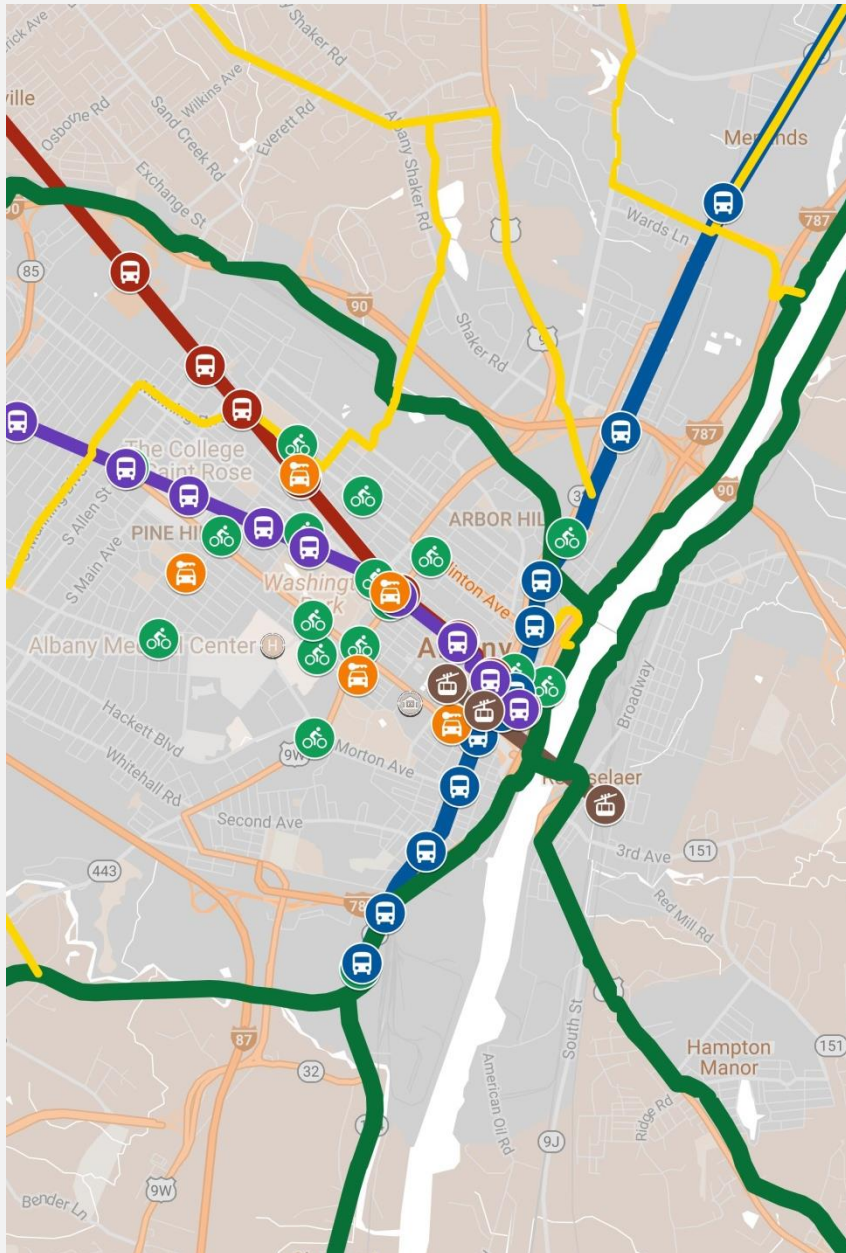


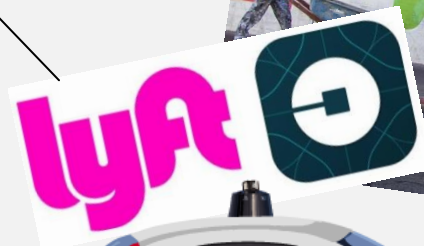
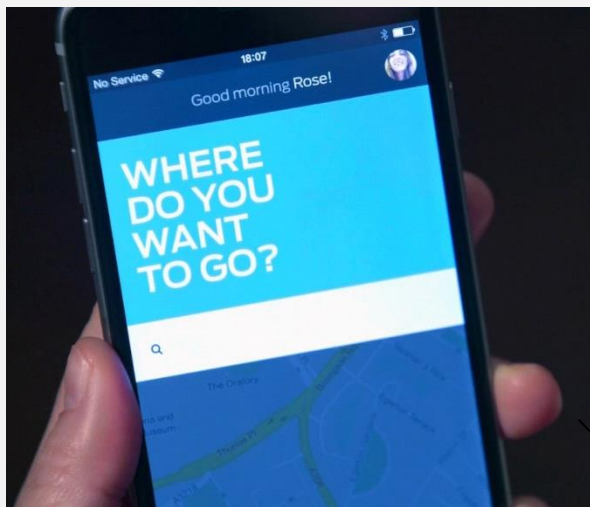


Capital District Trails Plan

Advancing a Vision for Connecting Communities

Smart Mobility







Thankyou!

#518Trails

www.cdtcmpo.org/trails



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@MPOCDTC

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