

THE MOHAWK-HUDSON BIKE-HIKE TRAIL

ANALYSIS OF TRAIL USE, REGIONAL BENEFITS
&
ECONOMIC IMPACT

OCTOBER 1998



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Analysis of Trail Use, Regional Benefits
&
Economic Impact

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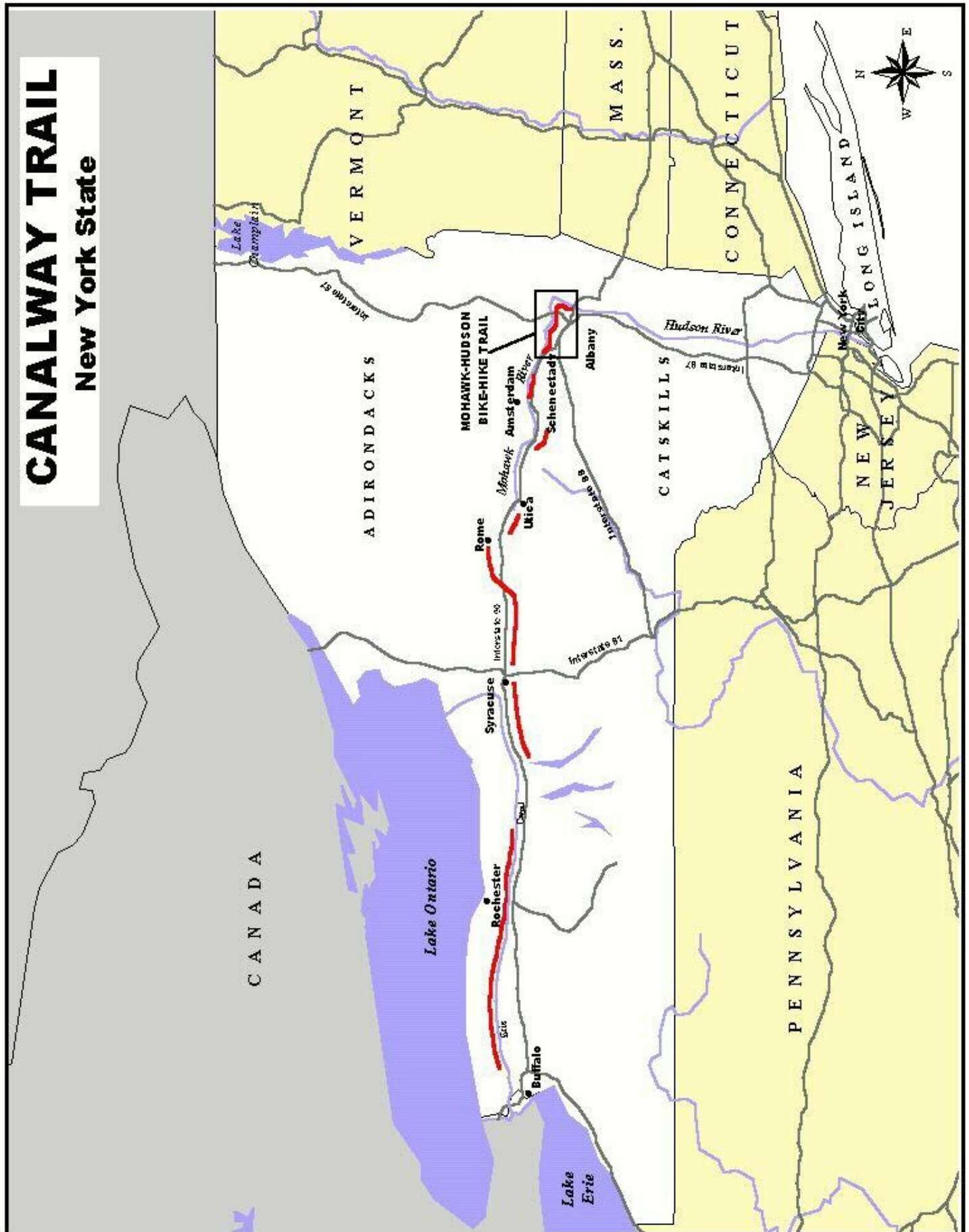
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CANALWAY TRAIL

New York State



INTRODUCTION

All across the Country, multi-use recreational trails are proving to be both popular with local residents and a wise economic investment for the communities through which they pass. Studies have shown that in addition to providing many intangible quality of life benefits, they help stimulate local economies by attracting regional, state and national/international tourists to an area. These tourists and local users alike help attract and revitalize businesses, create jobs, and increase public revenue.

Other communities around the Country have done an excellent job in developing, maintaining, and promoting trails similar to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail. Comparable trails have been credited with revitalizing downtown areas and bringing millions of dollars into the community. Like many of the most successful trails around the Country, the infrastructure is largely in place locally to develop consistent and high quality services and attractions for visitors. Given the wonderful natural setting and the numerous cultural and historic resources in this area, the opportunity clearly exists to provide one of the best recreational/heritage trails in the Country.

This report documents the results of a trail user survey conducted along the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail on seven different days between September 1996 and July 1997. In addition to documenting the extent and type of use occurring, the study identifies user attitudes toward the trail and helps develop a user profile. This report also attempts to ascertain the trail's existing and potential economic and quality of life benefits to Schenectady County and the region. In addition to citing examples of current trail user spending along the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, various studies of other trails and historic sites from around the state and Country are used for comparison herein. By comparing documented results at other similar facilities a realistic prediction of the existing and potential economic impacts of the trail is made.

The primary purpose of this report is to heighten awareness of this tremendous regional recreational and economic asset and bolster current efforts to extend and improve the facility. While the trail is being capitalized upon to varying degrees by each community through which it passes, there appears to be a great deal of untapped potential.

BACKGROUND

The Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is representative of localized efforts across the state since the 1970s to establish trails along the Mohawk River and associated State Canal system. Through the cooperative efforts of volunteers and local, county, state, and federal governments, more than 130 miles of such trails have been constructed. The increased popularity of these trails, and similar trails throughout the Country, has focused attention on the benefits that could be realized by establishing a continuous statewide trail along the Mohawk River and the associated State Canal System. Located partially along the route of the abandoned Erie Canal, the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is an integral part of a recent effort by the New York State Canal Corporation to promote the establishment of a 524-mile statewide "Canalway Trail." However, as in Schenectady County, there are critical segments of trail that need to be constructed and/or

upgraded throughout the state if this potential statewide trail is to become a reality.

The Canal System has been the subject recently of various studies including the New York State Canal Recreationway Plan, the Eastern Gateway Canal Regional Plan (August 1994), and the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Management Plan (April 1997). These studies layout options and ideas for future use and development of the canal corridor and are intended to encourage recreation, tourism, and environmental and historic preservation. Importantly, many state and federal programs are in place to help fund projects along the Mohawk and Hudson River corridors. With state and federal financial assistance various projects are currently underway locally, such as the Aqueduct Towpath Park in the Town of Niskayuna and the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail extension in the Town of Rotterdam, that will enhance recreational use and historic interpretation of the Canal System.

Schenectady County communities and the Capital Region would appear poised to significantly capitalize on an improved Canal System and profit from the resulting tourism, economic development, and regional quality of life benefits. One common denominator identified in the aforementioned studies is the importance of a mechanism to link the communities, services, and the numerous cultural, historic, and recreational attractions in the region's canal corridor. An improved Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail can provide such a linkage in Schenectady County and the Capital District, and is an important cost-effective step toward implementation of these plans.

**The Mohawk-Hudson
Bike-Hike Trail is
an integral component
of the proposed 350-
mile statewide
Canalway Trail.**



TRAIL DESCRIPTION

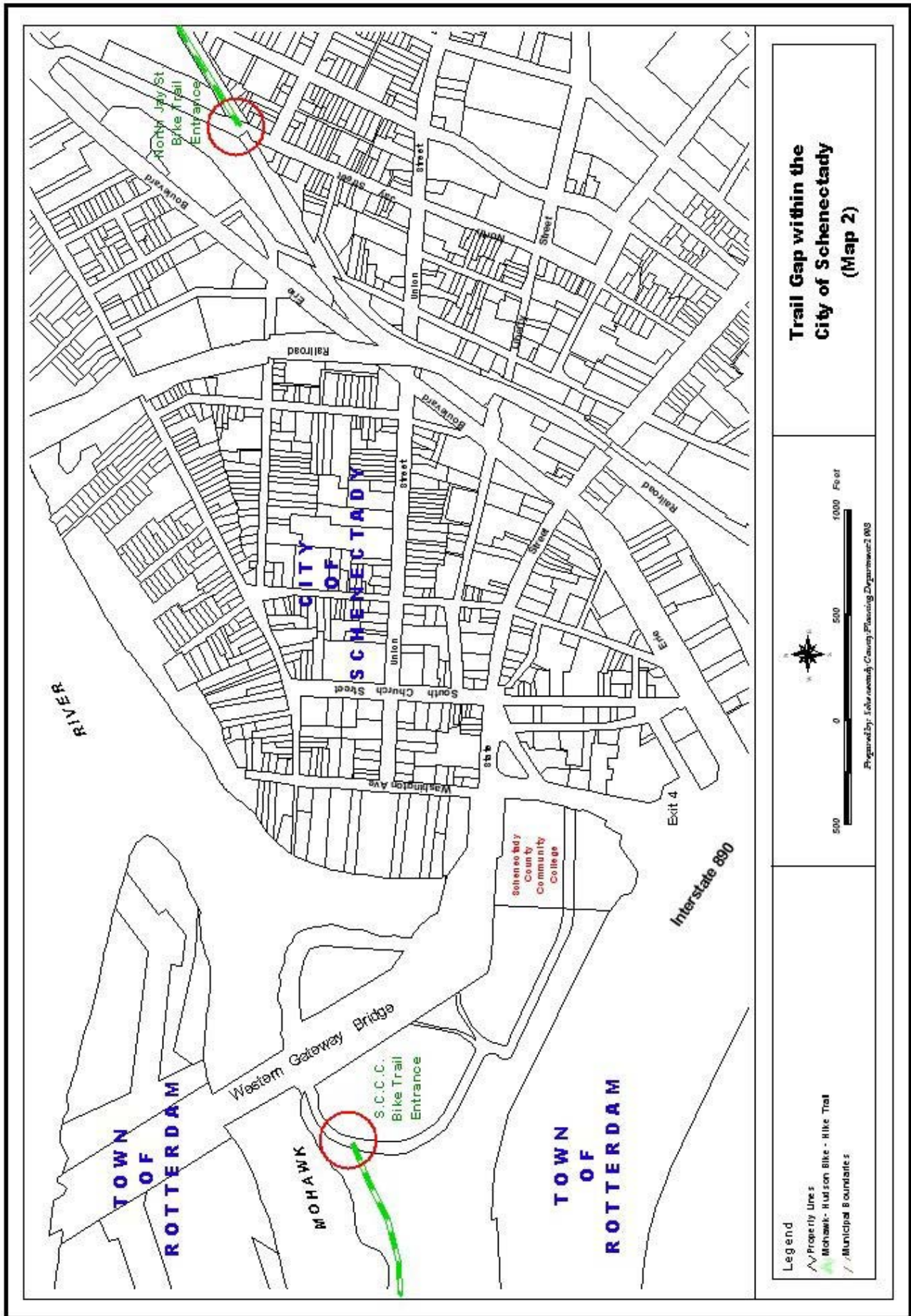
The Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail extends from the Erastus Corning Riverfront Preserve in downtown Albany west to Scrafford Lane in the Town of Rotterdam (see Appendix E for detailed maps). The trail was constructed in the late 1970s and early 1980s and is built directly upon the old Erie Canal towpath and former railroad grades of the area's first transportation routes.

At approximately 35 miles in length, the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is one of the longest paved rail-trails in the Country. In Schenectady County alone, the trail is about 19 miles long and completely continuous except for a 1.25 mile gap in the City of Schenectady. By contrast, the very popular Cape Cod Rail Trail, that many people in this region are familiar with, is only 19.6 miles long. The average rail-trail in the Country is 10.5 miles long according to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

Over its length, the trail traverses four towns and four cities. Management responsibilities are disjointed and generally change as the trail crosses municipal boundaries. All non-motorized uses such as walking/running, bicycling, and in-line skating are permitted with the exception of horseback riding. Motorized use is confined to snowmobiling along a short, rural section at the western end of the trail in the Town of Rotterdam. There is no permit system or fee for users.

Law enforcement and emergency response is generally the responsibility of each separate municipal jurisdiction. However, the N.Y. State Police (Troop T) recently instituted permanent patrols along 25 miles of the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail from Cohoes to Rotterdam. The patrols will coincide with the NY State Thruway Authority's canal season of May 1st to mid November.

The trail runs through a wide range of settings including rural, sparsely developed areas; heavily developed urban settings; and, suburban single family home developments. The trail passes through various municipal parks and there are many access points. It crosses a number of local, county, and state roads, and long sections are located along or near the rear property lines of numerous single-family homes. The trail is generally flat with an 8 to 10 foot wide paved asphalt surface. A one mile stonedust segment in the Town of Colonie from Schermerhorn Road to the Cohoes City line is the only unpaved section of the trail. While the trail stretches approximately 35 miles, predominantly along the shores of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers, it becomes a bike route in places within the Cities of Schenectady and Watervliet, and the Town/Village of Green Island, traversing local streets for various distances. Due to the relatively poor signage and roadway interference, traveling along local streets between trail sections can be difficult. Consequently, due to an overall lack of a readily definable corridor, the trail appears to function as three or four smaller separate trails. This segmentation is very apparent in the City of Schenectady between the Jay Street and Schenectady County Community College entrances to the trail (see Map 2). Unfortunately, with little visual and physical linkage between these sections to encourage visitor flows in the area, the approximately 1.25 mile gap effectively divides the trail in Schenectady County.



As mentioned above, the trail passes through many municipal parks, crosses numerous public streets, and has many access points. Despite this apparent high profile, the trail is usually not identified where it crosses roads nor is access to the trail generally well marked. There are some exceptions regarding attempts to identify the trail. However, there is essentially no signage that directs people specifically to the trail from the major travel corridors in the region.

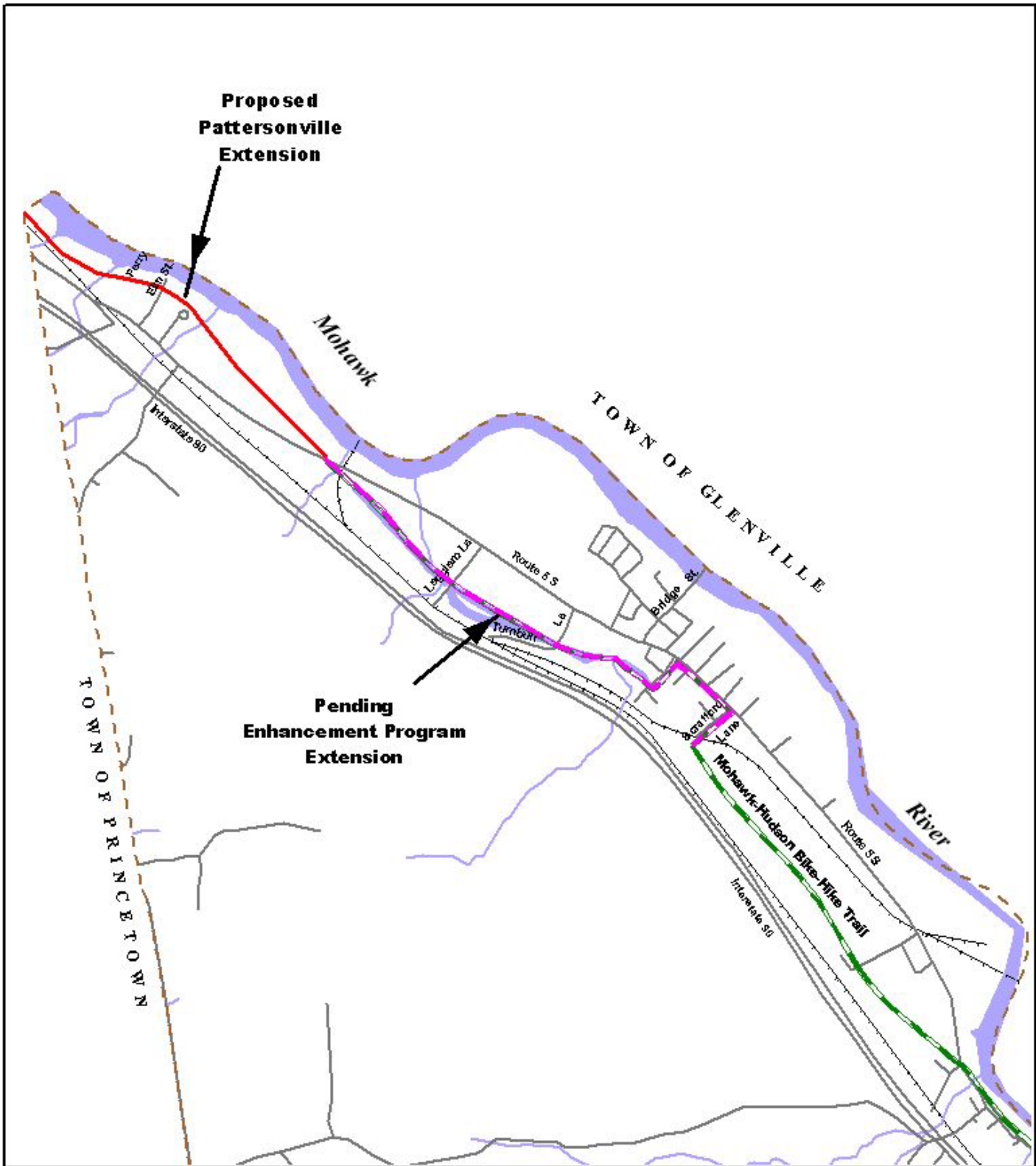


No directional signage, similar to that provided for the Erie Canal along State Rt. 7, exists for the trail.

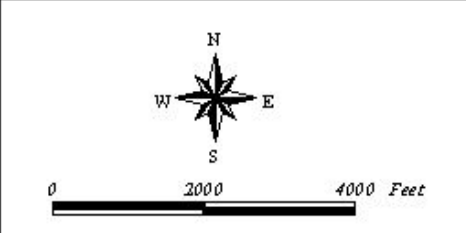
Additionally, trail users seeking services or points of interest have little to guide them. While many associated resources are not yet well developed, there is currently little encouragement for trail users to explore the community.



The Cohoes Falls Overlook Park is just .2 miles from the trail; however, there is no signage along the trail that identifies the Park's location.



-  Municipal Boundary
-  Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail
-  Roads
-  Water Bodies
-  Railroad



**MOHAWK-HUDSON
BIKE-HIKE TRAIL SECTION
Town of Rotterdam, New York
(Map 3)**

Prepared by: Schoenady County Planning Department 2007

Current Trail Development Plans

With the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail terminating in Schenectady County at Scrafford Lane, and the Montgomery County Bike Trail terminating in the Town of Florida, there is an approximately five mile gap in the planned statewide Canalway Trail in this region. The next segment of the Canalway Trail to the west is the seven-mile long Montgomery County section that is associated with the Schoharie Crossing Historic Site. With financial assistance from the New York State (ISTEA) Transportation Enhancement Program, Schenectady County is in the process of extending the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail approximately 1.5 miles west to State Route 5S in Pattersonville (see Map 3). Schenectady County recently received an additional grant under the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act of 1996 to extend the trail west to the Montgomery County line. If completed, this final extension will essentially create a countywide trail. Discussions have begun with Montgomery County officials and the NYS Department of Transportation regarding a possible link between Schenectady County's trail and the Montgomery County section of trail associated with the Schoharie Crossing Historic Site.

TRAIL USER SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey Instrument

The trail use data contained in this report were collected through the use of a self-administered questionnaire distributed to trail users and collected by on-site surveyors. Every adult trail user was encouraged to complete a survey except for those users who had already completed the survey at some other time during the study period. The survey instrument consisted of a single-sided legal-sized page and included 15 questions. Additionally, an on-site surveyor completed a count sheet for each hour of trail use observance. Each surveyor attempted to identify every user by age range and travel mode. A separate count sheet was used for each hour. A copy of the survey and count sheet is contained in Appendix B.

To facilitate the survey, five separate survey sites were established based on distance, access points, and physical separation of trail segments. Time periods for data collection varied somewhat by site, day, and weather. Typically, data collection took place at all sites between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Data collection began in September of 1996 and continued periodically through July 1997 with the exception of winter months.

Where the survey locations had other attractions such as a boat launch, recreational fields, etc., surveyors were careful to locate in a position to count only users of the trail.

Survey Data Limitations

Generating a credible estimate of Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail use is difficult due to the numerous access points and the considerable variation in use among access points and by season. However, the large number of completed surveys (928) and observed trail users (6,262) allows a reasonable description of trail users and overall activity on the trail. The methodology employed for estimating trail use is detailed in Appendix C.

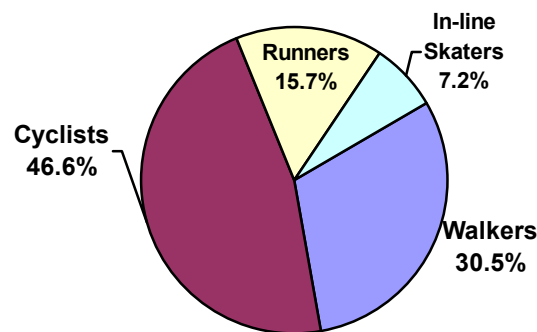
While the research included herein provides an indication of trail use, further investigation may be warranted to provide more complete information on trail usage and out-of-town visitation. For instance, there was no user count data for many access points and no counts conducted during the winter months. The annual trail use figure estimated herein was based on the assumption of very limited use during the cold weather months and conservative estimates at other possible count locations.

Much of the data relied upon for estimating expenditures of trail users and the economic impact of the trail is obtained from previous studies of other similar trails around the Country. By comparing documented results at other trails, a realistic estimate of economic impacts can be made. While assumptions need to be made, the estimates herein are conservative and should be reasonable.

CURRENT TRAIL USE

Data from the user survey shows that the trail is truly a multi-use facility. While the profile of use varies depending upon the trail section, cyclists account for approximately 47 percent of user trips followed by walkers at 31 percent, runners 16 percent, and in-line skaters at 7 percent.

Figure 1. Trail Use by Mode



Since the opening of the trail in the late 1970s, use has apparently increased significantly reflecting the national trend of an increasing number of Americans bicycling and walking. While no earlier user data are available, an estimate based on the 1996-97 user survey data puts current total trail use at approximately 458,000 annual trail user visits, translating into a trail traffic level of approximately 916,000 trips per year (Appendix C). A recent study by the Warren County Parks and Recreation Department indicates that use of their 8-mile County Bikeway, located in the Lake George Area of upstate New York, tripled between 1980 and 1995 to an estimated trail traffic level of 104,000 trips per year.

The estimated 458,000 trail visits per year on the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail equates to about 13,000 annual visits per trail-mile. This is double the estimated 6,500 annual trail visits per mile along the Warren County Bikeway and similar to the Nationwide average for rail-trails

of 11,787 according to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Although the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is heavily used, the estimate of annual trail use is significantly lower than the most heavily used rail trails in the Country.

TABLE 1. The 10 Most Heavily Used Rail-Trails in U.S.

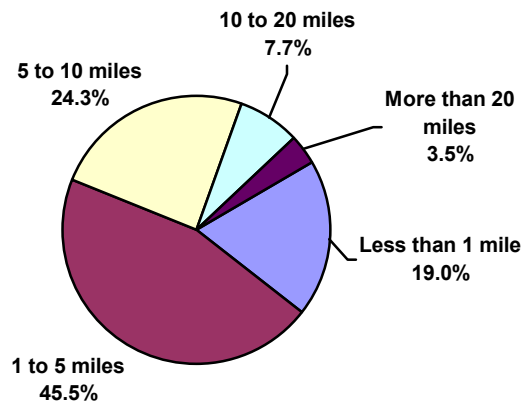
Minuteman Bikeway (MA)	2 Million Users/Year
W&OD Railroad Trail (VA)	2 Million
Pinellas Trail (FL)	1.2 Million
Iron Horse State Park Trail (WA)	1.2 Million
East Bay Bicycle Path (RI)	1.1 Million
Baltimore & Annapolis Trail (MD)	1 Million
Northern Central Rail-Trail (MD)	1 Million
City Island Foot Bridge (PA)	1 Million
Provo Jordan River Trail (UT)	1 Million
Burke-Gilman Trail (WA)	1 Million

Source: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy 1996

It is an accepted convention to express the patronage of a facility (e.g., trail, highway, transit system, stadium), in individual uses or visits. Accordingly, the estimated 458,000 annual trail visits is likely the appropriate figure to use in comparing use of the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail with other such facilities around the Country.

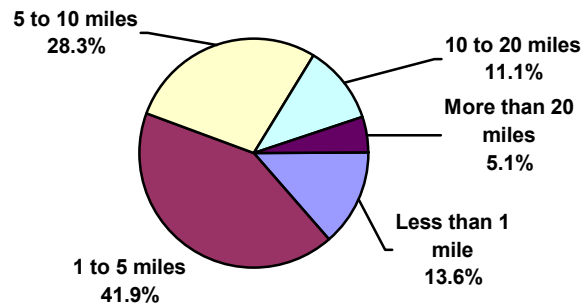
While the trail attracts users from relatively long distances, most of those surveyed (64.5 percent) responded that they travel 5 miles or less to get to the trail. A total of 24.3 percent of users travel between 5 and 10 miles, 7.7 percent travel between 10 and 20 miles, and 3.5 percent travel more than 20 miles to get to the trail. Of the trail users who responded that they traveled more than 20 miles to reach the trail, 71.9 percent were cyclists.

Figure 2. Distance Traveled To Use Trail



User survey response suggests that the “capture area” of the trail, defined by miles traveled to reach the trail, expands on weekends with 11.1 percent of weekend users travelling between 10 and 20 miles to get to the trail versus 7.7 percent on weekdays. On weekends, 5.1 percent of trail users responded that they travel more than 20 miles to reach the trail versus 3.5 percent on weekdays.

Figure 3. Distance Traveled To Use Trail On Weekends



A total of 3.1 percent of trail users surveyed indicated that their visit to the trail was part of an overnight trip away from home. This is relatively consistent with the zip code data examined below that indicates 3.7 percent of survey respondents lived outside the Capital District. Only about 1 percent of all trail users surveyed said that visiting the trail was one of the reasons for their trip to the area, indicating the trail is currently not attracting a significant number of overnight tourists.

An analysis of zip code data of trail users further shows the relatively small percentage of tourist use of the trail. The zip code data indicates that 96.3 percent of respondents were from Capital District Communities, 1.1 percent from upstate Non-Capital District communities, less than 1 percent from New York Metropolitan area, and 1.8 percent from out-of-state. As discussed later, when compared to other similar trails around the Country, the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail captures a relatively small number of tourists.

TABLE 2. Zip Code Based Locations of Survey Respondents

Municipalities/Area	Number (Percent)
Capital District Communities*	874 (96.3 %)
Upstate but Non-Capital District	10 (1.1 %)
New York City/Westchester/Long Island	8 (.88 %)
Out of State	16 (1.8 %)
Total Responses	908

*Capital District Communities include the Counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, & Schenectady.

To develop an accurate estimate of tourist use of the trail it is necessary to estimate the number of distinct individuals who patronize the trail annually. To generate an estimate of distinct trail users, estimated total annual uses are first distributed to the different modes based on user counts. These distributions are then worked back to users based on use frequency by mode. The result is an estimate of about 29,000 distinct users per year as shown in table 3.

TABLE 3. Distinct Trail Users/Year by Activity

Activity	Total Annual Visits	Avg. Reported Use Freq./Year	Distinct Users/Year
Walk	137,400	15.0	9,149
Run/Jog	73,280	9.2	7,927
Bicycle	215,260	19.7	10,894
Skate	32,060	32.0	1,003
TOTAL	458,000	15.8	28,973

Since about 3 percent of trail users indicated that the trail visit was part of an overnight trip, an estimated 900 persons from outside the area visit the trail annually. Approximately 1 percent of overnight trail visitors reported that visiting the trail was a reason for their trip to the area. Since virtually all of these respondents were cyclists, an estimated 320 overnight touring cyclists visit the trail annually.

TABLE 4. Estimate of Overnight Traveler Trail Visits/Year

Distinct Trail Users per Year	28,973
Percent Overnight Traveler Visits	3.1 %
Total Overnight Traveler Visits per Year	898
Percent Tourist Cyclists	1.1 %
Number of Tourist Cyclists Visits per Year	318

Survey responses indicate that cyclists are willing to travel longer distances than any other type of user to reach the trail. As mentioned previously, of the trail users who traveled more than 20 miles to reach the trail, approximately 72 percent were cyclists. Further, of the approximately 1 percent of persons responding that visiting the trail was a reason for their overnight trip to the area, 90 percent were cyclists. This data supports the conventional thinking that the most viable tourist market for facilities like the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is the out-of-town cyclist.

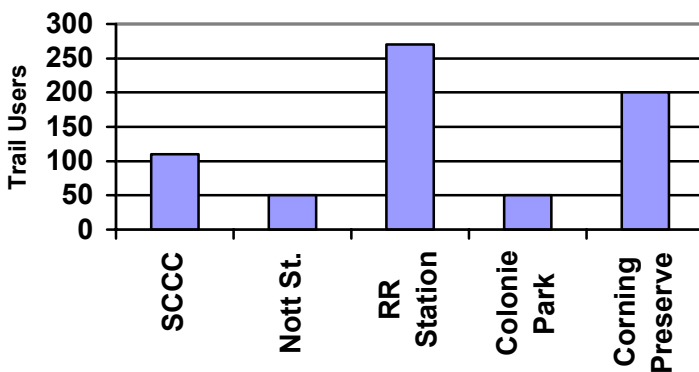
The trail provides a unique recreational resource for cyclists—a long off-road paved path—unavailable in many parts of the Country.



The vast majority (91 percent) of users reported that their primary purpose for using the trail is for recreation/exercise. The average duration of trail use is approximately 60 minutes on weekdays and 80 minutes on weekends. Averages vary significantly by mode, with cyclists tending to spend the longest amount of time on the trail and runners the shortest. Cyclists reported an average trail use time of approximately 97 minutes followed by in-line skaters (79 min.), walkers (68 min.), and runners/joggers (56 min.).

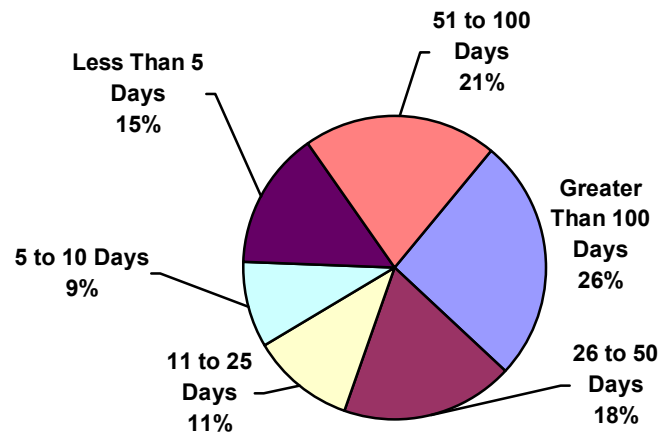
The volume of trail use varies significantly by location throughout the trail’s 35-mile length. The trail user data indicates that of the five survey sites, the Railroad Station Park in the Town of Niskayuna is the busiest followed by the Corning Preserve in the City of Albany. A variation in use is expected given the differing community character and relative appeal of the trail throughout its length.

Figure 4. Estimate of Daily Trail Use by Survey Site



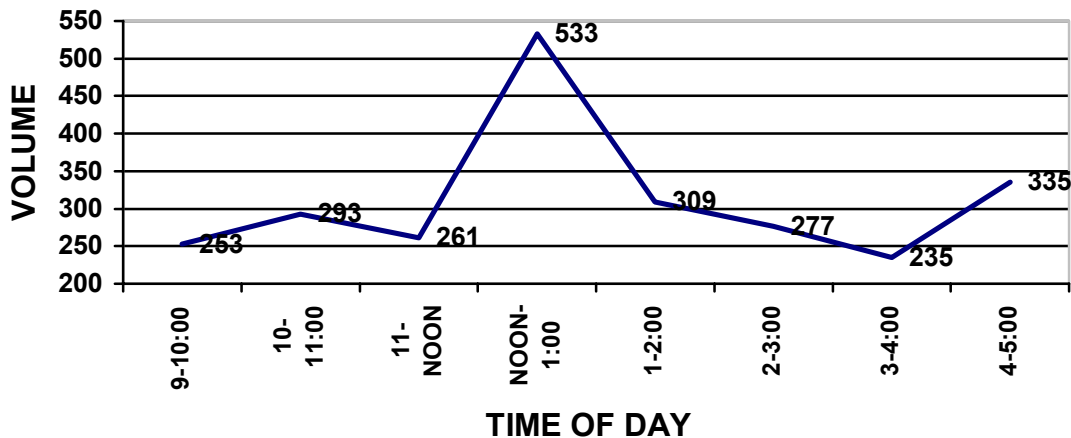
As can be expected, trail use also changes by time of day, time of year, and weather. While no trail user counts were undertaken during the winter months, informal observations indicate that the trail is used year-round. Relatively significant year-round use is also indicated by responses to the user survey, with many respondents indicating that they use the trail over 100 times per year. Respondents may have overestimated the number of days they use the trail per year by not accurately considering the winter months. Nonetheless, the number of users reporting numerous trail visits per year indicates that there are many repeat “customers” of the trail.

Figure 5. Respondents' Frequency of Trail Use/Year



One interesting observation concerning trail use is the obvious peak in “lunch hour” use during the week. Workers with access to the trail appear to take advantage of the trail, and it is an obvious amenity for the regional workforce.

Figure 6. Weekday Hourly Trail Trips (All Survey Locations)



Workers throughout the region, such as those at the Knolls Atomic Power Lab, take advantage of the trail during the workday for exercise & commuting.



The average age of adult trail users who completed a questionnaire is 47 years old. According to the count sheet data, Minors (15 & under) represent 11.3 percent, Young Adults (16-24) 12.3 percent, Adults (25-64) 68.1 percent, and Seniors (65 & over) 7.2 percent of trail users. Children in strollers/bike seats accounted for 1.1 percent. Among those responding to the survey questionnaire, males predominated with 67 percent of respondents being male and 33 percent female.

As mentioned above, most trail users live in close proximity to the trail. This is made even more evident when examining mode of travel used to reach the trail with 40 percent of those surveyed indicating they biked, walked or ran to the trail. This is another indication that the demographics of trail users reflect the nearby community.

TRAIL USERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TRAIL

Trail users completing a survey were presented with a list of items that they may consider problems with the trail and its management. Trail users were asked to respond by circling the number that best indicates how they feel about each item. Numbering was on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 representing "Not At All A Problem" and 5 representing "A Major Problem." An opportunity was also given for respondents to indicate they have no opinion. Table 5 presents a summary of the responses from the survey of trail users ranked by mean response. None of the items listed had a mean score above 2.80 registered for "Lack of services (water, restrooms, etc.)." The two items where the largest number of respondents indicated there was a "Major Problem" were *Lack of Services* (15 percent) and *Pets off Leashes/Dog Droppings* (11 percent).

TABLE 5. Trail User Attitudes

Potential Problem	Mean Response	Not At All A Problem				Major Problem
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
Lack of Services	2.80	25%				15%
Trail Surface Condition	2.44	32%				8%
Pets off Leashes/Dog Droppings	2.30	38%				11%
Trail Width	2.23	39%				5%
Litter and Glass	1.98	44%				5%
Personal Safety	1.77	54%				3%
Conflicts with other Trail Activities	1.72	61%				3%
Behavior of Trail Users	1.66	59%				2%
Too Crowded	1.59	63%				1%
Dangerous Road Intersections	1.58	63%				2%
Directional Signage	1.50	70%				1%
Parking/Access	1.39	75%				1%

Means calculated on a 5-point scale with 1 representing “Not At All A Problem” and 5 representing “Major Problem.”

When asked whether there are sections of the trail that they avoid due to deficient trail conditions or general concerns about trail maintenance, 23 percent responded yes. This is an indication of variation in management/maintenance and differing character of the trail between communities. As shown in Table 6, there is some variation in mean responses between survey sites. However, it should be noted that none of the potential problems had a mean response above 2.95 registered for *Lack of Services* at the Corning Preserve. The lack of services (i.e., water, restrooms, etc.) is one item that trail users seemed to consistently cite as the most significant problem at all survey locations.

TABLE 6. Trail User Attitudes by Survey Site

Potential Problem	SCCC	Nott Street	RR Station Park	Colonie Town Park	Corning Preserve	All Locations
Too crowded	1.39	1.22	1.73	1.79	1.51	1.59
Conflicts with other Trail activities	1.44	1.47	1.90	1.77	1.75	1.72
Behavior of trail users	1.62	1.56	1.73	1.60	1.65	1.66
Trail surface condition	2.57	2.72	2.36	2.0	2.62	2.44
Trail width	2.31	1.50	2.12	1.91	2.44	2.23
Pets off leashes/dog droppings	2.09	2.06	2.10	2.43	2.51	2.30
Litter and glass	1.86	2.82	1.90	1.75	2.16	1.98
Dangerous road intersections	1.61	1.94	1.77	1.65	1.39	1.58
Directional signage	1.52	1.35	1.59	1.47	1.45	1.50
Personal safety	1.51	1.89	1.74	1.51	2.05	1.77
Lack of services	2.84	2.33	2.81	2.47	2.95	2.80
Parking/access	1.18	1.44	1.43	1.34	1.47	1.39

Means calculated on a 5-point scale with 1 representing “Not At All A Problem” and 5 representing “Major Problem.”

BENEFITS TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

The trail provides a multitude of benefits for the people of the region. One of the most obvious is a safe and pleasurable area to walk, run and bike. The willingness of recreational cyclists to travel relatively long distances to reach the trail reflects a lack of other safe areas to gather. To that end, the trail fills a critical gap for the surrounding region.

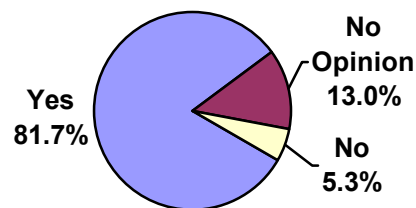
The Annie Schaffer Senior Center Bike Club meets at different locations along the trail twice each week.



Adjacent homeowners surveyed by Schenectady County in 1997 felt that safe opportunities for both public recreation and health and fitness are the greatest benefit of the trail followed by open space conservation. They also responded overwhelmingly that development and management of trails such as the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is a good use of public funds. Table 7 provides a summary of adjacent homeowner responses regarding benefits to the surrounding community provided by the trail.

Figure 7. Attitudes Regarding the Use of Public Funds for Development & Management of Trails

Do you feel that the development and management of trails such as the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is a good use of public funds?



**TABLE 7. Adjacent Landowner Perceptions of Potential Trail Benefits
(Items Listed from Highest Perceived Benefit to Smallest)**

Potential Benefit	Mean Response	Extremely Important				Not At All Important
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
Opportunities for Public Recreation	1.88	46%				3%
Safe Opportunities for Health & Fitness	1.88	44%				2%
Open Space Conservation	2.08	37%				3%
Riverfront Access/Revitalization	2.33	34%				12%
Environmental Education Opportunities	2.35	32%				7%
Location for Special Events	2.82	19%				16%
Transportation Alternatives	2.90	20%				22%
Tourism & Related Economic Benefits	3.03	20%				21%

Means calculated on a 5-point scale with 1 representing “Extremely Important” and 5 representing “Not At All Important.”

Tourism and related economic benefits was considered the least important potential benefit by adjacent homeowners. However, a commonly acknowledged benefit of recreational trails is the economic impact generated by users while traveling to and from their destination and while participating in their activity along the facility. Furthermore, trends indicate that facilities such as the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail that provide a link between historic and cultural sites and interesting natural features are increasingly attractive. According to the U.S. Travel Data Center, travelers are increasingly attracted to educational-oriented experiences provided by cultural and historic sites. Along with recreation and beautiful natural sites, tourists cite cultural heritage as one of the three major reasons they travel to specific locations.

The importance of quality of life in an area is increasingly cited as a major factor in corporate and business location decisions. According to an annual survey of chief executive officers conducted by Cushman and Wakefield in 1989, quality of life for employees was the third most important factor in locating a business.



The trail is used for many special community events.

In today's economy corporations and businesses and the professionals they employ are increasingly mobile and are able to choose from among many communities. One aspect of quality of life is a location with convenient access to natural settings, recreational and cultural opportunities, and open space. Greenways, rivers and trails can play an important role. Pueblo, Colorado, once known mainly as an industrial city, made an early decision in its highly successful economic revitalization effort. The decision was made to improve its appearance and amenities in order to attract new businesses. The resulting investment in trails and parks along the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek is now credited by the city as one of the most important components in turning around its economic decline.

The trail passes through the General Electric R&D Center and is used by many employees.



ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Various studies and surveys have attempted to assess the economic impacts trails can have on a community. These studies typically measure the direct and indirect effects associated with average daily expenditures by trail visitors. Direct effects are expenditures resulting from transactions related directly to the visit, such as purchase of food, lodging, services, etc. Indirect effects are expenditures that result from the purchase of supplies and materials by the producers of trail-related products and services. Some of the studies more pertinent to our local situation are referenced herein and used to establish typical daily expenditures by visitors to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail and a visitor profile. (See Appendix A for a synopsis of the referenced studies/surveys.)

In addition to indirect and direct effects, there can be considerable intangible benefits from trails such as corporate retention and relocation. While intangible benefits are discussed along with potential indirect and induced effects, for the purposes of this report, only the direct effects are quantified. Therefore, the resulting estimated economic benefit should represent a conservative

estimate.

As mentioned previously, comparable trails have been credited with revitalizing downtown areas and bringing millions of dollars into the community. Just how much a trail can impact a community varies considerably depending upon many variables such as the quantity and quality of associated attractions and market demand. While estimating the potential economic benefits of an improved trail entails various assumptions, there is no doubt that trails such as the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail are highly desirable destinations for an increasing number of people.

Tourist Market

The trail's geographic location provides an opportunity to capture a significant tourist market. Within 200 miles of the Capital District there are large and diverse markets from which to draw visitors. The large metropolitan areas around New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, and Hartford present a regional tourist market unavailable in many other parts of the Country. The Capital District is within a 3-hour drive for these populations and therefore very accessible for the weekend traveler. The regional highway transportation system provides excellent access in virtually all directions and Amtrak runs frequent train service from New York City to the Albany/Schenectady area. Accessibility is increasingly important since weekend trips to nearby areas are on the increase, while the traditional two-week summer vacation is on the decline.

In addition to the trails advantageous geographic location and scenic attributes, the region's link to historic places and events in our Country's history and the trail's direct link to the ancient Mohawk-Oneida navigation corridor (which would eventually become the Erie Canal) provide additional tourism interest. This corridor played a significant role in our Country's westward expansion, providing many opportunities for historic interpretation along the trail. Long sections of the Bike-Hike Trail are built upon the abandoned Erie Canal towpath, passing many historic sites and structures. These structures and sites are among the oldest canal features in North America and provide an excellent opportunity to develop self-touring interpretive exhibits.



The Flatstone Creek Aqueduct, built in 1898, is a typical canal feature associated with the trail.

Many other sites along the trail's route, such as the Stockade Historic District in the City of Schenectady, provide similar heritage-tourism opportunities. While these regional attributes add significantly to the attractiveness of the facility, possibly most important of all is that the trail provides a unique recreational resource—a long off-road paved bicycle path—unavailable in most parts of the Country.



Currently the trail annually attracts an estimated 900 overnight visitors and only 320 overnight tourists seeking specifically to use the trail (Table 4). This is an extremely low tourist visitation rate when compared to other similar trails around the Country. With some modest investment in development, maintenance, and marketing, the number of tourist visitations could easily be increased to 5,000 given our market area compared to other successful trails around the country. According to a 1990 survey of the Root River Trail in Minnesota, the average visitor traveled 82 miles to reach the trail and about 20 percent stayed overnight (Appendix A). A similar percentage of overnight visitors to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail would result in approximately 6,000 annual tourist visitations.

While current tourist use is relatively low, there is continuing interest in the trail from persons outside the region interested in self-sustaining and/or organized bicycle touring of the trail. For instance, the Schenectady County Department of Planning and the Albany County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Conservation receive many requests for trail information (maps) from persons outside of the region and state. Recent requests for trail information during April 1998 reflect much of this anecdotal data and support the contention that there is a significant untapped demand for biking and heritage tourism. One such request by Mr. William Cochrane, Activities Director for the NY Chapter of the Over-The-Hill Gang, International, indicated that he was organizing a group bicycle trip to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail. He was bringing 13 “retired” people from the New Jersey area to ride the trail for 3 days in April 1998. Mr. Cochrane also indicated that the Frost Valley YMCA in Claremont, NJ was organizing a five-day Erie Canal bike trip from Syracuse to Albany. Their itinerary, included in Appendix D, shows a two-night stay in the Schenectady/Albany area. The itinerary notes that “museums and historic sites will be right on our routes almost every day.”

These anecdotal observations indicate that despite the segmentation of the trail, inconsistent maintenance, and a relative lack of marketing and trail-related services, the trail currently attracts interest from nonresident touring bicyclists. In a recent nationwide study by the Travel Industry Association of America, New York placed second among the states in the number of travelers visiting historic places and participating in cultural activities. In fact, tourism is New York State's second largest industry, with an economic impact of \$46 billion annually.

Tourist Demographics/Profile

The typical overnight visitor to trails such as the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is the touring cyclist. As previously discussed, of the trail users who traveled more than 20 miles to reach the trail, 72 percent were cyclists. Other anecdotal observations support the conclusion that the out-of-town cyclist is most likely to use the trail as an overnight destination.

The studies of other similar facilities cited herein revealed a typical observation of such tourists—they have money to spend and they do not require a great amount of supervision by police. A 1993 study of the Mohonk Preserve in New Paltz, NY revealed that 86 percent of visitors had at least a four-year college degree and more than 41 percent had family incomes in excess of \$60,000 per year. A 1997 survey of the Elroy-Sparta trail in Wisconsin reported that 57 percent of trail users had household incomes of \$50,000 or more and 65 percent had at least a four-year college degree. These attributes make the typical tourist trail/heritage area visitor attractive to the business community.

Tourist Trail Visitor Expenditures

Daily expenditures by tourists vary widely depending upon the attractions available, an area's cost of living, and whether any overnight stays are involved. Typical spending for overnight trail users tends to range between \$25 and \$125 per day. For the purposes of this report overnight visitors to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail are assumed to spend \$75 per day based on a review of available data from other studies referenced in Appendix A.

It is estimated that the trail currently attracts approximately 320 touring cyclists seeking to use the trail (Table 4). Assuming an average 1.5-night stay for these tourists, and expenditures of \$75/day, the trail currently only generates approximately \$36,000 in direct "tourist" expenditures in the area. Modest growth in tourist visits to 1,600 would generate approximately \$180,000 in direct expenditures as shown in table 8 below.

TABLE 8. Touring Cyclist Trail Use & Direct Trail-Related Expenditures (Current & Projected)

Tourist Trail Use	Percent of All Trail Visitors	Number of Trail Visits	Assumed Avg. Daily Trail-Related Expenditures	Total Direct Expenditures (1.5-Night Stay)
Current	1%	320	\$75	\$36,000
Modest Growth	5%	1,600	\$75	\$180,000
Ambitious Growth	20%	6,400	\$75	\$720,000

It should be reiterated that the expenditure estimates and projections herein are conservative when compared to documented economic benefits of other successful trails around the Country. A 1988 study of the Elroy-Sparta Trail in Wisconsin and a 1989 study of the Summit County trail system in Colorado estimated that \$1.2 million and \$4.3 million was spent annually, respectively, by people using these two trails (Appendix A).

Regional Market

Notwithstanding the potential tourist market, there appears to be a viable market in the regional population of approximately 800,000 that could be more effectively captured with improvements to the trail and associated attractions. Currently, about 96 percent of all trail users are from the Capital District. Applying this percentage to an estimate of 29,000 distinct trail visitors per year results in nearly 28,000 Capital District residents who patronize the trail, or approximately 3.5 percent of the Capital District's residents. The demographic characteristics of the Capital Region, including a higher-than-average median household income and one of the highest concentrations of graduate and post-graduate degree holders in the nation, suggest a demand for the heritage- and eco-tourism opportunities that could become more available along the trail's route.

A recent 1997 survey of 400 people in downtown Albany by Hunter Interests, Inc. shows that nearly 64 percent of respondents visited the Corning Preserve and the riverfront. This is nearly as many that responded that they visited the Pepsi Arena (67 percent) and more than those that responded that they visited the New York State Museum (61 percent). This supports the trail survey data that shows a relatively high use rate for the Corning Preserve, and is a good indication of the overall popularity of the trail and waterfront.

Regional Trail Visitor Spending

Currently, the vast majority of trail users are from the Capital District area. However, of these local trail visitors nearly 8 percent travel 10 miles or more to reach the trail. While the out-of-town visitor is financially the most important, the immediate area realizes economic benefits from area residents visiting the trail who would have spent dollars on similar leisure time activities outside of the region. A 1994 study of the Northern Central Rail Trail in Maryland, a trail used primarily as a recreation resource by local residents, estimates that the trail supports 264 jobs and visitors spend in excess of \$3.3 million annually because of the trail.

Spending by local visitors on trail-related activities helps support recreation-oriented businesses, as well as other businesses that are patronized by trail users and represents net new dollars injected into the area's economy. Based on the studies referenced in Appendix A herein, the day use visitor to the trail can be expected to spend from \$0 to \$70 per day. Spending by day users depends upon how far they traveled to reach the trail, how much time they spend on the trail, what activities they participate in, etc. For the purposes of this report, trail-related spending by day trip users is assumed to be minimal and changes by distance traveled to reach the trail as shown in table 9 below.

TABLE 9. Day Trip Trail Visitors' Direct Trail-Related Expenditures

Distanced Traveled To Reach Trail	Percent of All Trail Visits	Number of Trail Visits	Assumed Avg. Daily Trail-Related Expenditures	Total Direct Expenditures
Less than 5 miles	65.3%	299,074	\$0	\$0
Between 5 & 10 miles	24.0%	109,920	\$2	\$219,840
Between 10 & 20 miles	7.7%	35,266	\$5	\$176,330
Greater than 20 miles	3.0%	13,740	\$10	\$137,400
Total	100%	458,000		\$533,570

Low levels of spending are assumed since currently there is a relative absence of trail-related businesses, attractions and activities along the trail's route. As more attractions associated with the trail are developed additional opportunities for trail visitors to spend money would become available. Furthermore, and possibly most important, if trail connections through the City of Schenectady are improved additional people will be brought into the downtown area where opportunities to economically capitalize on visitors are more available.

The combined direct expenditures of local and out-of-town trail users is conservatively estimated at \$569,570 annually. It should be reiterated that the estimates in tables 8 and 9 are in direct dollars without economic multipliers. Economic multipliers are used in most tourism studies because they represent spending beyond the direct spending of the visitors. The multipliers reflect the indirect spending by businesses within the community that benefit from the tourism revenue. For instance, an owner of a bed and breakfast might purchase a computer with money gained from a trail visitor who rented a room. Economic multipliers around 1.5 are normal; thus, direct spending of \$1 million becomes an economic impact of \$1.5 million. Furthermore, the trail user survey conducted locally did not ask questions pertaining to expenditures. Instead, daily expenditure estimates were obtained from studies of other comparable trails and attractions outlined in Appendix A.

ADJACENT REAL ESTATE VALUES

The Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail's impact on adjoining real estate values is not examined herein as an economic impact of the trail. However, Schenectady County's recent study of adjacent landowners revealed that having residential property next to the trail is certainly not an economic hardship. In fact, the majority (86 percent) of adjacent landowners felt that the trail has no effect or increased their ability to sell their homes. Similarly, most landowners (61 percent) felt the trail has no effect or actually increased the value of their property. A significant number (32 percent) of respondents indicate that they had not formed an opinion on the trail's impact on the value of their property. Studies of other greenways and trails around the country have had similar results and indicate that most landowners believe the trail or greenway increased or had no effect on the value of their property.

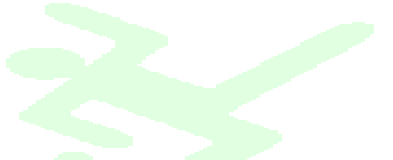
TABLE 10. Adjacent Landowners' Opinions About Whether Presence of Trail Has Made It Harder or Easier to Sell Home

Possible Responses	Rating	Frequency	Percent
Much Easier	1	5	2.4
Easier	2	39	18.5
Same	3	137	64.9
Harder	4	27	12.8
Much Harder	5	3	1.4
Total Responses		211	
Mean Response			2.92



The backyards of many homes are adjacent to the trail.

SUMMARY



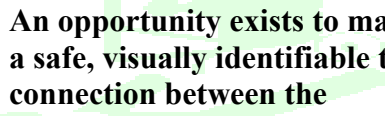
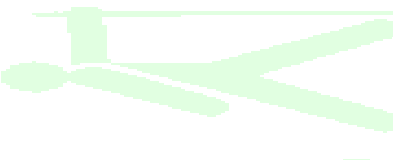
An improved local trail associated with the Mohawk River and regional Canal System would be large enough to attract numerous tourists..

Whether or not a statewide Canalway Trail is completed, an improved local trail would be extensive enough to attract numerous visitors. The large metropolitan areas within a reasonable drive of the Capital District present a tourist market unavailable in many parts of the Country. Additionally, the trail provides a unique recreational resource—a long off-road paved bicycle path—unavailable in most parts of the Country. Comparable trails attract many overnight tourists and have been credited with revitalizing downtown areas and bringing millions of dollars into the community.



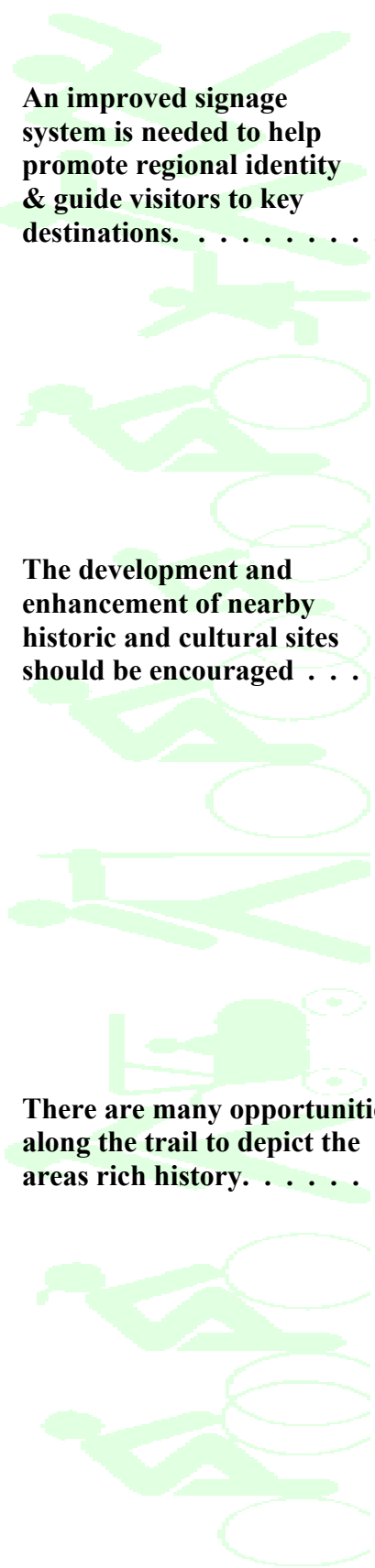
Trail improvements are needed to attract trail users through downtown Schenectady..

While the trail has many needs, one of the priorities should be making improvements to attract trail users through downtown Schenectady. The current situation segments the trail and discourages trail users to travel through the City. Instead, the City should be a destination along the trail rather than a place to avoid. Improving the trail in this vicinity is an important step in the development of downtown as a destination by the region's residents and tourists alike.



An opportunity exists to make a safe, visually identifiable trail connection between the Community College trail entrance & the Stockade area..

As shown on the sketch plan in Appendix F, an opportunity clearly exists to improve the connection between the Community College and the Jay Street trail entrances. The sidewalk on the north side of State Street from Washington Avenue to the Community College access road could be widened into a multi-use corridor overlooking the Binnekill and the Mohawk River. The access road could be modified to incorporate a multi-use trail along its perimeter on the river's edge. This improvement would make a safe, readily definable connection between the Community College trail entrance and the Stockade area. Improving this linkage, associated with improvements to both trail entrances, would help provide a sense of arrival and a positive image of the downtown area.



An improved signage system is needed to help promote regional identity & guide visitors to key destinations.

A better signage system is needed along the trail to help promote regional identity and guide tourists and local visitors to key destinations including historic and cultural sites, parks, restaurants, lodging, downtowns, etc. Trail users seeking services or points of interest have little to guide them and there is little encouragement for trail users to explore the community. Additionally, directional signage to the trail from the major travel corridors in the region is virtually absent.

The development and enhancement of nearby historic and cultural sites should be encouraged

In conjunction with general trail improvements the development and enhancement of nearby historic and cultural sites should be encouraged. Potentially, the Schenectady Museum and Heritage Area could play an important role in providing visitor services and interpretive and educational materials. Perhaps an ancillary museum site closer to downtown and the trail route could be explored. Improvement and expansion of the trail presents an excellent opportunity to fulfill the four goals of the NYS Heritage Area System: preservation, recreation, education, and economic revitalization. The trail is also an opportunity to reinforce the themes around which the Schenectady Heritage Area is organized.

There are many opportunities along the trail to depict the areas rich history.

One of the best opportunities to depict the areas history appears to be within the City of Schenectady's Stockade Historic District. This seventeenth-century settlement is one of the nation's oldest and most significant cultural resources relating to early European settlement. The preservation of the Stockade's original street plan and survival of its architectural fabric have drawn much attention to this area. Additionally, the many remnants of the Erie Canal along the trail provide an excellent opportunity for historic interpretation and heritage-tourism promotion.

Any actions that further isolate sections of the trail and disconnect communities along the trail should be avoided.

Where the trail crosses busy roadways, improvements that make the trail crossings more visible and safe should be considered. Current inconsistencies in crossing treatments and existing state and local trail intersection design guidelines should be addressed.

The virtual absence of any services (i.e., water, restrooms) along the trail needs to be addressed.

Trail users repeatedly identified the lack of services as a problem. Where infrastructure is in place, opportunities to provide basic services such as water fountains, benches, shelters, restrooms and other conveniences should be explored.

General improvements to the trail and surrounding environs should be accompanied by an increase in marketing.

While over 33,000 trail maps have been distributed since 1993 and mention of the trail is made in various local travel guides, no active marketing of the trail is currently done. Despite this, many request are received by local agencies from persons outside of the region and state seeking information on the trail and local lodging accommodations. These requests indicate that despite the segmentation of the trail, inconsistent maintenance, and a relative lack of marketing and trail-related services, the trail currently attracts interest from nonresident touring bicyclists. If improvements are made, more aggressive marketing of the trail should be done in an attempt to better tap the apparent demand for such a facility.

Improvements to the facility, such as extending the trail and providing modest improvements in signage, services, etc. would significantly increase the number of tourists as well as benefit the many resident trail users in the region. Obviously, an improved Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail is not an economic panacea. However, it is a relatively low cost and realistic step to capitalize on one of our existing assets—our region’s tremendous natural resources and historic significance. An improved facility will provide better access to the Mohawk River, make the rich history of our region more accessible to area residents and visitors alike, and help broaden the economic base of the County.

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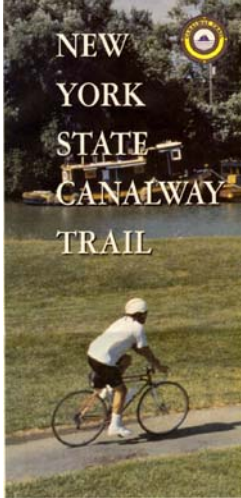
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APPENDIX A

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF OTHER TRAIL STUDIES/SURVEYS USED AS REFERENCES

EXAMPLES FROM NEW YORK STATE

New York State Canalway Trail Trek



During the fall of 1997, a 10-day bike trip across New York State along the Erie Canal and Mohawk River was undertaken to promote the establishment of the Canalway Trail. In addition to raising awareness of the Canalway Trail, participants hoped to demonstrate the economic benefits that can be derived from trail use, and highlight the many historic and cultural attractions along the way. According to the group, each rider spent an average of \$70-\$100 per day on lodging, meals, equipment and other expenses.

Over The Hill Gang, International--Eastern New Jersey Chapter Visit to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail

The Over The Hill Gang is a national organization that organizes many activities for persons over 50 years of age. The Eastern New Jersey chapter organized a three-day trip for 13 people to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail in the spring of 1998. According to their Activities Director, Mr. William Cochrane, they stayed at local hotels and spent approximately \$85 per person per day. The total estimated direct local expenditures for this group is \$3,315. On a typical day trip, they would spend approximately \$15 per person per day.

Mr. Cochrane also indicated that the Frost Valley YMCA in Claremont, NJ is organizing a five-day Erie Canal bike trip from Syracuse to Albany. Their itinerary, included in Appendix D, shows a two-night stay in the Schenectady/Albany area. The itinerary notes that “museums and historic sites will be right on our routes almost every day.”

Marist College Survey of Visitors to Hudson River Valley Historic Sites

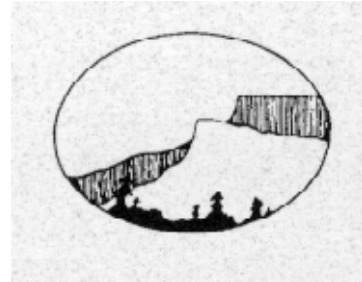
During the summer of 1996, Marist College conducted a survey of visitors to Historic Sites along the Hudson River in New York State. According to this study, the total average daily expenditure for each overnight visitor was approximately \$125. Day trip visitors spent nearly \$70 per day and local visitors spent approximately \$45 per day. Overnight visitors spent on average approximately \$475 during their trip. Most of that expense was attributable to lodging (\$250) followed by meals (\$150).

Warren County Bikeway Survey

The 8-mile Warren County Bikeway runs from the City of Glens Falls to the southern tip of Lake George. According to a study of the Bikeway conducted in 1995, of the 1,099 users surveyed during the months of June through September, 522 respondents (47.5 percent) were nonresidents. Cyclists represented the highest percent of nonresidents (92.5 percent) by far followed by pedestrians (4.4 percent), and In-Line Skaters (2.9 percent). Of the 522 nonresidents, 236 or 45 percent lived out-of-state. Of the remaining 286 in-state nonresidents, 108 (21 percent) lived more than 120 miles away. The report states that this user data demonstrates the strong tourism influence of the Lake George Region, and infers that the bikeway may be a tourist draw to the area. The inference that the bikeway is a tourism draw itself is bolstered by the fact that nonresident cyclists surveyed reported using the bikeway an average of 4.3 times per year. This seems to indicate that using the bikeway is an important part of the respondent's trip to the area.

Report on the Economic Impact of Mohonk Preserve Visitors on the Surrounding Communities

The 6,000-acre Mohonk Preserve, located near New Paltz, New York, hosts about 100,000 visitors annually who come to hike, rock-climb, bike, ski, and enjoy nature. This 1993 study revealed that visitors to the Mohonk Preserve contribute nearly \$3 million to the Mid-Hudson Valley Region Economy and provide about 75 jobs to the region. The businesses that benefit most are motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, quick markets, and gas stations. Almost 10 percent of visitors stay at least one night in the area accounting for approximately 13,500 room nights per year. Visitors also purchased goods and services from local businesses including guide services, outdoor clothing and gear, books, antiques, and souvenirs. The study also revealed a typical observation of such tourists—they have money to spend and they do not require a great amount of supervision from police. The average visitor is 43 years old, 86 percent had at least a four-year college degree, and more than 41 percent had family incomes in excess of \$60,000 per year. These characteristics make them attractive to the business community.

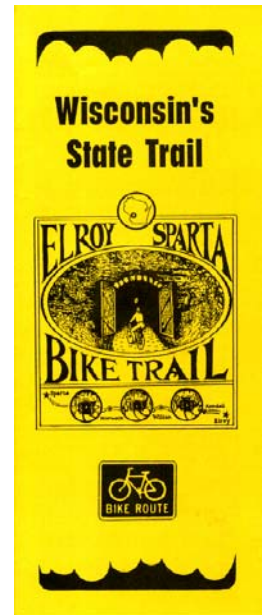


OTHER EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Wisconsin's Elroy-Sparta Trail

A 1988 study of the Elroy-Sparta Trail, a 32-mile crushed stone trail in Wisconsin, reported similar user spending. Traversing the hills and valleys of Western Wisconsin, the Elroy-Sparta Trail is known for its scenery and is part of a large regional trail network in the area. Users of the Elroy-Sparta Trail spent an average of \$25 per day for trip-related expenses. Based on the estimate of 60,000 trail visitors, total 1988 trail user expenditures were over \$1.2 million. Users were found to spend an average of 1.43 nights in the area and travel in groups of about 4 people. Approximately 50 percent of the users were from out-of-state, and the typical user travelled 228 miles to get to the trail. The Elroy-Sparta Trail is 32 miles long and has a crushed stone surface.

A 1997 survey of Elroy-Sparta annual pass holders indicated that the average distance traveled to the trail was approximately 117 miles and visitors spent an average of 2.5 nights. Annual pass holders reported spending an average of \$57 per year, with the largest amount spent at Restaurants followed by lodging. Of the respondents who spent the night in the area, 51 percent stayed in campgrounds and 30 percent in hotels. Peak-season hotel rooms along the trail are booked up to a year in advance. As is typical of other similar studies, trail users were well educated and had relatively high incomes. Approximately 57 percent of respondents had household incomes of \$50,000 or more and 65 percent had at least a four-year college degree.



Thursday, Oct. 9, 1997

The Capital Times

Katherine Williams

TRAVEL BEAT

Bike trail sets economic wheels turning



The Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail is western Wisconsin's answer to that cornfield in northern Iowa: If you build a bike trail, they will come.

Thirty years ago, Wisconsin's first Rails-to-Trails project opened as the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail. The 32-mile converted railbed, complete with three tunnels, goes between Elroy — the home of Gov. Tommy Thompson — and Sparta.

Two years ago, the Monroe County communities along the way started actively promoting the trail as the ideal western Wisconsin weekend activity. And now, they can tell Wisconsin Department of Tourism officials that an estimated 119,000 people utilized the Elroy-Sparta trail in 1996.

The tourists who travel there are coming not only from Wisconsin, but from Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. And, their average stay in the area has increased from 1.43 days to 2.5 days.

"There has been tremendous economic growth as a result of the trail," said Sharon Berns, executive director of the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce. "Several bed-and-breakfasts have opened, and they've had immediate results.

"Visitors to Monroe County spent \$54 million in 1995, and \$70 million in 1996."

The emergence of the Elroy-Sparta area is due in no small part to Berns' decision to market the bike trail at nine regional travel shows a year. The trail and surrounding trails are marked and maintained by local snowmobiling clubs. There is no charge for use by hikers or snowmobilers. But cyclists 16 and older are required to have a trail pass, as it is part of the Wisconsin State Trails System.

In the fall of 1998, two other area bike trails, the LaCrosse River State Trail (also anchored in Sparta) and the Great River State Trail will actually connect. The entire network of these west-central state trails, including the 400 State Trail, is known nationally as a fine example of old railbed put to modern-day use. This is especially the case as the Elroy-Sparta tourism interests combine to showcase other area draws to cyclists, including canoeable rivers, B&B's, Amish communities and antique shops.

Contact the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce, (608) 269-4123, for more information on the area.

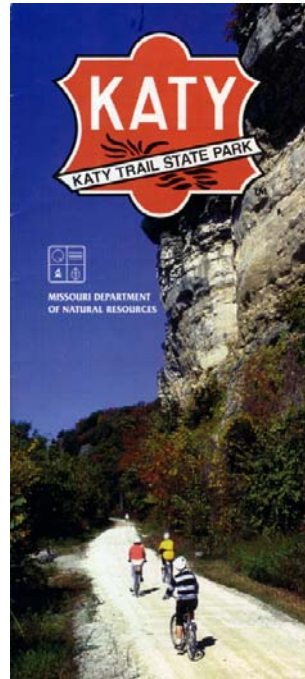
"There has been tremendous economic growth as a result of the trail," said Sharon Berns, executive director of the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce.

Missouri's Katy Trail State Park

A facility with many similarities to New York State's statewide Canalway Trail is the Katy Trail in Missouri. The 235-mile Katy Trail traverses 9 counties and 35 towns ranging in population from 100 to 75,000. It follows the path of the Missouri River and the Lewis and Clark Trail across the state of Missouri, meandering through river bottom lands, woods, farmland, and small historic towns.

The trail opened to the public in the spring of 1990 and an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 people used the trail in 1992. These communities were initially opposed to the trail. However, when the first sections opened opinions changed. Trail visitors proved to be responsible, likable guests who needed goods and services available in the towns along the trail.

A tourism assessment and marketing study of the Katy Trail in 1994 states that the park is "...one of Missouri's greatest economic, recreational and cultural assets." This study also states that "...the region had begun to thrive on the tourism spending of Katy Trail State Park visitors." Within weeks of the trail dedication, new and old businesses were vying for tourist dollars. Restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, bicycle rental shops, antique dealers, and campgrounds all opened to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of visitors. One of the key findings mentioned in the study is that merchants report a surprising number of "destination" or out-of-state and foreign visitors. A 1993 user survey on the trail's western half showed that it generated an estimated \$3 million in local revenue.



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Minnesota's Root River State Trail

Root River is a 36-mile asphalt paved trail in southeastern Minnesota. Although the trail has strong local use, it also is a vacation destination for many visitors. According to a 1990 survey of users conducted by the Minnesota DNR, the average Root River Trail visitor traveled 82 miles to reach the trail, stayed 2.5 hours and spent about \$10. About 20 percent of those surveyed, however, said they stayed overnight and on average spent about \$34.

Before the trail opened in Lansboro, Minnesota there was only one place to stay overnight. As of May 1994, there were thirteen. A year after the trail opened, the Town of Lansboro's food and drink receipts increased 84 percent and lodging receipts in Fillmore County increased eight-fold between 1986 and 1992. Writing in *the Benson County Press*, Mr. Richard Peterson remarks that economic development has blossomed in Lanesboro due to the trail. According to Mr. Peterson, the most amazing thing was "...that a simple bike path constructed with a relatively minor investment could create such astounding economic development."

BENSON COUNTY FARMERS-PRESS

Continuing the Devils Lake World, the Maddock Standard, Benson County Courier, the Esmond Bee and Dakota Sittings

Volume 115, Number 27

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Minnewaukan, ND 58351



Poor Richard's Almanac

Outrageous & Unsolicited Rantings

By Richard Peterson

Correction from last week's column: Sonja Lee is married to Kenneth Lee, not Walter Lee. Kenneth Lee is a son of Walter Lee.

This is a continuation of an account of our big trip to southeastern Minnesota July 24 & 25.

Our destination was Preston, Minn. (pop 1530) where our motel was located. Preston is located in the Root River valley & it's quite an experience for flatlanders like us to navigate in a town like Preston. It's not laid out in a grid like most towns. Streets run somewhat parallel to the river. When the banks of the river valley become too steep for streets, the streets simply end, making it easy to get lost. Many of the streets were extremely steep. They must be very difficult to traverse during the winter.

Towns there are quite close together, about 8 miles apart. I was especially impressed with the next town east, Lanesboro (pop 858). Downtown Lanesboro is crawling with tourists. Not your ordinary tourists, but tourists who are interested in biking.

About 10 years ago the railroad serving the area abandoned its tracks alongside a 35-mile stretch of the river. The state put a paved bicycle pathway where the tracks used to be & economic development blossomed.

A fellow from that area said 10 years ago there were probably 3 businesses on Lanesboro's main street. Now there are dozens of businesses which cater to tourists, renting them bikes, canoes, inner tubes for floating down the river, etc. Every other store is an antique store, it seems. Prices are high. Main Street had a carnival-like atmosphere with bikers everywhere. The buildings on the main drag date from the 1870's & the architecture is very interesting.

The town is built in the river valley & the cliffs of the valley tower over the city. It was somewhat reminiscent of Medora. We liked the look of the Old Red Hotel. One had to climb 3 flights of stairs from the sidewalk to reach the lobby. By the time you manage to get to the lobby, you're ready for bed.

About 200 feet behind the hotel & 200 feet up, a huge Lutheran Church is built on a bluff overlooking Main Street. There's quite a view of the valley from that church parking lot. I wonder how many cars have gone over that cliff.

Those who traversed the bike path crossed bridges over the swiftly running river & viewed a huge dam right in the city of Lanesboro. It is said there are 51 railroad bridges on the trail. The river valley is carved out of limestone & trees grow out of limestone along the bike path far overhead. It was quite an impressive place.

But the most amazing thing to me was that a simple bike path constructed with a relatively minor investment could create such astounding economic development.

There are lots of bed & breakfast places along this 35-mile bike path. One, in Preston, has been converted from a jail.

"Downtown Lanesboro is crawling with tourists. Not your ordinary tourists, but tourists who are interested in biking."

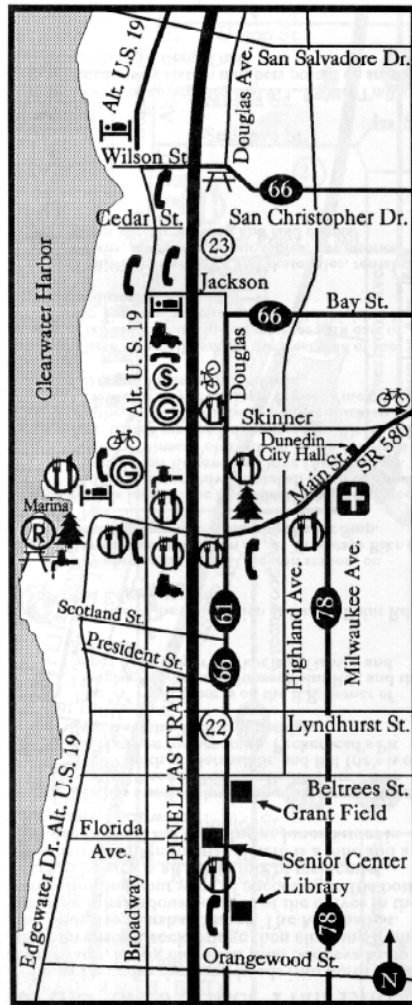
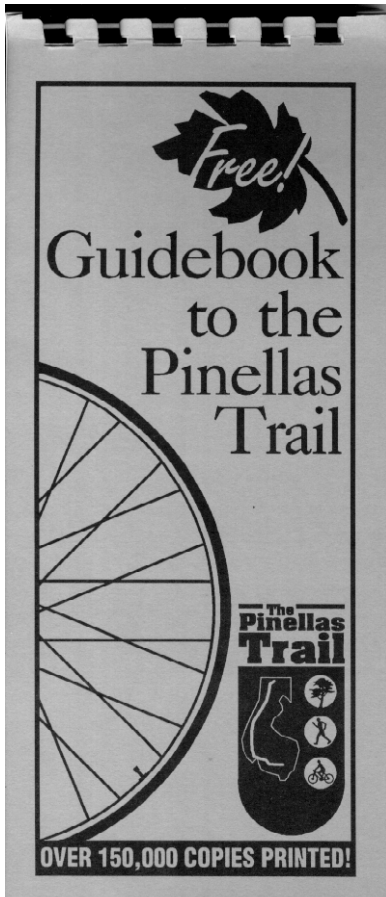
"But the most amazing thing to me was that a simple bike path constructed with a relatively minor investment could create such astounding economic development."

Florida's Pinellas Trail

The 35-mile Pinellas Trail cuts through a 292-square-mile county encompassing 24 political jurisdictions and a population of about 900,000. It is estimated that just over 1 million people use the trail each year.

Since the opening of the trail in the mid-1990s, the retail and business climate along its entire length has improved. One of the communities that capitalized on the opportunities presented by the trail is the City of Dunedin. Like many other cities, Dunedin's downtown had been gradually undermined by development of regional shopping centers. The trail, passing through the middle of downtown and generating a continuous flow of people, helped give a focus to commercial efforts. According to Bob Ironsmith, Director of Community Development for the city, approximately 3,000 people come through the city on the trail each weekend. According to Mr. Ironsmith, "The trail gave Dunedin's downtown an identity, a vibrancy. The retail near the trail is not going under any more, and there are no vacancies on Main Street." Prior to the construction of the trail, the downtown area was suffering a 35 percent storefront vacancy rate.

The Guidebook to the Pinellas Trail indicates that Downtown Dunedin is a prime destination for Trail travelers.



13 Scale: 1"=1/4 mile

Downtown Dunedin-San Salvador Drive to Orangewood Street

Dunedin has really promoted and supported the Trail, making downtown Dunedin a prime destination for Trail travelers.

- The Tropical Trail Station is on the Trail at Skinner. The Alfresco is north of Main on the Trail and the Sips & Nibble is north of Main on Douglas. On the south side of Main St. from east to west is Flannagan's Hunt Irish Pub, Skip's, Casa Tina, Kelly's, and Sea Sea Rider's. Bon Appetit Restaurant is north of the marina. Further south, Iris's is directly on the Trail below Beltrees St.
- Johnson's Country Market is in the Citgo station on Alt. U. S. 19 at Skinner.
- Three gas stations: a BP and a Spur on Bayshore north of Main, and the Citgo at Skinner and Broadway (Alt. U. S. 19).
- Pay phones everywhere: South of San Christopher, on either side of Cedar in the business centers, at Jackson and Alt. U. S. 19, at the Citgo, the BP station, also in front of Kelly's, Casa Tina's and Iris's.
- Hotels include the Amberlee on the Trail north of Skinner, and the Vermont across Bayshore. Inn on the Bay and Sailwinds Resort are on the west side of Bayshore north of Wilson St. By the marina there's the Jamaica Inn and Bay Palms Motel.
- Pioneer Park is on Main St. at Douglas. Edgewater Park offers restrooms, water and picnic tables. A drinking fountain is also located outside the historical museum next to the Trail on Main Street.
- Bike sales, rental and repair are available at The Energy Conservatory on Main St., just east of Skinner Blvd. Bikes may also be rented at the EZ Ship on Broadway, just north of Main St. and the Tropical Trail Station on the Trail at Skinner. Centre Sports on Broadway north of Skinner offers skate sales, rentals and repairs. Skate 2000 is in the green boxcar at Main St. and offers sales, rentals and repairs for inline skates.
- Mease Hospital is at Milwaukee & Main. In case of emergency dial 911. Report Trail locations by station numbers posted on small green signs along Trail.

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Summit County Colorado Recreation Trail System

Studies of the Summit County trail system estimate that \$4.3 million was spent by people using the trail system during 1989, primarily for bicycling. The average daily expenditure per person was approximately \$50 for all respondents. The average expenditure for out-of-state users was approximately \$100 per day. Approximately 16 percent of the trail users were from out-of state.

The number of users on the trail system increased an average of 28 percent per year between 1986 and 1990. The trail user count was estimated at 212,779 in 1991.

Maryland's Northern Central Rail Trail

The NCRT in Baltimore County Maryland is built upon a former rail corridor from Ashland north to the Mason Dixon Line, a distance of 20 miles. The Ashland entrance to the trail is approximately 15 miles from downtown Baltimore. Since the trail's opening in 1984, use has increased steadily and was estimated in 1994 at 450,000 users per year. A 1994 economic impact analysis of the NCRT concludes that, similar to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, the trail is used as a recreation resource primarily by local residents. Despite this finding, the study determined that the trail supports an estimated 264 jobs and visitors spent in excess of \$3.3 million because of the trail. The direct economic inputs to the state via tax revenue alone were \$303,750.

FILLMORE COUNTY Journal

Monday October 2, 1989 Volume 4 Number 51 30¢

BULK RATE
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Root River Trail creates boom in local business activity

By Martha Greenwald

Hammers are flying in once-empty storefronts up and down the Root River, due in part to the more optimistic business prospects created by the recent completion of the Root River Trail. The construction and renovation activity comes on the heels of the grand opening of the trail this spring. The Minnesota DNR recently completed construction of the 35-mile paved biking/hiking trail, which follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way running from Fountain to Rushford.

Owners of tourism-related businesses up and down the valley are incredulous about the increase in business activity. Mark Brewster, of Brewster Outfitters in Lanesboro, said that traffic in the area has "doubled over last year," and he attributes the trail to a lot of the increase. Rebecca Dalton, Director of Historic Bluff Country, a tourism promotion group, observes that "business has been booming all around the region. Visitors to State parks

are way up. Steam Engine Day in Mabel, for example, had thousands of people, many more than before."

The increased interest in tourism is translating into new investments in property, particularly along the trail. The new projects include the major new development planned at the Allis Barn location, in rural Preston, and small projects, such as Dick's Pop Stop in Peterson.

The remodeled Allis Barn is the biggest new project on the trail. The barn was built by Edward Allis, of Allis Chalmers, in 1884-85. Vernon Michel of Harmony is actively working on a project which will transform the Allis Barn site into a resort center with 60 beds in a hostel, 80 camping spaces, primitive camping, a restaurant, bar, meeting room, gift shop, and covered swimming pool. Paula Michel reported that the project is slated to open April 1, 1990.

The effect of the new traffic through Lanesboro this summer

has been manifested in a flurry of real estate transactions, some of which have been accompanied by renovation activity. Construction is under way on a new Parkway Pub, to be located in a once-vacant storefront. The American Legion is also renovating the first floor of its facility as a restaurant and bar, and the former Rose's Saloon will become a restaurant catering to tourists.

The Jail building in Lanesboro, purchased by new owners, now accommodates the Jail House pop stop, as well as a computer office. Qualy's canoe rentals opened on Highway 250 in Lanesboro this summer, and Laird's bicycle repair store opened to service the hundreds of bikes rolling up and down the trail. Plants And Things, a new flower shop, opened up in a quaint historic building this summer, a new Armenian bakery is being readied for opening later in October, and a local gift shop will be reopened under the name "Mr. J's Emporium." Linda

Hazel, co-owner of Down Home gift shop in Lanesboro, says that "it's surprising what the trail is doing here. This area has become a real destination."

The effects of the new trail business have also rippled through Fountain, Whalan and Peterson. A Wisconsin investor has purchased at least four properties in Peterson, and Peterson Mayor Dick Lee thinks that at least one of them will be used as a new canoe landing. Lee says that when the trail opened, "A lot of people were watching and looking to see what would happen." After a summer of increased activity for existing businesses, the coming spring should bring more concrete activity. The old hotel in Peterson has been purchased, and is apparently being remodeled as a bed and breakfast.

The trail is bringing new life through Whalan, but at a typically leisurely pace. Several local properties have apparently changed hands, and some local residents are talking of new

ideas for historic properties, but no real results have yet been seen. On the grand opening day for the trail, Whalan residents offered live music, lemonade and water, and enjoyed entertaining the many new visitors to town.

Fountain banker Charles Johnson says that "the trail will be a tremendous boon to southeastern Minnesota." Johnson is working to get the trail, which presently starts a mile outside of Fountain, connected to the Fillmore County History Centre and the Fountain ball park. Johnson owns some of the property on the proposed trail extension, which he says is now being appraised for potential purchase by the DNR." Johnson says that the Root River Trail towns organization, which helped host the trail's grand opening, is currently planning a Cabin Fever Days, for sometime in February. He says the event will promote area cross country skiing, as well as the talents of area woodcarvers and crafts-

Trail of success



There are many scenes of quiet beauty, like this one, along the 35-mile paved Root River Trail from Rushford to Fountain, Minn.

Fillmore Co. towns finding that bike trail is boon for business

By Julie Forster
Winona Daily News

The abandonment of the Milwaukee Road's southern Minnesota rail line between the Mississippi River and Austin has meant prosperity for the bordering towns.

The old railroad grade, abandoned in 1978, was snatched up by the state's Department of Natural Resources in 1980 after the Minnesota Legislature authorized a state bicycle and cross country ski trail on 35 miles of the property between Money Creek, east of Rushford, to Fountain.

"Tourist dollars are good for every community," said Larry Nielsen, a Rushford businessman. "It's extra money, unlike building a school building or curbs and gutters, where everyone has to pay."

Some of those dollars are from bicyclists out for leisurely day rides. Other riders, like Guy Bangs and Don Pulkrab, from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Friday used the trail as a means of training for a more serious 500-mile bike trek across Iowa by biking the distance of the Root River trail several times.

"There aren't many trails around that are paved," Pulkrab said.

"The first time I was on this I bought my mountain bike. I had no idea it was paved the entire way. I thought it was just at the beginning. When I found out it was an 8-foot wide paved path for 31 miles, I absolutely could not believe it."

Hundreds of bicyclists poured into the southeastern Minnesota

On the trail

Photographer Jim Galewski and reporter Julie Forster spent a day heading down the Root River Trail. You can find out about their trip — and how you can enjoy the trail, too — in a special report on page 1E

town on May 20 to start a trek along the trail on the banks of the Root River during the trail's grand opening, coordinated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Root River Trail towns. Those include Rushford, Peterson, Fountain, Whalan and Lanesboro.

Business owners say they hope the tourists using the trail will spur the towns' economies and provide local growth. The trail towns association is aiming to see that the growth stays in the towns.

"We are working to have zoning ordinances set so things are built in town and the distance between the towns is kept natural," said Linda Hazel, who owns a consignment and antique shop in Lanesboro. "We don't want campgrounds and hot dog stands popping up along the trail."

Hazel is a member of the non-profit corporation made up of citizens from the trail towns.

The association coordinates events along the trail such as the May 20 grand opening bike ride by Minnesota Lt. Gov. Marlene Johnson, a two-day extravaganza in which town celebrations welcomed bicyclists from all over the state.

Brandon Papenfuss, 10, left, and Anthony Schwartz, 10, both of Lanesboro, skate on the Root River State Trail recently. Activity on the trail through Lanesboro continues to increase.



Lanesboro draws business, tourists

► Development officials work to keep out 'weeds'

By Shella Storm
The Post-Bulletin

LANESBORO — "If you build it, they will come."

That line from the movie "Field of Dreams" is the real-life story for this town.

Since blacktopping of the Root River Trail was completed in Lanesboro in November 1988, a growing number of tourists and businesses have been converging in this river valley community.

How such growth will change the charm of this serene, neighboring city is yet to be seen. But it won't change much, if local economic development officials have their way.

Harlin Taylor, president of the Lanesboro Economic Development Authority, said the group is looking for owner-operated businesses, not chain businesses, to capitalize on dollars spent by trail users.

Taylor compares Lanesboro to a maturing corn field in July or August.

"We're hoping artists, professionals, independent merchants and entrepreneurs establish what I call a full canopy in Lanesboro," he said. "Then we don't have to worry about any weeds."

Although the popularity of the trail, which stretches 35 miles between Fountain and Rushford, and revamping of the historic downtown have attracted the most attention, economic development officials still credit the economy's main supporter, agriculture.

Inside

■ Visitors will find several new restaurants among the old this year — Page 3B

Agriculture will continue to be the backbone of the region's economy, said Peggy Addicks, an economic development authority board member and owner of Cady Hayes House bed and breakfast.

"Farmers are important to Fillmore County," Addicks said. "Farmers and tourism are compatible (because) farmers preserve the landscape."

And the development authority doesn't want the landscape to disappear.

Taylor said the authority does not want to stop development but is looking for certain businesses.

"Frankly, we don't see much industrial growth," he said.

But some speciality industries that tie in with the information age might find Lanesboro an interesting location, he said. A mail-order business, for example, could benefit from the city's name recognition.

Close to Rochester, La Crosse, Wis., and Decorah, Iowa, Lanesboro also carries growth potential for the housing market, Taylor said.

However, Addicks said, the real challenge is to grow the population wisely.

"We have to be careful of the pitfalls of becoming a bedroom community," she said. "We don't want to be a suburb of Rochester."

Besides keeping tabs on Lanesboro's growth, develop-

ment authority officials are looking beyond the city limits.

Last year, Lanesboro's two-year-old tourism board asked nearby cities and townships to join the board and promote the area cooperatively, said John Capron, an EDA board member and owner of Capron Hardware.

Taylor said Rushford, Harmony, Preston, Fountain, Whalan and Chatfield are among the communities that are suited for industrial growth.

"We're surrounded by communities that have those opportunities," he said. In turn, Lanesboro businesses benefit.

The catalyst of all the activity and growth, of course, is the Root River Trail, Taylor said.

On a typical summer weekend, Capron said, Lanesboro has between 500 and 1,000 visitors. The best estimates show that about 100,000 people use the trail during the summer months and other good-weather weekends. An official number of Root River Trail users is not available, but the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources set up a counter last fall to start keeping track of the number of users.

Without the trail, Capron said, the growth would be occurring at a much slower rate.

As a third-generation store owner, Capron has seen a dramatic increase in the value of downtown buildings. He said the selling price has probably gone up about 20 times since the 1970s, when many of the buildings were vacant. Capron and his wife bought the store from his uncle in 1983. Capron's grandfather and a partner took over the store in 1920. The store



Jerry Olson/The Post-Bulletin

From one end of Parkway Avenue to the next, business signs show the variety of restaurant offerings in Lanesboro. The new sign on the block is Nick's Ribs, which

has been selling retail, hard lines for about 100 years, Capron said.

Owners of only one or two vacant buildings downtown don't have immediate plans, Capron said.

Among the successful businesses are restaurants and bed and breakfasts that are spring-

ing up to cater to the tourists. Lanesboro, Fountain and Whalan have about 72 rooms at bed and breakfasts, cabins and motels.

Other new businesses include Lanesboro Electronics, which sells computers, and Lanesboro Folk Country, which sells various craft items.

A group of regional artists is also looking to locate its Cornucopia Art Center downtown to display and sell regional artwork, Addicks said.

She said the number of people in the building trades also has grown as a result of construction activity in the community.

APPENDIX B

TRAIL USER SURVEY FORM
&
COUNT SHEET

ON-SITE MOHAWK-HUDSON BIKE-HIKE TRAIL USER SURVEY FORM Date: _____

The managers of the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail are interested in the extent and type of use occurring on this trail, and how users feel about the trail. If you have not already completed this survey form, please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

1. Approximately how many miles (one-way) did you travel to get to the trail today?
 a. Less than 1 mile b. 1 to 5 miles c. 5 to 10 miles d. 10 to 20 miles e. Greater than 20 miles
2. How did you travel to where you got on the trail today?
 a. Motor vehicle b. Bicycle c. Run, jog, or walk
 d. Other (Please specify _____)
3. Approximately how much time did you spend, or do you plan to spend, on the trail today? _____
4. Are you leaving, or will you leave the trail at the same point that you entered today? a. Yes b. No
5. What activity were you engaged in while on the trail today? (Check one)
 a. Walking b. Running/jogging c. Bicycling d. In-line skating
 e. Other (Please specify _____)
6. Please estimate the number of days you used the trail during the past twelve months. (Check one)
 a. Less than 5 days b. 5 to 10 days c. 11 to 25 days
 d. 26 to 50 days e. 51 to 100 days f. Greater than 100 days
7. What do you use the trail for? (Check all that apply) a. recreation/exercise b. commute to work/school
 c. travel to other activities (e.g., shopping, visiting friends, etc.)

8. On a scale of 1 - 5, to what extent do you feel the following items are problems on the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail? (Please circle the number that best indicates how you feel about each item.)

	Not At All A Problem	1	2	3	4	Major Problem	5	No Opinion
a. Too crowded		1	2	3	4		5	
b. Conflicts with other trail activities		1	2	3	4		5	
c. Behavior of trail users		1	2	3	4		5	
d. Trail surface condition		1	2	3	4		5	
e. Trail width		1	2	3	4		5	
f. Pets off leashes/dog droppings		1	2	3	4		5	
g. Litter and glass		1	2	3	4		5	
h. Dangerous road intersections		1	2	3	4		5	
i. Directional signage		1	2	3	4		5	
j. Personal safety (Crime)		1	2	3	4		5	
k. Lack of services (water, restrooms, etc.)		1	2	3	4		5	
l. Parking and/or access		1	2	3	4		5	
m. Other? (Please specify _____)		1	2	3	4		5	

9. Are there sections of the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail that you avoid due to deficient trail conditions or general concerns about trail maintenance?
 a. Yes (If "Yes," in what communities are the sections located? _____)
 b. No

10. What is your home zip code? _____ 11. What is your age? _____ Years 12. Sex: a. Female b. Male

13. Is your visit to this trail part of an overnight trip away from home?
 a. Yes b. No (If "No," Ignore Questions #14 & #15 below)

14. During your stay, how many nights will you be using each of the following types of accommodations in this area? (Please write number in space provided.)
 a. _____ Hotel/motel b. _____ State campground c. _____ Private campground
 d. _____ Rented home or cottage e. _____ With friends or relatives
 f. _____ Other (Please specify _____)

15. Was visiting the Mohawk-Hudson Bike Trail one of the reasons for your trip to this area?
 a. Yes (If "Yes," was it the primary reason? Yes No)
 b. No (If "No," what was the reason for this visit? Business Pleasure)

This survey is a cooperative effort of local, county, and regional planning agencies in the Capital District.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Please use the reverse side of this form for any additional comments you might have about the trail or its management.

MOHAWK-HUDSON BIKE-HIKE TRAIL USER COUNT SHEET

Please pay careful attention to the time of day and *use a separate sheet for each hour*. Count every trail user that goes by in each direction. Make an educated guess regarding age categories. If time permits, please provide totals by type of use, excluding children in strollers, seats, etc.

1. Date _____ 2. Day of Week (Circle One): SU M T W TR F ST

3. Weather (Circle One): Sunny Partly Sunny Cloudy Rain Snow

4. Temperature _____ F 5. Counter Name _____

6. Time period (hour) when counting took place (Circle one):

AM 6:00-7:00 7:00-8:00 8:00-9:00 9:00-10:00 10:00-11:00 11:00-NOON
 PM NOON-1:00 1:00-2:00 2:00-3:00 3:00-4:00 4:00-5:00 5:00-6:00 6:00-7:00 7:00-8:00

7. Trail Location (Circle one):

Kiwanis Park Lock 8 SCCC Blatnick Town Park Nott St.
 Railroad Station Park Colonie Town Park Cohoes Corning Preserve

	Bike	Walk	Run	Skate	Other	Helmet*	Dog**
Minors (15 and under)							
Young Adults (16 to 24)							
Adults (25 to 64)							
Seniors (65 and over)							
Children in strollers, seats, etc.							
TOTALS (excluding children in strollers, etc.)							

* Please mark a "B" for each biker and a "S" for each skater wearing a helmet by age category.

** For each trail user with a dog, please mark DL for each dog on a leash and D for each dog unleashed by user age category.