

Ulster County 2021 Climate Smart Communities Recertification Documentation

PE6 Action: Planning and Infrastructure for Bicycling and Walking

7 POINTS DOCUMENTED

Background: Ulster County continues to implement various strategies and projects to improve infrastructure for bicycling and walking county-wide. These include many of the recommended projects from the [Ulster County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan](#) (2008).

The County is including documentation for the Hudson Valley Rail Trail project, of which Phase 4 was completed and opened in 2018. The following items are documented as part of this project, for a total of 7 points:

- Expand and improve bike/walking paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks – 3 points
- Improve bike parking – 2 points
- Improve bike and pedestrian signage – 2 points

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail is now open from the Walkway Over the Hudson to the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail in New Paltz (approximately 7 miles of shared-use trail/ 1.5 miles road segment in Town and Village of New Paltz.)

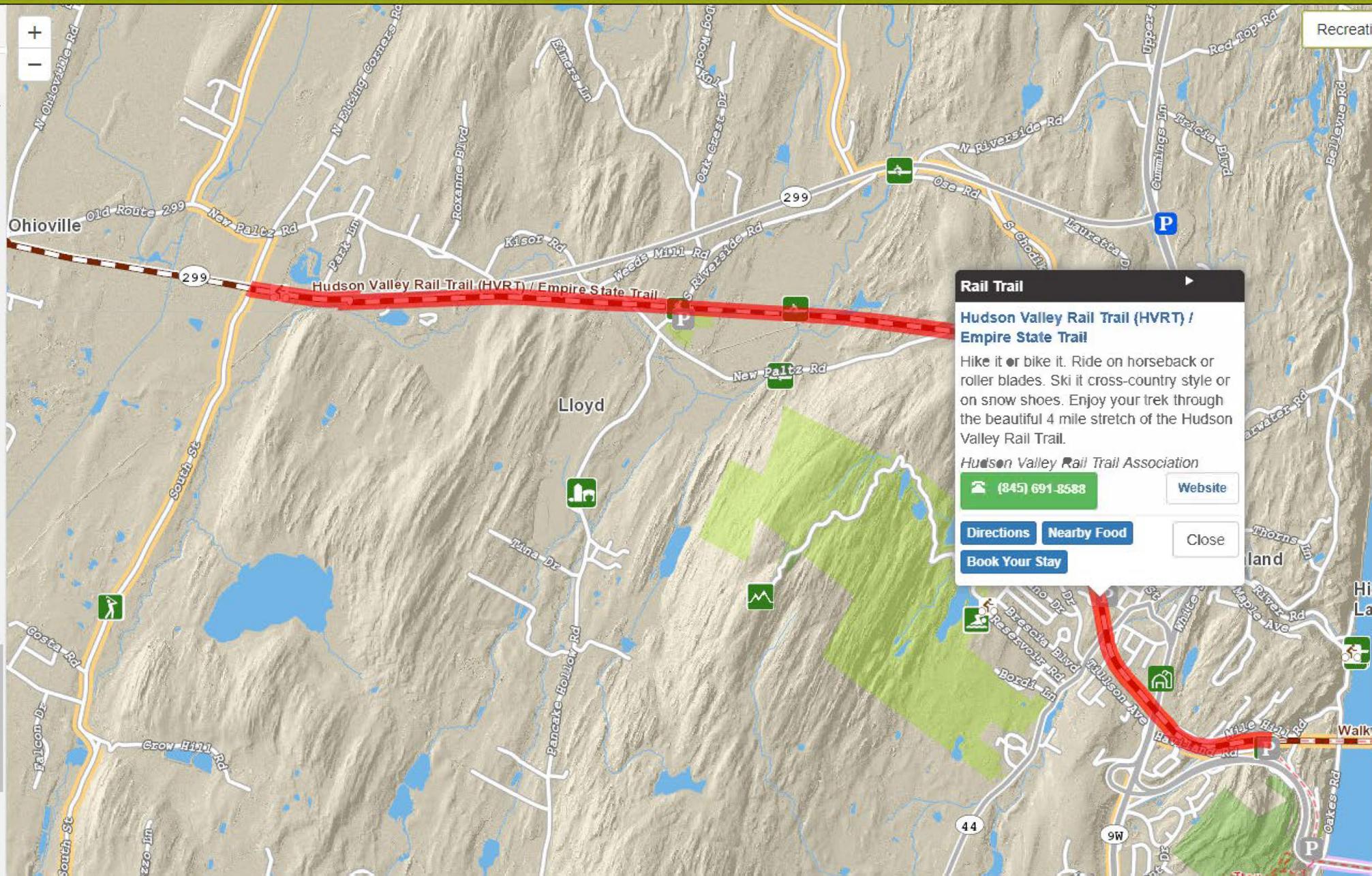
In the autumn of 2018 and spring of 2019, the longtime goal of connecting the Hudson Valley Rail Trail (“HVRT”) and the Walkway Over the Hudson westward to the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail and Town of New Paltz moved from feasibility studies and construction plans to completed projects, thanks to a historic partnership between the Town of Lloyd, Ulster County, New York State, and the HVRT Association completing three trail extension projects. The HVRT was lengthened from 3.5-miles to 7-miles of paved, shared-use trail (non-motorized only) with an additional 1.5-mile on-road segment connecting to the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail.

In addition to connecting Ulster County’s growing rail trail network, the recent extensions of the HVRT set the stage for the grand opening in 2020 of the Empire State Trail, a 750-mile long connected trail network stretching from Manhattan north to the tip of Lake Champlain (including a large segment in Ulster County) and from Albany westward to Buffalo. The Empire State Trail runs along the east side of the Hudson River but crosses into Ulster County at the Walkway Over the Hudson, following the HVRT westward to New Paltz and then following the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail northward to the City of Kingston, where the trail will be extended through Kingston in 2020.

Documentation:

- Hudson Valley Rail Trail
 - Phase 4 webpage: <https://ulstercountyny.gov/planning/rails-and-trails/hudson-valley-rail-trail-west-phase-4>
 - REConnect
 - Webpage: <https://ulstercountyny.gov/maps/recreation/>. Select “bike” and scroll down to select “Hudson Valley Rail Trail” to highlight segment (screenshot included in documentation packet).
 - Construction Plans, page 1
 - Kiosk Sign, Bicycle Parking, and Signage pictured
 - Final Design Report
- These items are also documented with the included photographs (and in the 2019 Photos of Hudson Valley Rail-Empire State Rail Trail document).
- Other bicycle parking: The bike rack at the County Office building is included, and several of the loop style bike racks depicted are on order with installation at County facilities planned for spring/summer of 2021.

- Rochester
- Rochester
- Wawarsing
- Wawarsing / Ellenville
- Marletown
- Hurley
- Rail Trail - Gardiner
- Rail Trail - New Paltz
- Rail Trail - Kingston
- Rail Trail - Rosendale
- Rail Trail (HVRT) / Empire State Trail
- Mill Rail Trail
- hnaus Dutchess Rail Trail
- Rail Trail
- Rail Trail
- New Paltz (South)
- ards Around New Paltz
- ashokan Reservoir
- ervoir Views
- gston-Rhineclif Loop
- Ashokan Reservoir
- ka
- acon / Walkway + Mid-Hudson Loop



Rail Trail

Hudson Valley Rail Trail (HVRT) / Empire State Trail

Hike it or bike it. Ride on horseback or roller blades. Ski it cross-country style or on snow shoes. Enjoy your trek through the beautiful 4 mile stretch of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail.

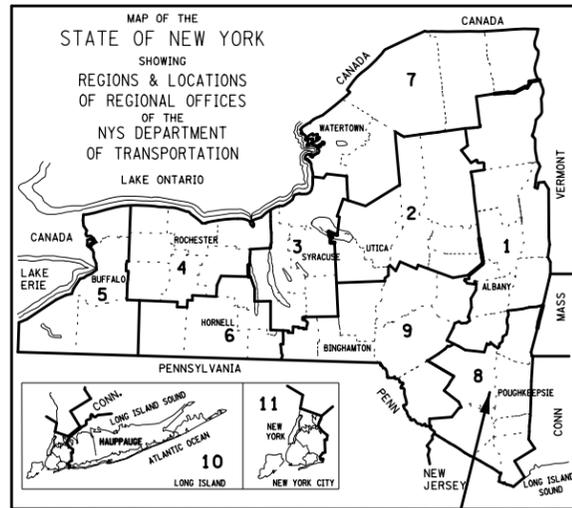
Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association

(845) 691-8588 [Website](#)

[Directions](#) [Nearby Food](#) [Close](#)

[Book Your Stay](#)

PROJECT MANAGER J. GORTON
 CHECK L. BACH
 DRAFTING K. FISCHER
 CHECK J. GORTON
 DESIGN L. BACH
 JOB MANAGER J. GORTON
 DESIGN SUPERVISOR B. FITZGERALD



PROJECT LOCATION



Ulster County

ulstercountyny.gov

SHARED-USE PATH CONSTRUCTION PROJECT:
HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL WEST - PHASE 4, TOWN OF LLOYD

LOCALLY ADMINISTERED FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT
CONSTRUCTION PLANS

RECORD PLANS

THE LATEST REVISIONS OF THE STANDARD SHEETS MAINTAINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, WHICH ARE CURRENT ON THE DATE OF ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS, SHALL BE CONSIDERED TO BE IN EFFECT. ALL PAY ITEMS AND WORK CONTAINED IN THE CONTRACT AND ANY ADDITIONAL PAY ITEMS AND WORK ENCOUNTERED DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONTRACT SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE APPLICABLE STANDARD SHEET(S) UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS.

ALL WORK CONTEMPLATED UNDER THIS CONTRACT IS TO BE COVERED BY AND IN CONFORMITY WITH THE STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS (US CUSTOMARY) REFERENCED IN THE CONTRACT PROJECT "PROPOSAL" EXCEPT AS MODIFIED BY THESE PLANS OR BY CHANGES SET FORTH IN THE CONTRACT PROJECT "PROPOSAL."

CONTRACT PLANS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH NYSOT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES AND THE FINAL DESIGN REPORT APPROVED ON 09/16/2016

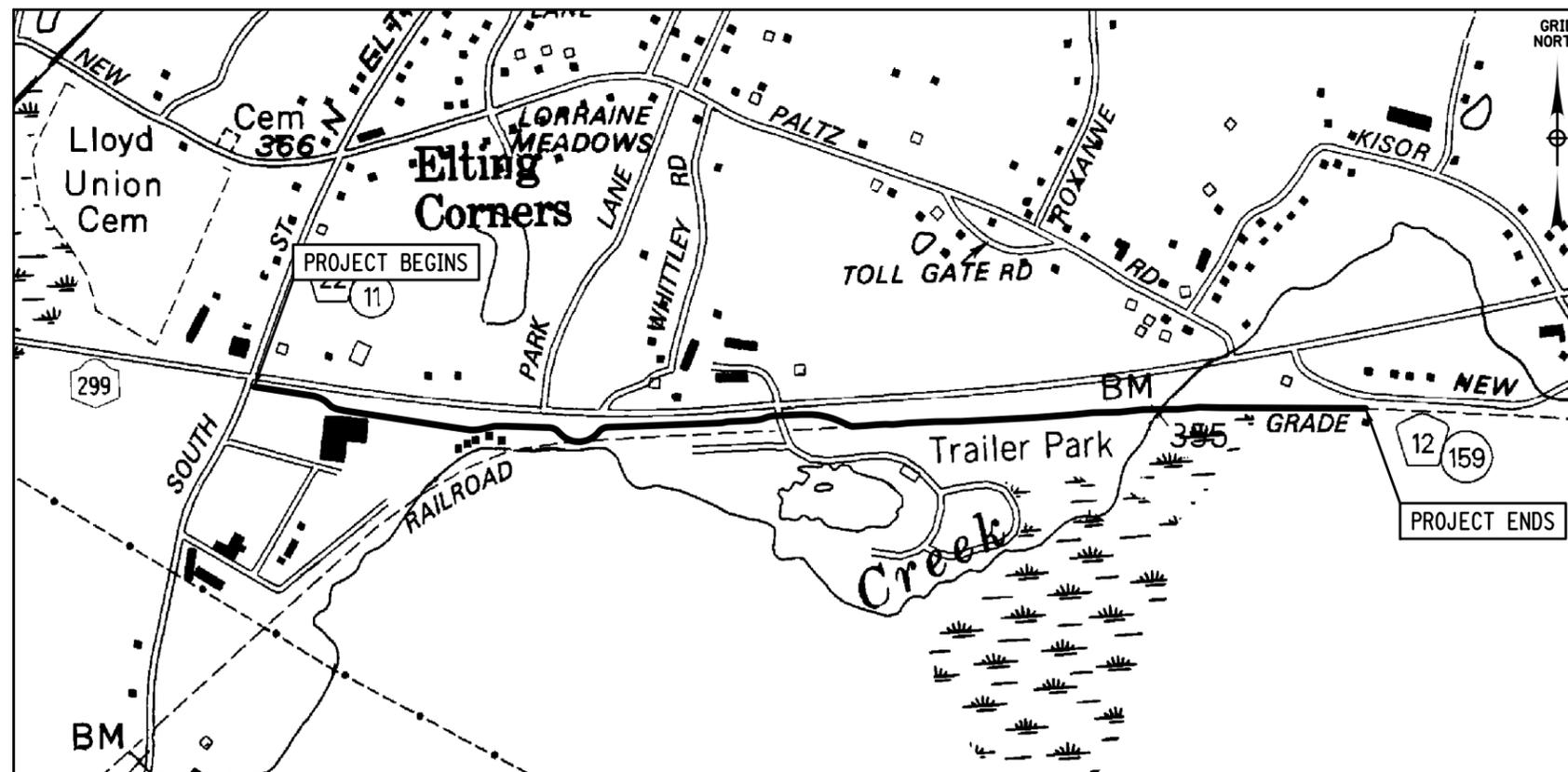
LOCATION: HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL WEST FROM
SOUTH STREET (CR 22) TO NEW PALTZ ROAD (CR 12)
TOWN OF LLOYD
ULSTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

PIN 8761.21

ULSTER COUNTY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

THE PROJECT PROPOSES THE CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES EXTENDING THE EXISTING HVRT FROM SOUTH STREET (CR 22) TO NEW PALTZ ROAD (CR 12) IN THE TOWN OF LLOYD.



PROJECT LOCATION

CONTRACTOR'S NAME _____	
AWARD DATE _____	
COMPLETION DATE _____	
FINAL ACCEPTANCE DATE _____	
REGIONAL DIRECTOR _____	
ENGINEER IN CHARGE _____	
FINAL COST TOTAL _____	
FISCAL SHARE _____	COST(S) _____

RECOMMENDED BY

DENNIS DOYLE, DIRECTOR _____ DATE _____
ULSTER COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PREPARED BY



Brendan Fitzgerald

BRENDAN FITZGERALD
HVEA ENGINEERS
N.Y.S. P.E. #074115



BEACON, NEW YORK 12508
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HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL WEST		
SOUTH STREET (CR 22) TO		
NEW PALTZ ROAD (CR 12)		
COUNTY: ULSTER		
FED. ROAD REG. NO.	STATE	SHEET NO.
8	N.Y.	1
CAPITAL PROJECT IDENTIFICATION NO. 8761.21		
INDEX ON SHEET NO. 2		



Welcome to the Hudson Valley Rail Trail (HVRT) Empire State Trail



HVRT Trail Use Rules

- ❖ **Open Sunrise to Sunset**
- ❖ **Smoking and Alcohol Prohibited**
- ❖ **Please Stay on Trail**
- ❖ **Bicyclists Must Warn Pedestrians**
- ❖ **No Littering**
- ❖ **Dogs Must Be On Leash**
- ❖ **No Motorized Vehicles Except Electric Wheelchairs**
- ❖ **No Discharging Weapons On or Across Trail**

For more information visit
www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net



“This section of trail represents a major achievement in our vision to connect the Walkway Over the Hudson to New Paltz and beyond, and it furthers our goal of an interconnected trail system throughout Ulster County.”

- Ulster County Executive Michael P. Hein (October 2018- Phase 4 Opening)



STOP

HUDSON VALLEY
Rail Trail
DEPOT



HUDSON VALLEY
RAILTRAIL





TRANSPORTATION

FINAL DESIGN REPORT



PROJECT REPORT

SHARED-USE PATH CONSTRUCTION PROJECT: HUDSON VALLEY RAIL TRAIL WEST – PHASE 4

PIN 8761.21

TOWN OF LLOYD
ULSTER COUNTY, NY

August 2016

Prepared by:



560 Route 52, Suite 201
Beacon, NY 12508



Federal Highway Administration



**Ulster County
Planning Department
Mike Hein, County Executive
Dennis Doyle, Director**



**New York State Department of
Transportation
Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
Matthew J. Driscoll, Commissioner**

FINAL DESIGN REPORT

FOR

PIN 8761.21

Hudson Valley Rail Trail West: Phase 4

TOWN OF LLOYD

ULSTER COUNTY

AUGUST 2016

Prepared by:



560 Route 52 – Suite 201
Beacon, New York 12508

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail West – Phase 4 Project (“the Project”) is being progressed by the County of Ulster (“the County”) and involves the design and construction of a dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facility that will extend the Hudson Valley Rail Trail (“HVRT”) from New Paltz Road (CR 12) to South Street (CR 22). The planned HVRT extension will be in the Town of Lloyd, Ulster County, New York along the general location of the abandoned Penn Central Railroad right-of-way and the NYS Route 299 right-of-way (“ROW”). The Project is identified on the Project List of the 2008 Ulster County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and was originally part of the scope of the Town of Lloyd’s HVRT West Phase 3 Project, which was subsequently truncated due to cost considerations. The County’s Phase 4 extension is a critical step in creating an interconnected non-motorized trail system from Dutchess County and the Walkway Over the Hudson to the City of Kingston and Ashokan Reservoir. The Project will expand non-motorized transportation alternatives, restore a former transportation corridor for public use, provide a safe bicycle and pedestrian link to public transportation opportunities and urban centers, provide additional outdoor recreational opportunities, and increase tourism and economic development in the Town of Lloyd and Ulster County.

The existing Hudson Valley Rail Trail currently is a 12 ft. wide asphalt paved shared-use path that extends approximately 3.5 miles from the Walkway Over the Hudson to the Tony Williams Park in the Town of Lloyd. The Town of Lloyd is currently finalizing the design of the HVRT West- Phase 3 project, which will extend the existing HVRT 0.7-miles from Tony Williams Park westward to New Paltz Road (CR 12). Phase 3 is anticipated to begin construction in late 2016 or early 2017. The County’s Phase 4 Project further extends the HVRT from the planned Phase 3 terminus to South Street (CR 22) in the Town of Lloyd.

The extension from South Street to New Paltz Road will be a 12 ft. wide asphalt paved shared-use path following the general alignment of the abandoned Penn Central Railroad. The trail will divert from the former rail alignment to avoid residential housing that has been constructed on the former alignment. The western terminus of the trail will also divert from the railbed and to the NYS Route 299 ROW as it nears its terminus at South Street where a new trailhead parking area with approximately ten (10) spaces will be constructed that includes necessary signage. A small bridge exists along the former railbed that will be rehabilitated to inhibit further deterioration and made safe for bicyclists, pedestrians and emergency vehicles with the inclusion of new safety railing.

The Project is being administered by the Ulster County Planning Department in cooperation with the Town of Lloyd, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, the Walkkill Valley Rail Trail Association, Scenic Hudson, and the Walkway Over the Hudson, all of which serve as Community Advisory Committee members for the Project. The abandoned Penn Central Railroad railbed west of New Paltz Road is comprised of several privately owned parcels. New York State owns the area immediately adjacent to NYS Route 299. Ulster County will acquire or obtain appropriate easements for all necessary property to construct the Project. Ownership of the property currently owned by the State and being utilized by the Project will remain unchanged. Any work within the NYS ROW will be done under a Use and Occupancy Permit

and a Highway Work Permit from the New York State Department of Transportation (“NYSDOT”).

The Project’s estimated budget is \$1,990,904, eighty percent of which is funded by US DOT funds through the Transportation Alternatives Program. The Project is a locally administered federal-aid project under the oversight of the NYSDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”). It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2017.

I. INTRODUCTION

This design report will serve to establish the scope of work for the Hudson Valley Rail Trail West – Phase 4 Project. It will evaluate alternative ways to meet the Project objectives and will recommend the preferred Project alternative. Additionally, this report will provide the environmental documentation needed to identify required permits and to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”).

This Project is classified as a C-List Categorical Exclusion project under the NEPA. FHWA/NYS DOT will act as the lead agency and provide NEPA concurrence to the County of Ulster.

This project is classified as an unlisted action under the SEQRA in accordance with the Implementing Regulations of the Official Compilation Codes, Rules and Regulations of New York State (NYCRR). The County of Ulster will act as the lead agency for SEQRA.

The Project proposes the construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities extending the existing HVRT from South Street (CR 22) to New Paltz Road (CR 12) in the Town of Lloyd. The extension of a new 12’ wide asphalt shared-use path to a new trailhead with public parking is the preferred project alternative.

The report will be used as the documentation for design decisions for this Project and may be distributed as public information as required.

For additional information on the Project, please contact the County’s Project Manager:

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Ulster County Planning Department
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Kingston, NY 12402
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Ph: (845) 340-3338
Fax: (845) 340-3429

II. **PROJECT IDENTIFICATION, EXISTING CONDITIONS, AND OBJECTIVES**

A. **Project Identification:**

1. **Project Type:** Construction of pedestrian and bicycle facility (Shared-Use Path).

2. **Project Location/Description:**

a. **Route/Street Names:**

The project is located on the general alignment of the abandoned railbed south of NYS Route 299. Segments of the project will be constructed adjacent to NYS Route 299.

b. **Municipality:**

The project is located in the Town of Lloyd.

c. **County:**

The project is located in Ulster County.

d. **Length:**

Approximately 1.24 miles of shared-use path is proposed.

e. **Termini:**

South Street (CR 22) to New Paltz Road (CR 12)

f. **Regional Map:**

A Regional Location Map is shown in Figure 1.

g. **Project Location Map:**

A Project Location Map is shown in Figure 2.

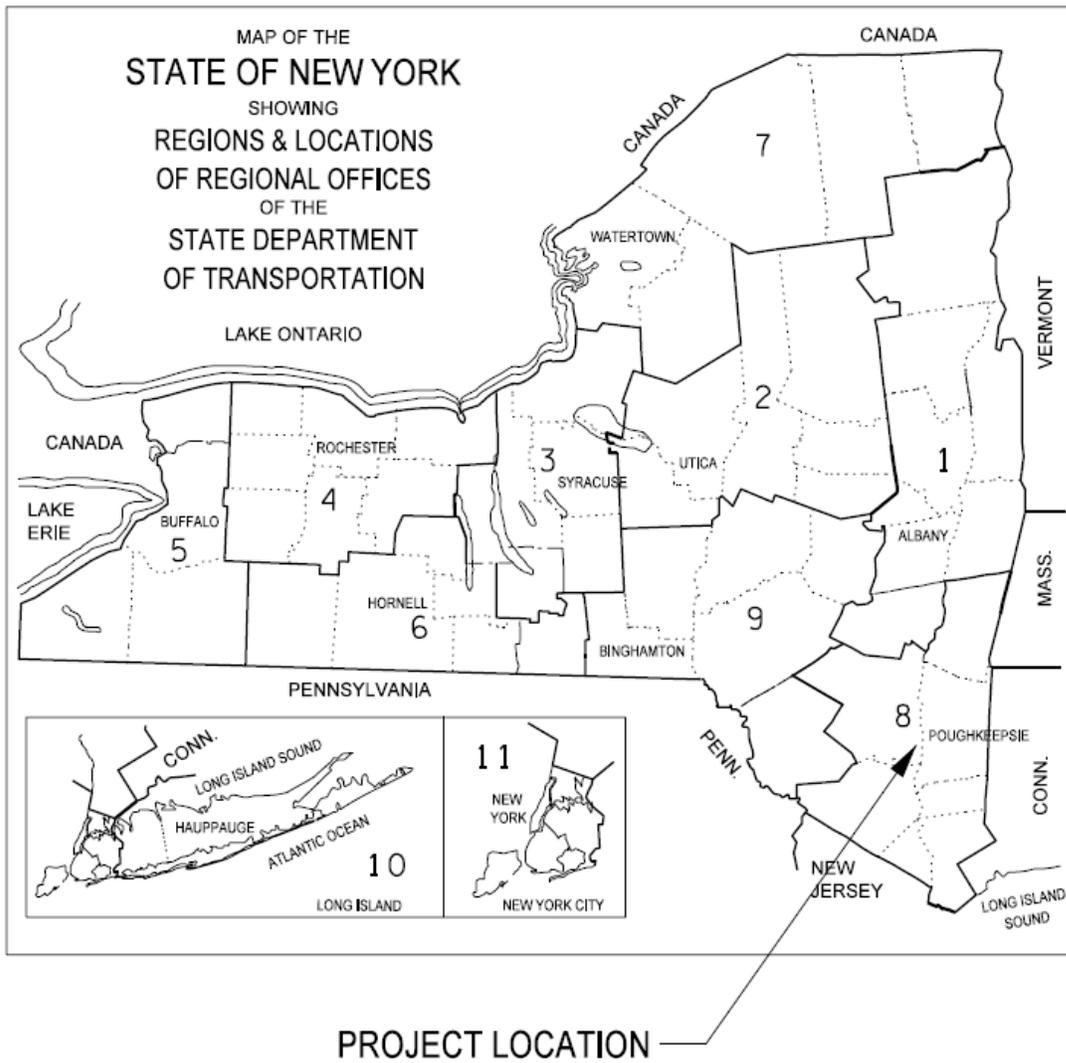


Figure 1:

Hudson Valley Rail Trail West – Phase 4
Town of Lloyd, Ulster County, New York

Regional Project Location Map

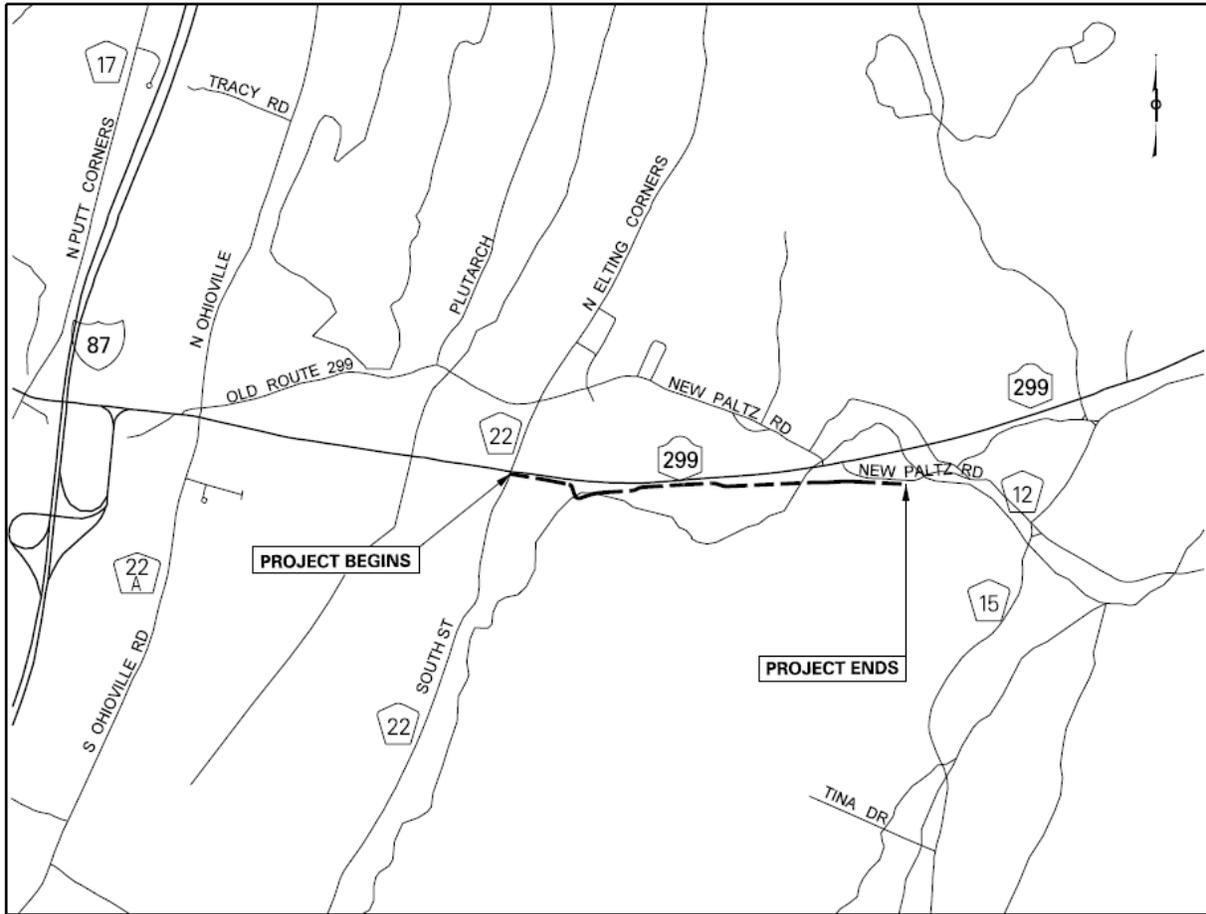


Figure 2:

Hudson Valley Rail Trail West – Phase 4
Town of Lloyd, Ulster County, New York

Project Location Map

B. Project Evolution:

The Project is a planned extension of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail in the Town of Lloyd. The Project was initially part of the proposed scope of the Town of Lloyd’s Phase 3 extension project, which was originally proposed from Tony Williams Park to South Street. Due to funding and right-of-way constraints, Phase 3 was shortened and will now terminate at a new parking area along New Paltz Road. Phase 4 will complete the link from South Street to the parking area along New Paltz Road.

In order to continue extending the HVRT westward towards New Paltz and eventually the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, the County submitted a grant application through the Transportation Alternatives Program in June 2014. The Project was awarded funding in October 2014 and added to the NYSDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (“STIP”). The Initial Project Proposal (“IPP”) was completed by the County of Ulster and approved by the NYSDOT on March 12, 2015.

C. Existing Conditions:

1. Transportation Conditions and Engineering Considerations:

a. Functional Classification and National Highway System (NHS):

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail is not a public vehicular roadway and thus does not have a functional classification. It is not on the National Highway System or part of the National Network of Truck Access Highways.

The Project will begin at South Street and terminate at New Paltz Road. The Project will closely follow NYS Route 299. The roads within the project limits are classified below in the following table.

Exhibit 1.1 – Roadway Classification	
Road Name	Classification
South Street (CR 22)	Urban Local
New Paltz Road (CR 12)	Urban Major Collector
NYS Route 299	Urban Principal Arterial

NYS Route 299 is located within 1 mile of the project and is a Designated Truck Access Highway on the National Network of Designated Truck Access Highways.

None of the roadways within the project limits are part of the 16 ft vertical clearance network.

b. Ownership and Maintenance Jurisdiction:

The abandoned rail bed is comprised of several privately owned parcels.

The State of New York owns NYS Route 299. New Paltz Road and South Street are owned by Ulster County. There are also privately owned commercial and residential driveways along the Project.

All roads within the project limits are maintained by their respective owners.

c. Culture, Terrain and Climatic Conditions:

1. The Project area is a combination of undeveloped woodland, residential development and commercial properties.
2. The terrain in the Project area is primarily flat.
3. The Project area has no unusual climatic conditions.

d. Control of Access:

Vehicular access is not permitted on the abandoned rail bed with the exception of maintenance and emergency vehicles. There are no provisions in place to control the access.

e. Existing Trail/Highway Section (plans and typical sections included in Appendix A):

The majority of the Project area is located on privately owned parcels. Portions are located within the NYS Route 299 right-of-way.

Plans showing the right-of-way are contained in Appendix A.

The existing abandoned rail bed is mostly a 25' wide embankment section with some vegetative encroachment on the side slopes. Tracks and ties have been removed and the rail bed is in fair condition.

A manufactured home park has been developed on the abandoned rail bed in the approximate center of the project.

f. Abutting Trail/Highway Segments and Future Plans for Abutting Trail/Highway Segments:

(1) Abutting Trail Segments / Future Plans for Abutting Trail Segments

The eastern terminus of the project will connect to Phase 3 of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail West. This segment is currently an abandoned rail bed from Tony Williams Park to New Paltz Road. However the Town of Lloyd is

progressing a project to construct a 12 foot wide asphalt shared-use path on this segment. That project is projected to be completed in 2016 and will be maintained by the Town of Lloyd.

The western terminus of the project is located at South Street in the vicinity of the intersection of NYS Route 299 and South Street. The County and NYSDOT have discussed a future HVRT extension from South Street to the vicinity of the New York State Thruway in the Town of New Paltz, but there is no funding allocated for this project to date.

2) Abutting Highway Segments

There are several public roadways within the project action area. Exhibit 1.2 provides information regarding the attributes and traffic conditions of the abutting highway segments. The information consists of municipality location, roadway classification, travel lanes, and Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes.

Exhibit 1.2 – Abutting Highway Segments							
Abutting Roadway	Functional Classification	Owner	Type of Crossing	Roadway Section	Lane Width	Volumes (AADT)	Posted Speed
South Street (CR 22)	Urban Local	Ulster County	N/A	2 Lanes	11 ft	2,002 (2010)	35 mph
New Paltz Road (CR 12)	Urban Major Collector	Ulster County	N/A	2 Lanes	11 ft	4,061 (2008)	40 mph
NYS Route 299	Urban Principal Arterial	New York State	N/A	2 Lanes	12 ft	18,254 (2011)	55 mph

g. Speeds and Delay:

The existing rail bed does not permit vehicles, and therefore does not contain a posted speed limit. The speed limits of the abutting highway segments are listed in Exhibit 1.2.

Travel speed and delay runs for the evaluation of road crossings were not conducted since this project does not involve analyzing deficiencies involving congestion.

h. Traffic Volumes:

Vehicular traffic is not permitted or planned on the proposed trail. Existing traffic volumes on the abutting highway segments are listed in Exhibit 1.2. The information contained in Exhibit 1.2 has been taken from the Average

Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) from NYSDOT records. The DOT mainline data is included in Appendix D.

i. Level of Service:

Existing level of service determination and capacity analysis were not performed at the street crossings. The proposed trail will not affect or alter the existing level of service of the roadway network.

j. Non-Standard Features and Non-Conforming Features:

Non-Standard Features:

There are no non-standard existing features through the project limits.

Non-Conforming Features:

There are no non-conforming existing features through the project limits

k. Safety Considerations, Accident History and Analysis:

There is no permitted vehicular use on the existing railroad bed; therefore, no accident records exist for the shared-use path location.

l. Pavement and Shoulder Conditions:

There is no pavement along the project corridor. The pavement condition on the roadways adjacent to the project is in good to fair condition.

m. Guide Railing, Median Barrier, Impact Attenuators:

There are segments of guiderail along NYS Route 299 in the vicinity of the project. However as the guiderail is not in the project action area, it is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate.

n. Traffic Control Devices (Signs, Signals, etc):

There is one major intersection within the project action area, South Street at NYS Route 299. This intersection is signal controlled and has various auxiliary turn lanes. There are 2 minor driveways which are stop sign controlled within the project limits as well.

o. Structures:

There is an existing bridge within the project limits that carries the former railroad over the Black Creek. The structure is a 3-sided structure with stone and concrete abutments and a concrete deck spanning approximately 17 feet. The deck has an out-to-out width of 34 feet and does not have any guide railing or protection.

There are no record plans available for the structure however preliminary investigations indicate that the structure is in fair condition. The deck is approximately 30” thick and was exposed in two (2) locations to check the integrity. The top of the deck was solid and did not show signs of deterioration. The deck and abutments showed some deterioration including leaking, minor spalling and a few loose abutment stones.

p. Hydraulics of Bridges and Culverts:

No hydraulic deficiencies have been identified at the bridge.

q. Drainage Systems:

The drainage system along the project corridor is a network of overland flow and open ditches along the abandoned rail bed and NYS Route 299 that all eventually drain to the Black Creek. No deficiencies have been identified.

r. Soil and Foundation Conditions:

Any excavated excess soil or ballast will be spoiled within the ROW of the trail and remain under the jurisdiction of the project owner so as to avoid off-site issues in the event that they contain low levels of contamination..

s. Utilities:

There are overhead utility lines and poles that run throughout the Project limits along NYS Route 299. The overhead utilities include electric, telephone, and cable. The electric lines are owned by Central Hudson Gas and Electric (“CHG&E”), the telephone lines are owned by Verizon, and the cable lines are owned by Time Warner Cable. In addition, there are underground fiber optic (Adesta) and gas (CHG&E) lines along NYS Route 299 throughout the project area. The overhead lines cross the proposed trail east of the Highland Woods driveway to feed an office building. The underground gas main crosses the project location at the Highland Woods driveway.

t. Railroads:

The majority of the project is located on the abandoned Penn Central Railroad bed (currently privately owned). The tracks have been removed, but the majority of the rail bed is still intact and in good shape. A portion of the railroad has been by and large eliminated and integrated with residential development.

There are no active railroads within the project limits.

u. Visual Environment:

The visual environment of the project is primarily woodlands mixed with residential and commercial development.

v. Provisions for Pedestrians and Bicyclists:

The abandoned rail bed does not have any provisions for pedestrians or bicyclists. Pedestrians and bicyclists share the roadway with motorists on NYS Route 299.

w. Planned Development:

There is no known development planned at this time.

x. Systems Elements and Conditions:

The Project area currently has no dedicated route for non-vehicular travel. The Project will provide opportunities for increased choice in transportation modes, specifically non-motorized transportation, within the corridor. The separate shared-use path will further increase mobility within the region. The Project will complete a vital segment of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail West from Dutchess County towards New Paltz.

2. Needs:

a. Project Level Needs:

- (1) Safety Needs – Safe off-road facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other modes of non-motorized transportation for all skill levels and ages are needed.
- (2) Structural Needs – The existing structure requires minor concrete/steel rebar repair and positive protection of bridge railing and/or fencing.
- (3) Environmental Needs – A shared-use path for resident and visitors is needed to provide pedestrians and bicyclists a safe and enjoyable alternative to using motorized vehicles and allow for enjoyment of the scenic Black Creek wetland complex proximate to the Project.

b. Area or Corridor Level Needs:

- (1) Modal Interrelationship - The proposed facility will provide an alternative travel choice to motorized modes of transportation. This will contribute to the development of a multi-modal transportation system for all types of travel.

- (2) System Needs – The proposed Project will serve as an important element linking Dutchess and Ulster County communities. The pedestrian and bicycle facilities will provide approximately a 1.24 mile link of the proposed Hudson Valley Rail Trail West towards the Town of New Paltz and the Walkkill Valley Rail Trail.
- (3) Mobility Needs – The proposed Project is necessary to provide a safe, fully-accessible and efficient pedestrian and bicycle facility for residents of the County who desire to travel by bicycle or walk to nearby destinations.
- (4) Social Demands and Economic Development – The proposed Project is a critical link in the emerging regional interconnected rail trail network that will link numerous towns and villages in the County with the Poughkeepsie Train Station and Dutchess County.

The proposed Project would increase tourism and pedestrian and bicycle use and access to local business establishments such as restaurants and convenience stores. Ancillary support services such as bicycle shops would benefit. Regionally, a linking trail would attract visitors from adjacent communities and counties, thereby affording the opportunity for intra-community travel. The Project will also enhance the quality of life thereby helping to attract new residents and businesses to Ulster County.

c. Transportation Plans:

The Project is in conformance with the Ulster County Transportation Council's (UCTC) Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and received Transportation Alternative Project (TAP) funding.

D. Project Objectives:

1. Provide and expand non-motorized transportation opportunities in the Town of Lloyd for pedestrians and bicyclists.
2. Expand recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors, including for persons with disabilities and for those of all skill levels and age groups.
3. Increase tourism and economic development in the Town of Lloyd and surrounding region.
4. Develop an interconnected rail trail system connecting Dutchess County and the Walkway Over the Hudson to New Paltz and the Walkkill Valley Rail Trail and other County rail trails.
5. Improve the quality of life for local residents

III. ALTERNATIVES

A. Design Criteria:

1. Standards:

- i. AASHTO Guidelines for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
- ii. NYSDOT Highway Design Manual
- iii. NYSDOT Bridge Manual

2. Critical Design Elements:

ELEMENT	EXISTING	STANDARD	PROPOSED	REF.	
Design Speed	N/A	18mph Desired 12 mph Minimum	18mph Desired 12 mph Minimum	a.	§5.2.4
Paved Width (two way)	N/A	10ft	12ft	a.	§5.2.1
Shoulder	N/A	2ft	2ft	a.	§5.2.1
Grade (maximum)	N/A	5% ²	5%	a.	§5.2.7
Horizontal Curvature ¹ (min radii) 18 mph	N/A	60ft ³ Desired 27ft Minimum	> 60 ft	a.	§5.2.1
Stopping Sight Distance	N/A	Adequate	> 200 ft	a.	§5.2.8
Lateral Clearance	N/A	2ft ⁴	> 2ft	a.	§5.2.1
Distance between edge of highway shoulder and path (min)	N/A	5ft ⁵	> 5ft	a.	§5.2.2
Vertical Clearance - obstructions bridges/tunnels	8ft 10ft	8ft 10ft	8ft 10ft	a.	§5.2.10
Cross Slope	N/A	1.5%	1.5%	a.	§5.2.6
PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE BRIDGES					
Design Vehicle	N/A	H-10 (Maintenance Veh)	H-10 (Maintenance Veh)	a.	§5.2.10
Loading	N/A	H-10 or Pedestrian	H-10 or Pedestrian ⁶	a.	§5.2.10
Width (railing to railing)	N/A	10ft	16ft min.	a.	§5.2.10
Vertical Clearance (freeboard)	2ft	2ft (min)	2ft	c.	P. 2-14
Railing Height (Bridges only)	N/A	54in.	54in.	b.	§17.4.10.6

References:

- a. AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 2012
- b. NYSDOT Highway Design Manual
- c. Bridge Manual NYSDOT Structures Design and Construction

Footnotes:

1. Radii on approaches to road crossings may be reduced to discourage high speed crossings
2. 5% desirable or grade restrictions as follows; 5-6% for up to 800ft, 7% for up to 400ft, 8% for up to 300ft, 9% for up to 200ft, 10% for up to 100ft, and 11+% for up to 50ft.
3. Based on a 20 degree lean angle.
4. Where the path is adjacent to canals, ditches, or slopes down steeper than 1:3, a minimum 5ft separation from the edge of pavement to top of slope need be provided or depending on slope condition a physical barrier may need to be provided.
5. If the distance between the edge of the highway shoulder and the shared-use path is less than 5ft, a barrier 42" high, must be provided.
6. Former railroad bridge has a 30" thick concrete deck and is adequate for the intended use.

B. Alternatives Considered:

1. Null Alternative (Alternative 1):

The null alternative is presented as a description of the existing conditions, which are described in Chapter II, and will serve as a basis for comparison with the proposed alternative.

The current transportation system does not provide a dedicated route for pedestrian and bicycle traffic beyond New Paltz Road towards the Town of New Paltz and points west. Accordingly, this alternative does not satisfy the Project objectives and is dismissed from further consideration.

2. Construct Shared-Use Path along NYS Route 299 (Alternative 2):

This alternative would construct a means for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely travel from South Street to New Paltz Road, extending the existing Hudson Valley Rail Trail towards the Town of New Paltz.

This alternative proposes to start at the intersection of South Street and NYS Route 299 and head east along Route 299 for approximately 3,450 feet (0.65 miles) before transitioning to the abandoned Penn Central Railroad corridor. The alignment then follows the railbed for an additional 2,800 feet (0.53 miles) to the terminus at the proposed end of Phase 3 (vicinity of New Paltz Road).

The construction of this proposed shared-use path project would progress the completion of a link in the regional conversion of the former railroad to shared-use path system.

However, this alignment does not utilize the abandoned railbed to the maximum extent practicable and increases the exposure of the trail users to NYS Route 299. NYS Route 299 has high vehicular speeds and volumes, creating a hazardous environment for the trail users. While feasible, it is not deemed the preferred alternative and is removed from further project consideration.

3. Construct Shared-Use Path along Railroad Corridor (Alternative 3):

This alternative would construct a means for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely travel from South Street to New Paltz Road, extending the existing Hudson Valley Rail Trail towards the Town of New Paltz.

This alternative proposes to start the trail at the intersection of South Street and NYS Route 299 and head east along Route 299 for approximately 1,800 feet (0.34 miles) before transitioning to the abandoned Penn Central Railroad corridor. The trail would then follow the abandoned railbed for approximately 400 feet (0.08 miles) to the vicinity of the Highland Woods manufactured home park. The trail

will veer off the former railbed-- now part of a private access road-- to the existing railroad “berms” for approximately 1,200 feet (0.23 miles) before transitioning back to the railbed. Safety and privacy berms will be constructed on both sides of the trail where feasible to increase the safety of the trail users from nearby Route 299 and to protect the privacy of the Highland Woods residents. The alignment then follows the railbed for an additional 2,800 feet (0.53 miles) to the terminus at the proposed end of Phase 3 (vicinity of New Paltz Road). Trailhead parking for 10-12 vehicles will be constructed east of the intersection of South Street and NYS Route 299. The existing traffic signal at the South Street and NYS Route 299 intersection will be augmented with pedestrian accommodations.

The construction of this proposed shared-use path project would progress the completion of a link in the regional conversion of the former railroad to shared-use path system.

This alternative best satisfies the project objectives and will be advanced for further study as the feasible alternative.

C. Feasible Alternatives:

1. Description of Feasible Alternatives:

The following is a detailed discussion of the feasible alternative – Construct Shared-Use Path along Railroad Corridor (Alternative 3).

The feasible alternative includes a shared-use path extension and the development of trail head parking at South Street.

This alternative proposes to start the trail at the intersection of South Street and NYS Route 299 and head east along Route 299 for approximately 1,800 feet (0.34 miles) before transitioning to the abandoned Penn Central Railroad corridor. The trail would then follow the abandoned railbed for approximately 400 feet (0.08 miles) to the vicinity of the Highland Woods manufactured home park. The trail will veer off the former railbed-- now part of a private access road-- to the existing railroad “berms” for approximately 1,200 feet (0.23 miles) before transitioning back to the railbed. Safety and privacy berms will be constructed on both sides of the trail where feasible to increase the safety of the trail users from nearby Route 299 and to protect the privacy of the Highland Woods residents. The alignment then follows the railbed for an additional 2,800 feet (0.53 miles) to the terminus at the proposed end of Phase 3 (vicinity of New Paltz Road). Trailhead parking for 10-12 vehicles will be constructed east of the intersection of South Street and NYS Route 299. The existing traffic signal at the South Street and NYS Route 299 intersection will be augmented with pedestrian accommodations.

The existing bridge over the Black Creek will be rehabilitated to inhibit further deterioration and to enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and maintenance and emergency vehicles.

This alignment will create a safe, feasible, and accessible route for pedestrians and bicyclists. A plan of this alternative is included in Appendix A.

2. Engineering Considerations of Feasible Alternative:

a. Special Geometric Features:

Non-Standard Features:

There are no non-standard features on this project.

Non-Conforming Features:

There are no non-conforming features on this project.

b. Traffic Forecasts, Level of Service and Safety Considerations:

The proposed shared-use path will have adequate capacity to handle the expected demand from trail users. The trailhead parking east of South Street will have one full access driveway onto NYS Route 299. A dedicated left turn lane will be provided on NYS Route 299 for access. The parking lot will not impact the capacity of Route 299 or South Street due to the low capacity of the parking lot.

Portions of the shared-use path will be located adjacent to NYS Route 299. The trail will be located as far off the edge of pavement as feasible to maximize the safety of both the roadway and trail users. Guide railing and/or protective fencing will be installed at the trailhead parking lot to protect the lot from the Route 299 intersection. Small (approximately 4 foot high) visual and protective berms will be constructed in the buffer area between the trail and Route 299 where feasible to maximize the overall user enjoyment value of the trail.

The proposed trail will cross one (1) commercial and two (2) residential driveways. These driveway crossings will be treated similarly to minor at-grade roadway crossings. The trail will be controlled by stop signs at the crossings and trail crossings signs will be installed along the driveways.

c. Pavement:

From South Street, a 12 ft. wide, 4 inch thick asphalt trail will be constructed to New Paltz Road. A trailhead parking lot will be provided east of South Street with a 4 inch asphalt top course.

d. Structures:

The bridge carrying the former railbed over the Black Creek will be rehabilitated to preserve the current condition and impede further deterioration. The ballast will be stripped from the deck and replaced with underdrains and subbase to facilitate drainage. Minor concrete repairs to the abutments will be performed to increase the longevity of the culvert and to repair cracks and deterioration. Loose stones in the abutments will be reinforced with additional concrete to provide scour protection.

Based on the intended design loading/ former use and the observed condition, the bridge is believed to be adequate to handle the proposed use. The bridge will be load posted for 10 ton (20,000 pounds) maximum loading. This restriction will be applied during construction as well.

Bridge rail with a minimum rail-to-rail width of 16 feet will be installed along the trail to protect the trail users.

e. Hydraulics:

Portions of the project action area are located within a flood zone associated with the Black Creek. No adverse impact or change in the hydrology is anticipated as a result of the Project as the trail will be constructed on the previously filled railroad embankment and utilize existing crossings of the Black Creek.

The existing hydraulic opening of the rehabilitated bridge will be maintained. No hydraulic deficiencies have been identified at the bridge.

f. Drainage:

The existing drainage patterns of Route 299 and the former railbed will be maintained. The shared-use path will be constructed with a 1.5% cross-slope to provide surface drainage. Existing ditches and culverts will be maintained or enhanced to provide adequate accommodations for the trail runoff. A new culvert will be installed where the shared-use path crosses the existing ditch around Sta. 39+50.

g. Maintenance Responsibility:

The maintenance responsibility of the shared-use path and the trailhead parking east of South Street will be the responsibility of Ulster County.

Maintenance responsibility for NYS Route 299 and its appurtenances will remain with the NYSDOT.

h. Maintenance and Protection of Traffic:

The majority of proposed construction will take place away from any traveled roadway. The access points will be provided with positive protection (temporary fencing or barrier) to prevent area residents from entering the trail until it is fully constructed.

Construction work requiring temporary lane closures on NYS Route 299, South Street and North Elting Corners Road will be controlled by flagmen, as necessary and two-way traffic will be maintained on all roadways during non-working hours.

Provisions for emergency vehicles and driveway access will be maintained at all times.

i. Soils and Foundations:

Since soils on the abandoned railroad bed may have low levels of contamination all excess excavated soils will remain within the Project ROW.

j. Utilities:

The Project is not anticipated to conflict with any overhead or underground utilities. In the event that a conflict does arise, relocation agreements with the respective owners will be acquired.

k. Railroads:

The overwhelming majority of the shared-use path will be constructed on abandoned railroad bed in which tracks have been removed. However, there are no active railroads or railroad involvement in this project.

l. Right-of-Way:

Acquisition and/or easements from private property will be required from 4 parcels.

Exhibit 3.1 – Right-of-Way Acquisitions				
Map	Parcel	Reputed Owner	Acquisition Type	Acquisition Size
1	1	Longhitano	PE	0.68 acres
2	2	Highland Woods, LLC	PE	0.42 acres
2	3	Highland Woods, LLC	PE	2.17 acres
3	4	Murphy	PE	0.79 acres

Exhibit 3.1 – Right-of-Way Acquisitions				
Map	Parcel	Reputed Owner	Acquisition Type	Acquisition Size
1	5	Longhitano	PE	0.68 acres
4	6	Ludwig	PE	0.36 acres

A ROW table and estimate is included in Appendix D.

m. Landscaping Development:

Tree clearing and pruning will be completed along the proposed Project alignment. Landscape planting and fencing will be utilized to visually screen and provide privacy and security to adjacent property owners as warranted.

n. Provisions for Pedestrians, Including Persons with Disabilities:

The Project proposes to install approximately 1.24 miles of accessible shared-use trail, including accessible parking at the eastern terminus.

The existing traffic signal at the intersection of NYS Route 299 and South Street will be enhanced with the addition of pedestrian signalization and marked crosswalks on all four legs. This work will be a coordinated effort between the NYSDOT and County with the NYSDOT financing and implementing the construction of the pedestrian accommodations at this intersection.

o. Provisions for Bicycling:

The Project proposes to install approximately 1.24 miles of shared-use trail, which will provide a safe, enjoyable alternative to bicycling on Route 299 roadway.

p. Lighting:

Lighting will not be proposed along the trail or in the trailhead parking lot as the trail operation will be from dawn to dusk.

C. Project Costs and Schedule:

1. Costs:

The estimated cost of this project is as shown below:

Exhibit 3.2 – Project Costs*

Project Phase	Total Cost	Federal Share	Local Share
Construction	\$1,548,000	\$1,239,000	\$310,000
Construction Inspection	\$186,000	\$149,000	\$37,000
Right-of-Way Acquisition	\$85,000	\$68,000	\$17,000

*Based on current TIP amounts

2. Schedule:

Design Approval: Fall 2016
Contract Documents (P, S & E): Winter 2016/2017
Construction Begin: April 2017
Construction End: September 2017

IV. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to (1) identify the social, economic and environmental consequences of the proposed project; (2) satisfy the applicable social, economic and environmental laws; and (3) identify all permits and approvals needed for the project.

1. SEQR:

This project is classified as SEQRA – Unlisted action in accordance with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation’s, Part 617, Subpart 4(b)(6) of Title 6 of the Implementing Regulations of the Official Compilation Codes, Rules and Regulations of New York State (NYCRR).

The County of Ulster progressed this Project as an uncoordinated review. A SEQR Short Environmental Assessment Form was completed and the County Legislature determined that the project WILL NOT result in any significant adverse environmental impacts. The signed SEQR Short Form and Neg Dec Resolution are included in Appendix C.

2. NEPA:

This is a C-List Categorical Exclusion project under the National Environmental Action Plan. Pedestrian facility projects are action listed under the C List in 23 CFR 771.117 (c). The Federal Environmental Approval Worksheet (FEAW) is included in Appendix C. The NYSDOT/FHWA will act as the lead agency for NEPA concurrence.

B. Social Consequences:

1. Affected Population:

There are numerous shopping and retail opportunities within and around the project area that will ultimately benefit from the Project.

The population affected by this Project consists of the residents of Towns of Lloyd and New Paltz, the hamlet of Highland and surrounding areas, who will have expanded opportunities for active outdoor recreation, improved non-motorized transportation alternatives, and accessible walking and bicycling facilities for persons with disabilities and limited mobility. The Project will also connect the existing HVRT with additional neighborhoods, including a manufactured home community at Highland Woods.

2. Local Planning:

The proposed shared-use path will provide safe designated pedestrian and bicyclist access to and from Dutchess County and Highland to New Paltz and is consistent with local planning as well.

3. Community Cohesion:

It is anticipated that community cohesion will be enhanced upon completion of the proposed shared-use path by linking adjoining communities and expanding public spaces in the western area of the Town of Lloyd. No businesses or residences will be relocated as part of this project.

4. Changes in Travel Patterns or Accessibility:

The Project will not impact travel patterns or increase vehicular traffic or congestion within the Project limits. This Project will enhance pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and provide needed missing links from generator and destination points. By connecting adjoining communities through a shared-use path, it is anticipated that vehicle trips may be avoided as more residents and visitors can safely bicycle or walk to desired destinations, such as the Walkway Over the Hudson.

5. Impacts on School Districts, Recreation Areas, Places of Religious Worship and Businesses:

No adverse impacts on schools, recreation areas, places of religious worship, and businesses are expected from construction of the trail. The Project will have a positive impact on these community resources by improving and enhancing non-motorized transportation facilities and expanding facilities for recreational use.

6. Impacts on Police, Fire Protection, and Ambulance Access:

No negative impacts upon police, fire protection, and ambulance access are anticipated. The Project will be constructed to provide access for emergency vehicles.

7. Impacts on Highway Safety, Traffic Safety and Overall Public Safety and Health:

The improved non-motorized transportation facilities will serve to enhance highway, traffic and public safety by creating dedicated pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

8. General Social Groups Benefitted or Harmed:

a. Effects on Elderly & Disabled Persons:

A new, fully-accessible trail extension will have a positive impact on elderly and disabled persons living in the area, particularly those in the Highland Woods community and areas in the eastern part of the Town of New Paltz, by providing additional trail facilities that can be used by those with limited mobility

b. Effects on Low Income, Minority and Ethnic Groups:

This project will not have an adverse human health and environmental effect on minority or low income populations. The new trail connections will serve to improve accessibility of all residents to community services and businesses.

C. Economic Consequences:

1. Impacts on Regional and Local Economies:

The Project is a key link in developing a regional and County-wide interconnected rail trail system. The expanded trail system will help to further expand tourism and economic development as the large number of visitors to the Walkway Over the Hudson can safely walk or bicycle further west towards New Paltz.

2. Impacts on Existing Highway-related Businesses

Existing highway-related businesses will benefit from the Project by improved accessibility from potential customers and increased visitors to the area.

3. Impacts on Established Businesses Districts:

The Project will benefit established business districts, including the hamlet of Highland, by connecting existing and proposed pedestrian generators and destinations.

4. Smart Growth Screening Tool:

Smart Growth is sensible, planned, efficient growth that integrates economic development and job creation with community quality-of-life by preserving and enhancing the built and natural environments. Smart Growth encourages growth in developed areas with existing infrastructure to sustain it. To comply with requirements set forth in the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act (SG Law) of 2010, a Smart Growth Screening Tool has been completed by the County.

D. Environmental Consequences:

1. Surface Waters/Wetlands:

a. Surface Waters:

The Project borders and crosses the Black Creek, a Class A(T) Protected stream. The abandoned railbed is 10-15 feet above the stream elevation and no work is proposed to take place within the stream or its banks to accommodate the trail. However, the small bridge crossing the Black Creek will be rehabilitated necessitating the need for work in the stream bed. In order to accomplish this work, Protection of Waters permit will be required.

Correspondence with NYSDEC is located in Appendix B.

b. State Wetlands:

The Project action area is within the 100 foot buffer of two (2) classified freshwater wetlands, CD-6 (Class 1) and CD-7 (Class 2). The Project may cause permanent disturbance to the wetland proper depending on the final routing; however this disturbance will be limited to less than 0.1 acres. Construction activities will take place in the buffer necessitating a Freshwater Wetland Permit. The wetland boundaries have been verified by the NYSDEC. Correspondence with the NYSDEC is contained in Appendix B.

c. Federal Wetlands / Executive Order 11990:

The Project action area contains federal jurisdictional wetlands. The Project proposes to fill less than 0.1 acres to construct the shared-use path. US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permits will be utilized to facilitate this work.

d. Coastal Zone:

The Project is not located in a Coastal Management Zone pursuant to the Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Law (19 NYCRR Part 600).

e. Navigable Waters:

There are no navigable rivers within the Project limits.

f. Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers:

The Project is not near a river on the National Wild & Scenic River System or State Wild, Scenic and Recreational River Inventory.

g. Flood Plains:

FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) number 36111C0760E was reviewed and the Project area is within in a mapped 100-year flood zone. This flood zone is associated with the Black Creek. No impact to the flood zone is anticipated as the trail will be constructed on top of the previously filled railroad embankment and cross the flood zone at an existing crossing.

2. Water Source Quality:

The design of this Project must conform to the NYSDEC SPDES Phase II requirements. The Project will require the application to, and approval by, the NYSDEC for a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The NYSDEC SPDES permit is required since land disturbances from construction of the trail are approximately 6.25 acres. However, as this project is classified as a shared-use path by the NYSDEC, only the disturbances related from the proposed trailhead parking will require post construction stormwater management. The shared-use path is exempt from post construction storm water management requirements as stated in Appendix B of the SPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities Permit No. GP-0-15-001.

The Project is not located within a sole source aquifer. Correspondence with the NYSDEC is contained in Appendix B.

3. General Ecology and Wildlife:

Endangered or Threatened Species (State and Federal): A State Endangered Species Screening was completed by the NYSDEC Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, and no records of known occurrences of rare or state-listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats were found on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project site.

A Federal Endangered Species Screening was performed by reviewing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services website. An official Species List Request was completed for the Project areas. There are a total of 3 (Indiana Bat, the northern long-eared Bat and the Bog Turtle) threatened, endangered, or candidate species on the Endangered Species Act Species List provided by the website. The response from the request stated that there is no critical habitat within the Project area. All correspondence with the NYSDEC is included in Appendix B.

Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) – There are no known occurrences of the Indiana Bat within 2 miles of the Project. Indiana bat hibernacula and hibernacula characteristics have been well documented by numerous observational studies reported in the literature. Indiana bats spend the winter months in secluded caves or mines. As of this writing, there are nine hibernacula currently known in Albany, Essex, Warren, Jefferson, Onondaga, Orange and Ulster Counties. To

date there are three known hibernacula located in the immediate vicinity of Kingston, New York. The hibernacula are critical to the survival of this species because so few are known to exist. The USFWS and NYSDEC are continually documenting habitat utilization by this species once emergence occurs.

Outside the hibernation period, Indiana bats are very mobile and use either live trees greater than 5 inches dbh especially containing dead wood and snags or dead trees in a variety of habitats for roosts during the summer months. Although roosts have been documented in a wide array of hardwood and pine species, trees and snags that have exfoliating bark or crevices, such as Shagbark Hickory and Black Locust, appear to be most important to this species because females and their young rest under the bark. Trees, equal to or greater than 9 inches dbh with exfoliating bark, crevices, southern or western exposure, and solar exposure appear to be the most important habitat for maternal colonies during the summer months.

According to the literature, roost-tree density necessary to support Indiana bats is not understood and negative or positive biological thresholds linked to roost abundance are unknown. Similarly, there are no quantitative studies that adequately describe species composition of forest stands or stand structure surrounding occupied roosts. There is evidence, however, that Indiana bats return to the same summer foraging and roosting areas and sometimes individual tree each year.

Based on the above habitat criteria, limited suitable habitat is present within the project action area. Approximately 450 trees greater than or equal to 3 inches dbh will be cut as a result of this project. Trees will only be cleared during the October 1st to March 31st time frame resulting in a determination of “**May Affect, Will Not Adversely Affect**”.

Northern Long-Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) - The Northern Long-Eared Bat is a listed threatened species found in the majority of the Northeast and throughout New York State.

According to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, “During summer, northern long-eared bats roost singly or in colonies underneath bark, in cavities, or in crevices of both live and dead trees. Males and non-reproductive females may also roost in cooler places, like caves and mines. This bat seems opportunistic in selecting roosts, using tree species based on suitability to retain bark or provide cavities or crevices. It has also been found, rarely, roosting in structures like barns and sheds. Northern long-eared bats spend winter hibernating in caves and mines, called hibernacula. They typically use large caves or mines with large passages and entrances; constant temperatures; and high humidity with no air currents. Specific areas where they hibernate have very high humidity, so much so that droplets of water are often seen on their fur. Within hibernacula, surveyors find them in small crevices or cracks, often with only the nose and ears visible.”

Based on the above habitat criteria, limited suitable habitat is present within the Project action area. Approximately 450 trees greater than or equal to 3 inches dbh will be cut as a result of this project. Trees will only be cleared during the October 1st to March 31st time frame resulting in a determination of “**May Affect, Will Not Adversely Affect**”.

Bog turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*) – There are no known occurrences of the federally threatened bog turtle within the Project site. This is a semi-aquatic species, preferring habitat with cool, shallow, slow moving water, deep soft muck soils, and tussock-forming herbaceous vegetation. In New York, the bog turtle is generally found in open, early successional types of habitats such as wet meadows or open calcareous boggy areas generally dominated by sedges or sphagnum moss. Like other cold-blooded or ectothermic species, it requires habitats with a good deal of solar penetration for basking and nesting. No bog turtle habitat was observed on any portion of the proposed project location.

A review of the Project area was completed by Ecological Solutions, L.L.C. on May 19, 2016 for the possible presence of bog turtle habitat within or near the Project site. The analysis concluded that the Project action area is too forested, too wet or too modified to provide habitat for bog turtles. Therefore it is concluded that the Project will have **No Effect** on the bog turtle and its habitat.

Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)- There are no known occurrences of the Sedge Wren, a State listed threatened species within the Project limits.

According to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, “Sedge wrens use densely vegetated sedge meadows, wet hayfields, upland margins of ponds and marshes, and coastal brackish marshes (Gibbs and Melvin 1992). They prefer drier marshes or wet meadows where there is little standing water and the ground is damp (Bent 1958), and ‘thick grassy areas in blueberry barrens’ (Palmer 1949). Forbush (1929) found them in ‘wet grassy meadows through which flows a small stream or river, often bordered by alder thickets, or in the upper reaches of a marsh where there is comparatively little water. Sedge wrens have low fidelity to both breeding and wintering sites, and readily abandon areas that become too wet or too dry through water level fluctuation’ (Gibbs and Melvin 1992, Forbush 1929). The available information suggests that sedge meadows, which offer saturated soils, with or without shallow standing water, are optimal nesting habitat, and that other types may be used when optimal habitat is unavailable or of limited availability.”

Based on the above habitat criteria, no suitable habitat is present within the Project action area.

Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forest (an unlisted community species) - This occurrence of the State unlisted community is considered significant from a statewide perspective by the NY Natural Heritage Program. It is either an

occurrence of a community type that is rare in the state or a high quality example of a more common community type.

According to the NY Natural Heritage Program, the Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forest is “a hardwood forest that occurs on well-drained sites, usually on ridgetops, upper slopes, or south- and west-facing slopes. The soils are usually loams or sandy loams. This is a broadly defined forest community with several variants. The dominant trees include one or more species of oak.”

Recommendations for development within and/or adjacent to the Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forests to maximize conservation and minimize disturbances include, “Strive to minimize fragmentation of large forest blocks by focusing development on forest edges, minimizing the width of roads and road corridors extending into forests, and designing cluster developments that minimize the spatial extent of the development. Development projects with the least impact on large forests and all the plants and animals living within these forests are those developments built on brownfields or other previously developed land.” This Project is located primarily on the previously disturbed railbed and adjacent to NYS Route 299. Clearing of trees will be required. However, these trees are located on the edge of the forest, and efforts will be taken to minimize clearing. Based on the above criteria, this Project complies with the available guidance to minimize harm to the Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forest and encourage further growth and enhancement.

FHWA concurred that the project *May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect* the Indiana and Northern Long-eared bats and will have *No Effect* on the Bog turtle or their habitat on August 24, 2016.

4. Historical and Cultural Resources:

This Project has been coordinated with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (SHPO) and the various Native American tribes with ties to the region through the assistance of the NYSDOT. Based on this review, along with a Phase 1A archaeological study, SHPO determined that the Project would have no adverse effect on any historic or archeological resources on October 9, 2015. However, the Delaware Tribe requested additional testing on October 25, 2015. After further discussions with the Delaware Tribe about the Project impacts and construction methods, the Tribe was satisfied that the Project would not have an adverse effect. The submitted Section 106 package, Phase 1A Study and correspondence letters are contained in Appendix C.

5. Visual Resources:

There are no natural landmarks in the vicinity of this project.

6. Parks and Recreational Facilities:

There are no parks and recreational facilities in the Project limits.

7. Farmland Assessment:

The Project does not impact or acquire any Prime or Unique Farmland as defined in the Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act.

8. Air, Noise and Energy:

- a. An air quality analysis is not necessary since the Project will not increase traffic volumes, reduce source-receptor distances or change either existing conditions to such a degree as to jeopardize attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- b. This project does not meet the criteria for a Type I action because it is not a highway on a new location nor proposes a physical alteration of the existing highway which significantly changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of through-traffic travel lanes. Any temporary construction noise will be during the daytime. There will be no other noise impacts stemming from this project.

9. Contaminated Materials Assessment:

A hazardous waste screening was performed. The soils located within the old railroad rights-of-way have potential for low levels of contamination. No soil will be permitted to leave the former railroad ROW.

No sites where a present potential for hazardous waste contamination were found in the project area. No further investigation is required. A Hazardous Waste Screening Form is included in Appendix G.

10. Construction Impacts:

Pedestrian, vehicular and bicyclist traffic will continue to use the existing roadway network during construction. Long term impacts to the Project area as a result of the proposed construction operations are not anticipated.

11. Anticipated Permits, Approvals and Coordination:

The following permits, approvals and coordination are anticipated:

- NYSDOT Highway Work Permit
- NYSDOT Use & Occupancy
- Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands Permit
- Water Quality Certification (Section 401)
- Article 15 Stream Disturbance Permit

- SPDES General Permit
- Executive Order 11990 Wetlands Finding
- USACOE Section 404 Nationwide Permit #14 – Linear Transportation Project

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Project has been developed and coordinated by the Ulster County Planning Department with the assistance of a community advisory committee. This committee is comprised of representatives from the Town of Lloyd, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail Association, Scenic Hudson, and the Walkway Over the Hudson. Responsibilities of the committee included assisting in selecting an engineering consultant and developing the trail routing and preliminary design. The committee convened on August 13, 2015 to discuss the conceptual plans and has received periodic updates on the Project.

A public informational meeting was held on September 30, 2015 at the Town of Lloyd Town Hall. Approximately sixty (60) local residents, town and county officials and various newspapers attended the meeting, thirty-two (32) of which signed in. The public information meeting was advertised in the *Southern Ulster Times* and the *New Paltz Times* as well as announced in articles in the *Daily Freeman* and *New Paltz Times*. Flyers and notices were also hand delivered to all abutting property owners and residences.

Following brief remarks from Town of Lloyd Supervisor Paul Hansut, Ulster County Deputy Director of Planning Chris White provided an overview of the Project before turning the presentation over to Brendan Fitzgerald and Jack Gorton from Hudson Valley Engineering Associates (HVEA), who provided a technical discussion. After the presentation, the meeting was opened to questions and answers and public comments. The Project received positive support from the community. Several Highland Woods residents raised concerns over their privacy. Others noted that vehicles enter/exit Highland Woods at high velocities. Both of these concerns have been incorporated into the design of the Project.

An abutting property owner, Mr. Jesus Herald, voiced concerns about the project due his understanding that his property might be acquired or taken. The Project does not propose to utilize or acquire any of Mr. Herald's property, and design features, such as landscaping, have been included to ensure that his property is not adversely impacted.

The public informational meeting generated significant local interest, and follow-up articles were featured in several local newspapers. A copy of the meeting minutes and the newspaper articles are contained in Appendix G.

A Public Hearing pursuant to Eminent Domain Procedure Law was held by the Ulster County Legislature on June 21, 2016 at the Ulster County Office Building to inform the public about the Project, review the public use and benefit of the Project and consider all other matters appropriate to the project through public comment. A notice of the Public Hearing was published in the *Daily Freeman* and the *Poughkeepsie Journal* for five consecutive days beginning June 7, 2016. The Notice was also published in the *New Paltz Times*, the *Shawangunk Journal*, and the *Southern Ulster Times* on June 9, 2016 and June 16, 2016. A copy of the Notice of Public Hearing was sent to the assessment record billing owners impacted by the Project.

Chris White opened the Public Hearing and briefly discussed the goal and background of the Project. Jim Deloria, property rights specialist from RK Hite & Co., Inc., discussed the

purposes of the Public Hearing, cited the Notice procedures, and detailed the Hearing exhibits and subsequent actions.

Jack Gorton from HVEA provided an overview of the Project, discussed the preferred alternative, and detailed the Project goals. Mr. Gorton highlighted the parcels proposed for acquisition and explained the ROW acquisition process. Following the presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to speak and comment on the Project, whose comments were documented in a Public Hearing Transcript, including a letter from one of the impacted property owners, which the Project team has worked to address in the final design. The public comments were overwhelmingly positive and included strong endorsements from the Town of Lloyd Supervisor, the Walkway Over the Hudson, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, and several other members of the public. An additional ten (10) days were allotted after the meeting for submission of additional public comment. No additional comments were received.

A copy of the Transcript and Exhibits from the EDPL Public Hearing is contained in Appendix G.



The Loop Rack is a traditional, heavy-duty bike rack that is perfect for any park or playground.





PE6 Action: Planning & Infrastructure for Bicycling & Walking

2 – 15
Points

A. Why is this action important?

Biking and walking are low cost, carbon-free transportation options that help to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, increase equity, improve public health, and enhance the sustainability of communities. Biking and walking are often referred to as “active transportation”, meaning that people are using self-propelled, human-powered modes of transportation, rather than cars or other types of motorized vehicles. Local governments can take a leadership role in increasing active transportation in their communities through planning initiatives and through installing infrastructure like paths, bike lanes, and way-finding signage.

B. How to implement this action

Local governments have a range of strategies they can implement to improve the infrastructure for biking and walking in their communities. This Climate Smart Communities (CSC) action focuses on the following five strategies:

- Develop a bicycle and pedestrian master plan (or similar plan)
- Expand and improve bike and walking paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks
- Improve bike parking
- Improve bike and pedestrian signage
- Develop a bike share program*

(*For purposes of the CSC program, a bike share program means the use of non-motorized bicycles with multiple self-service stations enabling point-to-point transportation for short-distance trips, typically fewer than 3 miles. To be eligible for points under this CSC action, the applicant must be engaged in the funding, managing, administering, and/or permitting of the program.)

Often local governments begin this process by developing a bicycle and pedestrian master plan. This can be a standalone plan or incorporated into another planning document, such as a comprehensive plan. Either way, this helps local governments to define their priorities and identify strategies most appropriate for their communities.

To achieve GHG reduction goals, such plans should have a strong focus on strategies for reducing vehicle trips to common destinations, such as to work, school, and shopping centers. To bring down GHG emissions, it is critical to invest in plans and infrastructure that connect common destinations within populations centers, as opposed to investing in walking or biking trails that are purely for recreational purposes (e.g., a loop trail around a lake that is not connected to a downtown area).

As part of this focus on using active transportation for meeting daily needs, plans should include strategies that make it more convenient to bike and walk within the community and that reduce any risks associated with biking and walking.

As part of the planning process, local governments should consider gathering data to better understand resident travel behavior, such as journey-to-work data to measure commute mode share. Local governments should look at existing factors such as the ratio of sidewalk and bikeway lanes to traffic miles, street intersection density, annual rates of pedestrian and cyclist injuries and fatalities, and any existing programs and policies such as [Vision Zero](#) initiatives, traffic calming policies, and related design guidelines.

To be eligible for points for this CSC action, the bicycle/pedestrian master plan (or similar plan) must have been completed

within 10 years from the application date. In addition, local governments are not required to incorporate the bicycle/pedestrian master plans or other policies into their zoning or comprehensive plan; however, they are encouraged to do so to reduce the risk of legal challenges.

Local governments are encouraged to contact the [New York State Department of State Division of Local Government Services](#) for training, technical assistance, and legal guidance on strategies that support active transportation and the [New York State Department of Transportation](#) (DOT) for guidance regarding transportation projects.

C. Timeframe, project costs, and resource needs

The timeframe and costs associated with these strategies depends on the strategy selected and the degree to which it is implemented in the community. Local governments may wish to partner with organizations or groups with complementary missions, which may help with developing a bicycle and pedestrian plan, and creating signage or sponsoring a bike share program, for example.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is applicable to all local governments, although some of the strategies are more relevant to more densely populated communities. The planning and public works departments are most likely to have responsibility for the tasks associated with this action; in some communities, this may fall under the department of transportation. In some cases, however, a county or regional council may undertake these efforts with input from local government representatives. Local government staff are also encouraged to work with any relevant community committees, such as conservation advisory councils or biking advocacy groups.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Local governments can earn points for this action by implementing the strategies listed below:

	POSSIBLE POINTS
Develop a bicycle/pedestrian master plan (or similar plan) applicable to the entire jurisdiction (within last 10 years)	3
Expand and improve bike/walking paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks	3
Improve bike parking	2
Improve bike and pedestrian signage	2
Develop a bike share program	5

F. What to submit

Submit documentation demonstrating which strategies have been implemented. Provide plans, reports, photographs, program details, websites, or other materials that demonstrate implementation of at least one of the five the strategies listed above. The bicycle/pedestrian master plan (or similar plan) must have been completed within 10 years from the application date and cover the entire community.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

G. Links to additional resources or best practices

- [DOT Transportation Alternatives Program](#)
- [Victoria Transport Policy Institute, Transportation Demand Management Encyclopedia, Strategies to Make **Cycling** Convenient, Safe and Pleasant](#)
- [Victoria Transport Policy Institute, Transportation Demand Management Encyclopedia, Strategies to Make **Walking** Convenient, Safe and Pleasant](#)
- [Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#)
- [Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center, Case Studies in Promoting Walking & Biking](#)
- [Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center, Bike Sharing in the United States: State of the Practice and Guide to Implementation, September 2012](#)

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.