



Trail Towns: Gateways to Growth

2021 Virtual Fall Planning & Zoning Training
September 30, 2021

A person with long hair, wearing a green life vest, is seen from behind, paddling a red kayak on a calm river. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and shimmering reflections on the water. The background is a dense forest of green trees. Two teal horizontal bars are positioned above and below the text.

*The Outdoor Recreation
Economy and Why it
Matters for Rural
Communities*

OUTDOOR RECREATION

A viable economic driver



THE
OUTDOOR
RECREATION
ECONOMY

OUTDOOR
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION

THE
OUTDOOR
RECREATION
ECONOMY
GENERATES:

\$887 BILLION

IN CONSUMER SPENDING ANNUALLY

7.6 MILLION

AMERICAN JOBS

\$65.3 BILLION

IN FEDERAL TAX REVENUE

\$59.2 BILLION

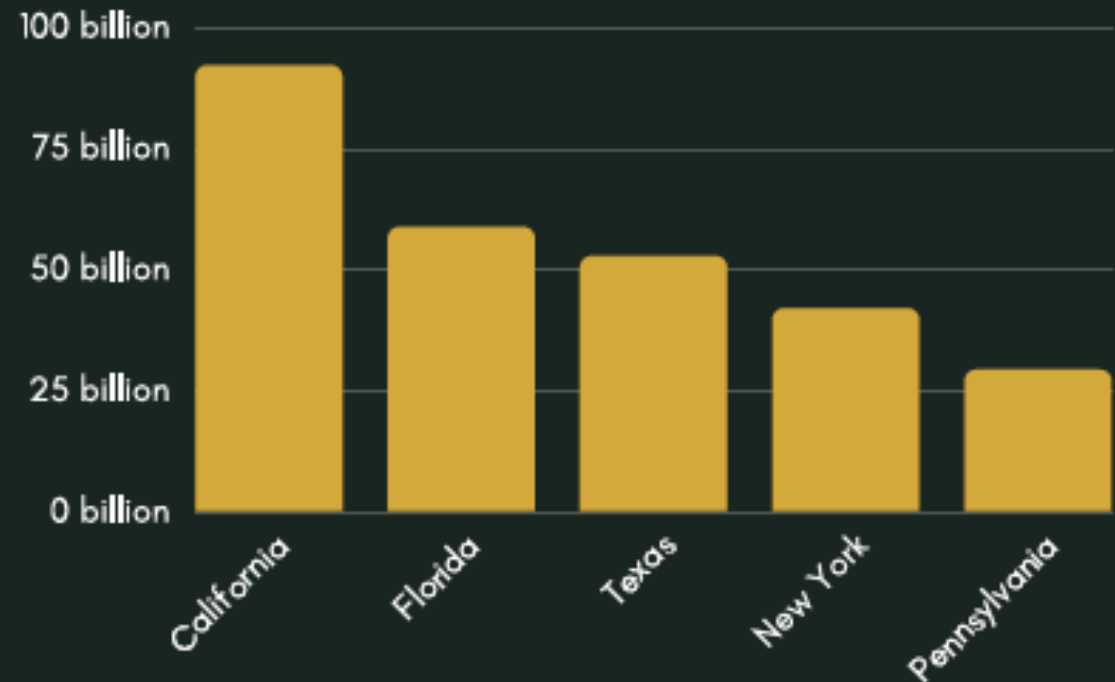
IN STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVENUE

**NYS RANKS 4TH
AMONG THE 50
STATES FOR
ANNUAL
CONSUMER
SPENDING ON
RECREATION**

*- Bureau of Economic
Analysis 2019, U.S. Dept. of
Commerce*

OUTDOOR RECREATION POWERHOUSE

A key economic driver



PROXIMITY TO GROWING

URBAN MILLENNIAL POPULATIONS

● Buffalo

MONROE

● Rochester

GENESEE

○ Scottsville

THE OUTDOOR RECREATION HUB

FOR THE GENESEE VALLEY REGION

WYOMING + LIVINGSTON

LEADERS IN NYS AGRICULTURE

○ Geneseo

○ Perry

○ Mt. Morris

WYOMING

LIVINGSTON

○ Portageville

950,000+

VISITORS ANNUALLY

70,000+ ACRES

STATE FOREST + NATURE ASSETS

200+ MILES

TRAILS

\$51 MILLION

IN LOCAL & VISITOR SPENDING

○ Belfast

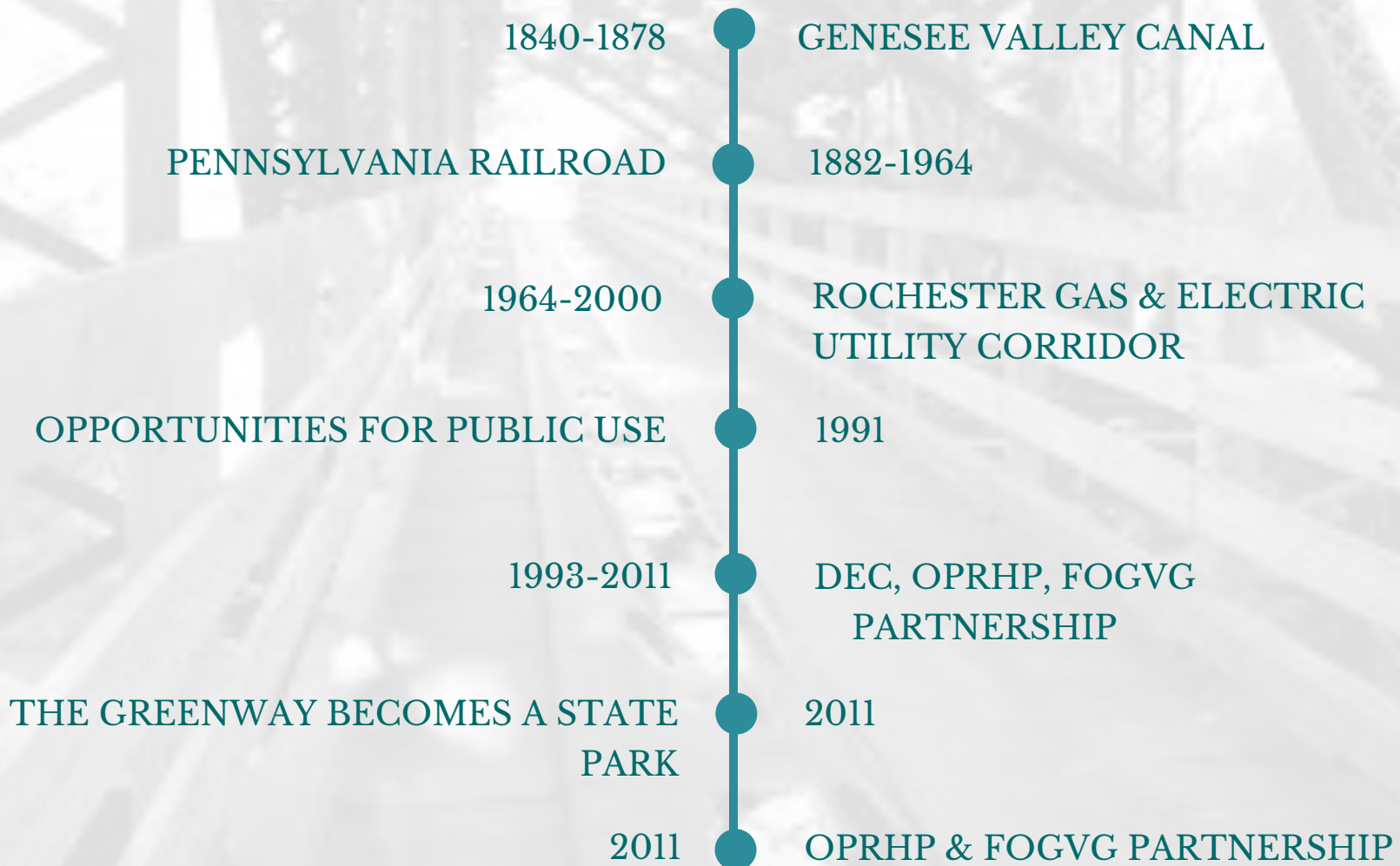
ALLEGANY

○ Cuba

POTENTIAL

Genesee Valley Greenway History

The evolution of a transportation corridor to a 90 mile recreation trail system connecting communities and attracting visitors to some of the best off-the-beaten track locations in Western New York.





A recreation and multi-purpose corridor in the historic Genesee Valley

KEY PARTNERS

- * Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway
- * NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
- * NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
- * 16 communities in 5 counties (Monroe, Livingston, Wyoming, Allegany and Cattaraugus)

GOALS

- * Public recreation
- * Natural, historic, and cultural resource protection
- * Economic development
- * Community involvement
- * Connections



GENESEE VALLEY CANAL, 1840-1878

IN 1896, EXCURSION TRAINS
RAN ON SUNDAYS TO
PORTAGE HIGH BRIDGE FROM
ROCHESTER AND BRADFORD,
PA.



The Greenway Today

Today the Greenway provides a diverse range of year-round outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. The trail is maintained and improved through a variety of volunteer and community efforts including: Trail Adopters, Outdoor Clubs, the Eagle Scouts, Kiwanis, BOCES & Service Clubs.





New York Empire State Trail



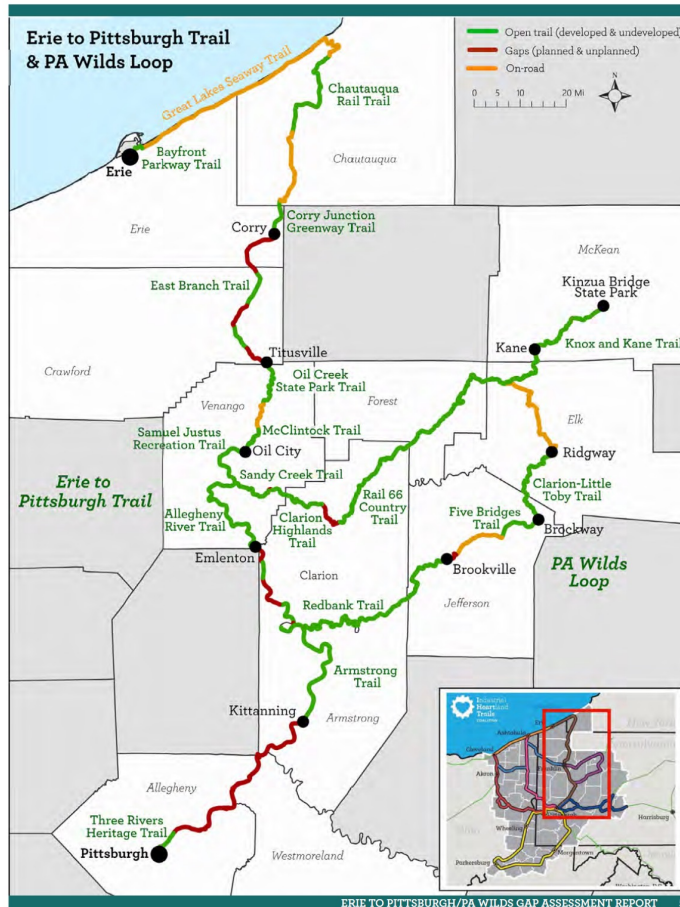
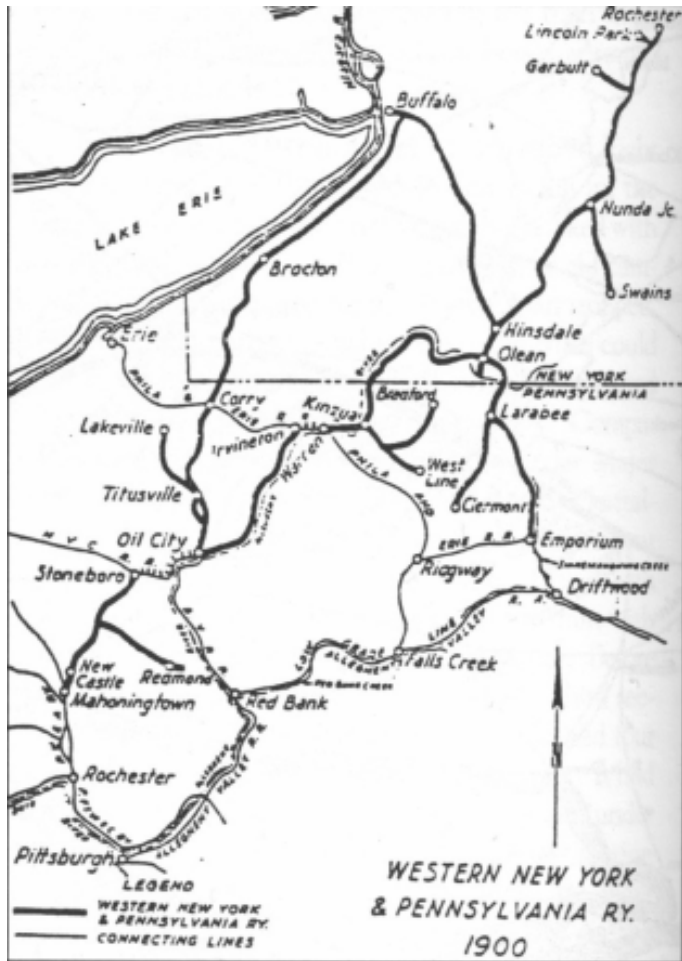
Legend

- ★ Featured Federal/State Parks/Historic Sites
- Regional and National Trails
- Empire State Trail
- State Lands

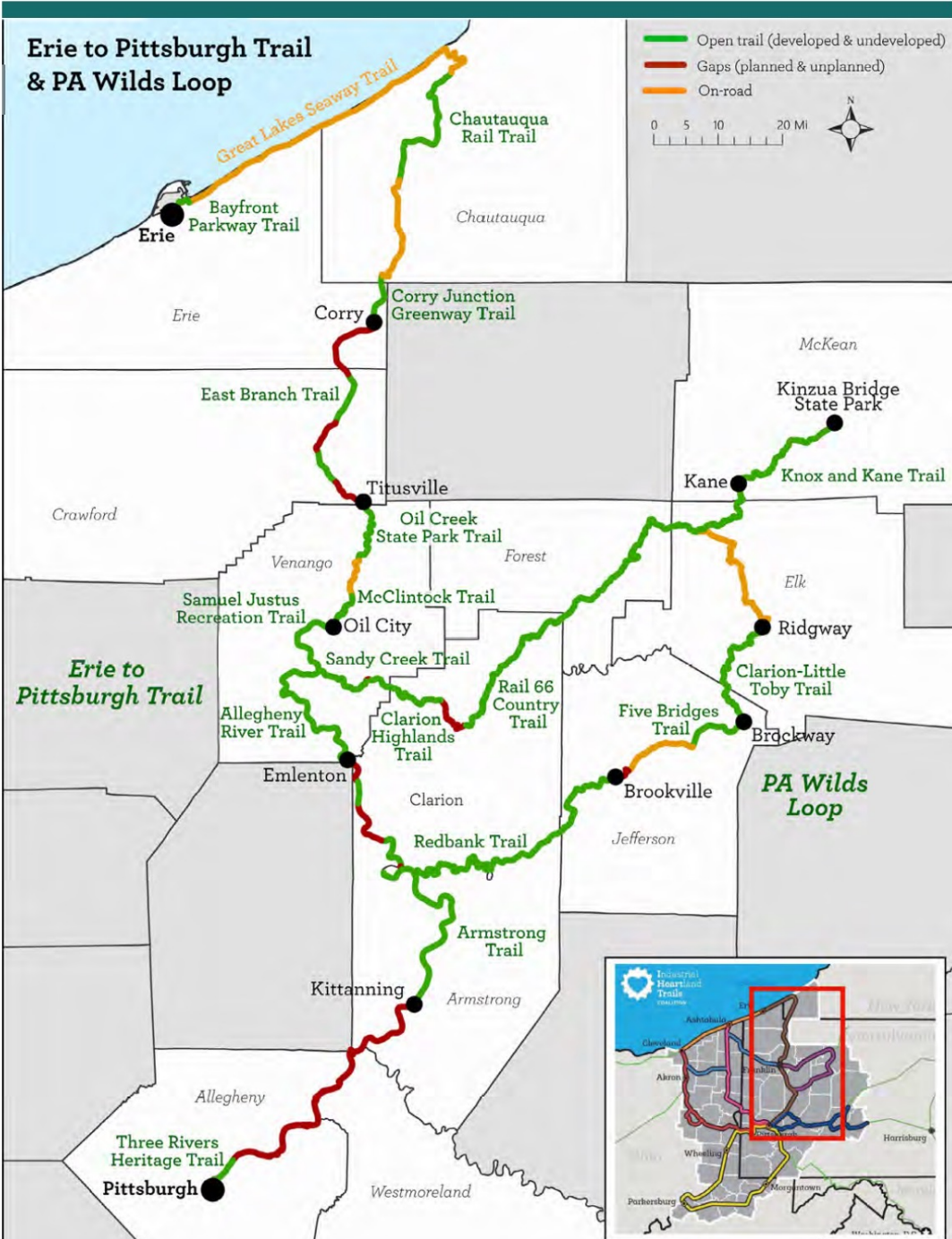
Counties			
Western New York	Mohawk Valley	Capital District	Mid-Hudson
Erie	Oneida	Albany	Ulster
Niagara	Herkimer	Rensselaer	Dutchess
	Montgomery	Columbia	Putnam
Finger Lakes		Schenectady	Westchester
Orleans	North Country	Saratoga	Bronx
Monroe	Clinton	Warren	New York
Wayne	Essex	Washington	
Central New York			

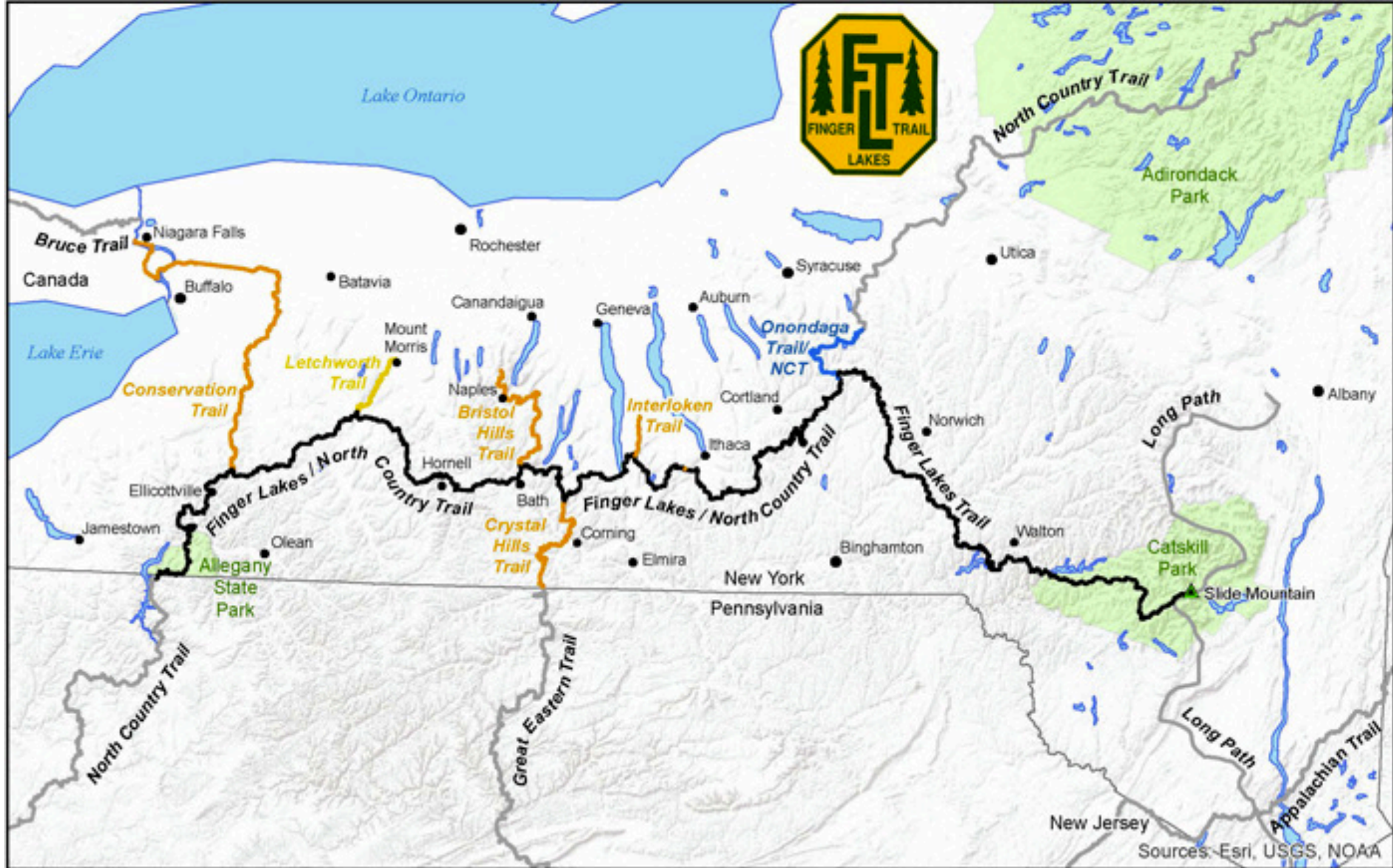


**NEW YORK
Empire State
Trail**



Erie to Pittsburgh Trail & PA Wilds Loop





Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA



The Genesee Valley Trail Town Vision



0 10 20 30 Miles

- NYS Canal System (Barge Canal)
- Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
- Existing Erie Canalway Trail
- ⋯ Proposed Erie Canalway Trail
- Other Trail Systems

Major Trail System



Perry Main Street, New York



The Trail Town Program® revitalizes rural communities by growing outdoor tourism and small businesses.

Focuses on regional thinking: a world-class trail needs amenities along its entire stretch, and towns working together can create a much broader impact.

10+ Years of success.

Trail Town Models

State Tourism Programs

- Kentucky
- Florida

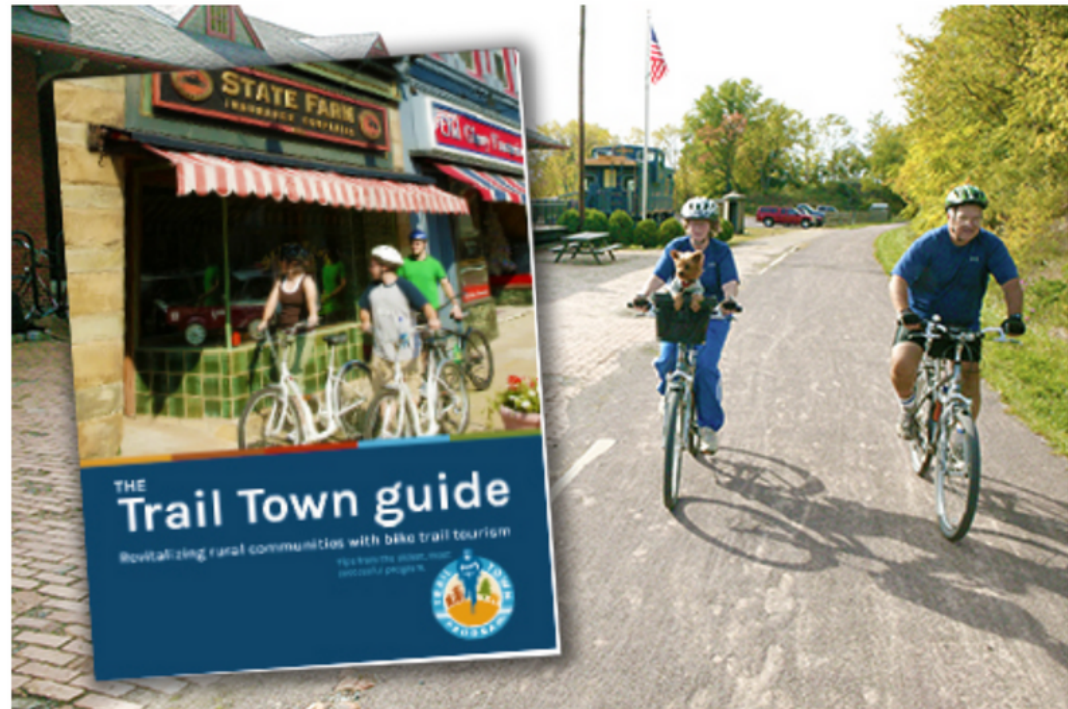
Community-driven Programs

- North Country Scenic Trail
- The GAP (Great Allegheny Passage)
- Genesee Valley Trail Towns



Kentucky
TRAIL TOWNS

Where the Outdoors and Amenities Meet





**GREAT
ALLEGHENY
PASSAGE**



**Spectacular Scenery
Awaits**



A Proven Model

The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program® is one of the first and best documented Trail Town models.

In 10 years it achieved:

An overall economic impact of \$50 million per year, leaping from 25% of the local income to 40% in a 6-year span.

65 new businesses and 270 jobs in its first 10 years.

A 10 fold increase in visitation including overnight stays, which generate 6x more revenue than day trips.

Other documented impacts include:

- Increased property values and investment with the addition of trail amenities.
- Improved infrastructure in rural areas.
- Increased social cohesion and pride in place.






Genesee Valley Trail Town Program

Categorize:

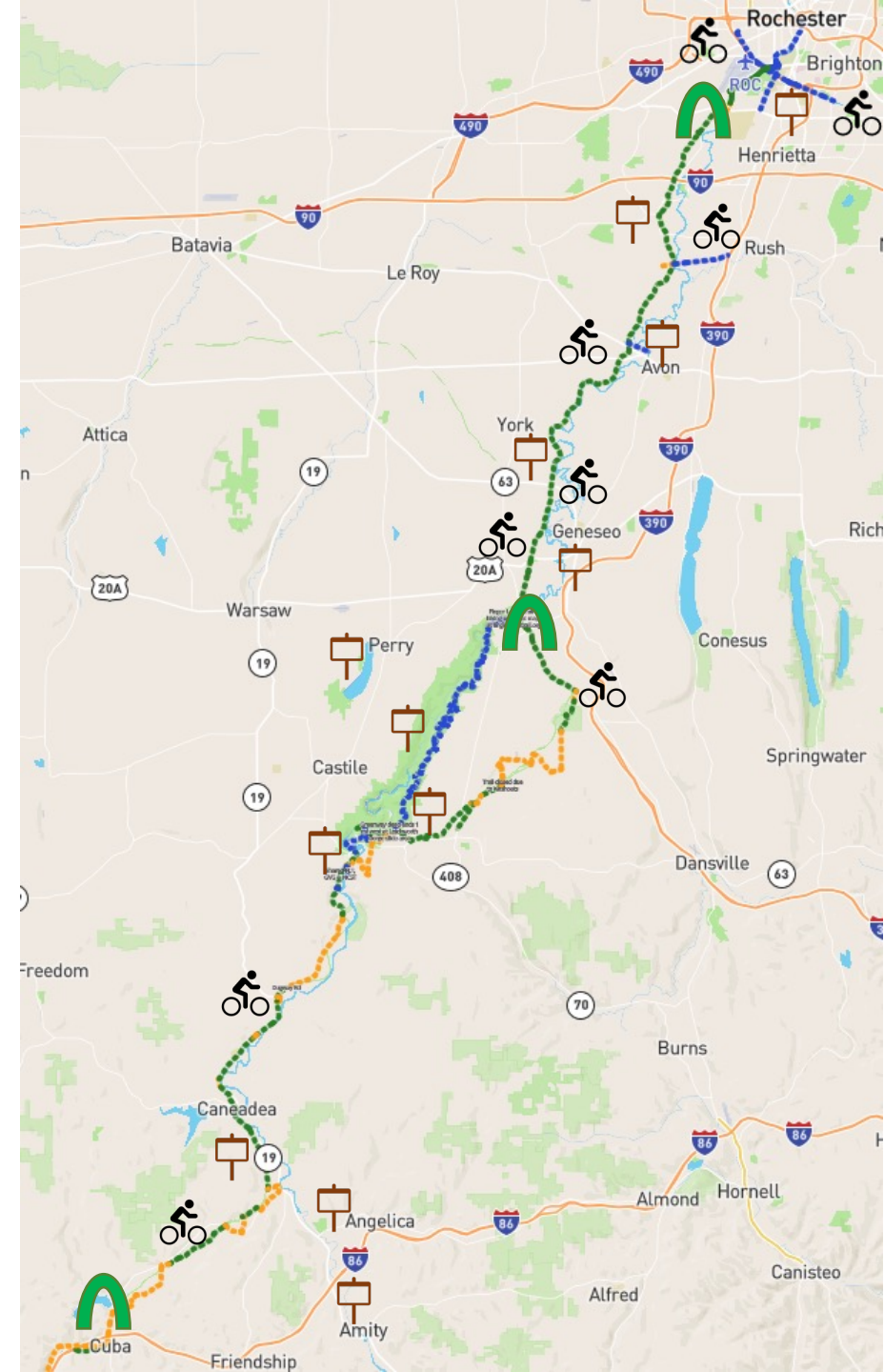
- Gateways
- Trailheads
- Access Points

Legend

-  Trail Town Gateway
-  Trail Town Trailhead
-  Access Point

Funding Received:

- Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo (RCW Legacy Funds) Design & Access Grants
 - Cuba
 - Portageville
- USDA *Trail Mapping Tool* Grant
- NBRC *Trail Town* Grant Application





Cuba, NY a Trail Town Gateway

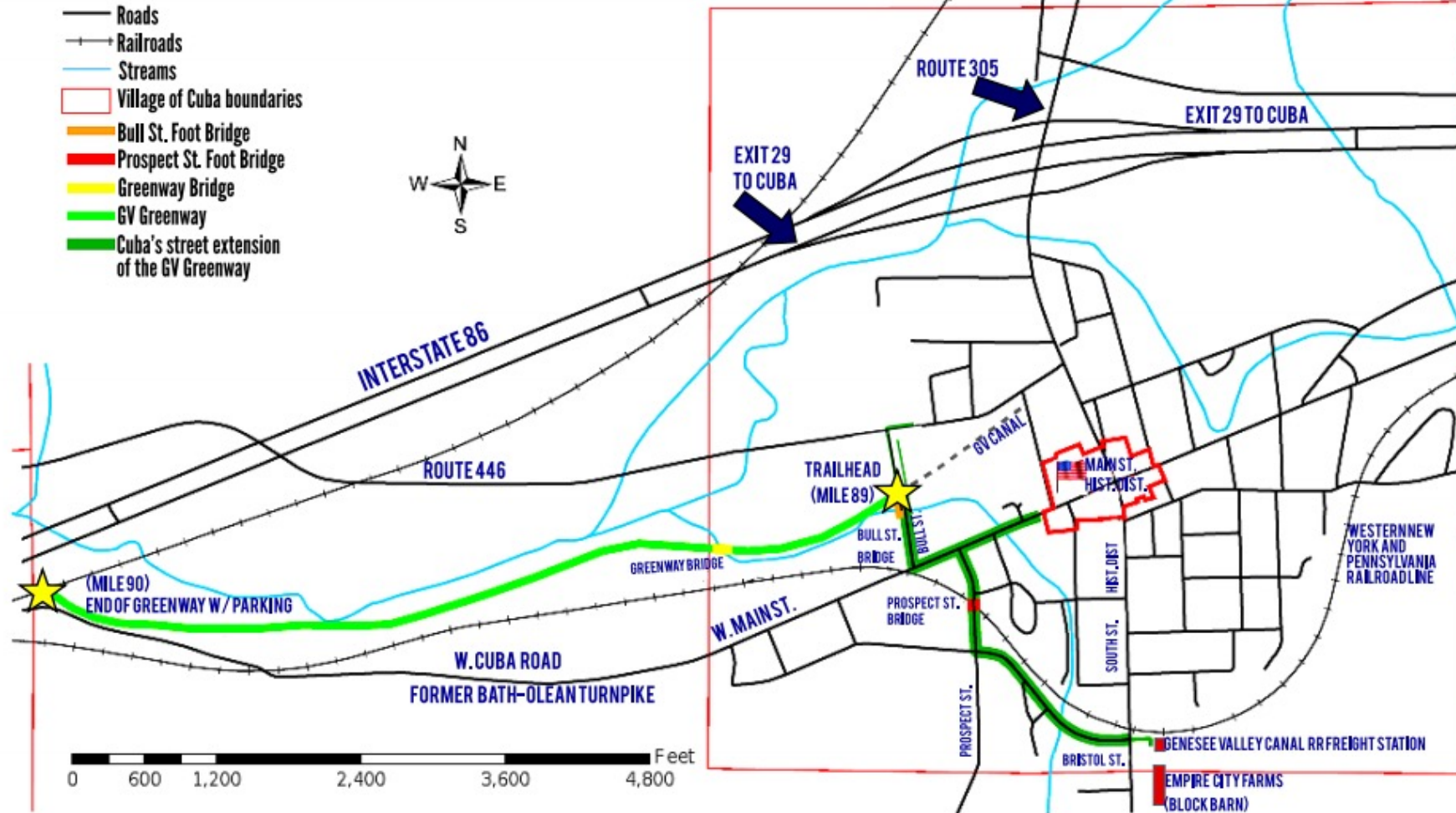
to the Genesee Valley
Greenway State Park



CUBA, NY

QR CODE FOR GPS
DIRECTIONS TO
MILE 89 TRAILHEAD

Note: This code takes you to the address
immediately south of the trailhead



HISTORY

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park runs from Rochester to Cuba along the towpath of what once was the Genesee Valley Canal. The canal was abandoned by the state in 1878, and purchased by the Genesee Valley Canal Railroad two years later. Eventually, the Pennsylvania Railroad would take ownership of the line. It became a busy 98 mile track and the main mode of transport between Rochester and Olean. In the early 1900s, six passenger trains and six to eight freight trains ran daily between these cities. With transportation and freight transitioning to America's roadways, the railroad company abandoned the lines in the 1960s. Recently, a movement to restore the former rail line into usable public space has taken shape through the Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway (FOGVG); the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Greenway became the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park in 2011.

Best Practices

Safe Routes to Schools

Complete Streets

Comprehensive Plan Update

High-value collaboration between municipal leaders, chamber, non-profit organizations, and volunteers

SafeRoutes



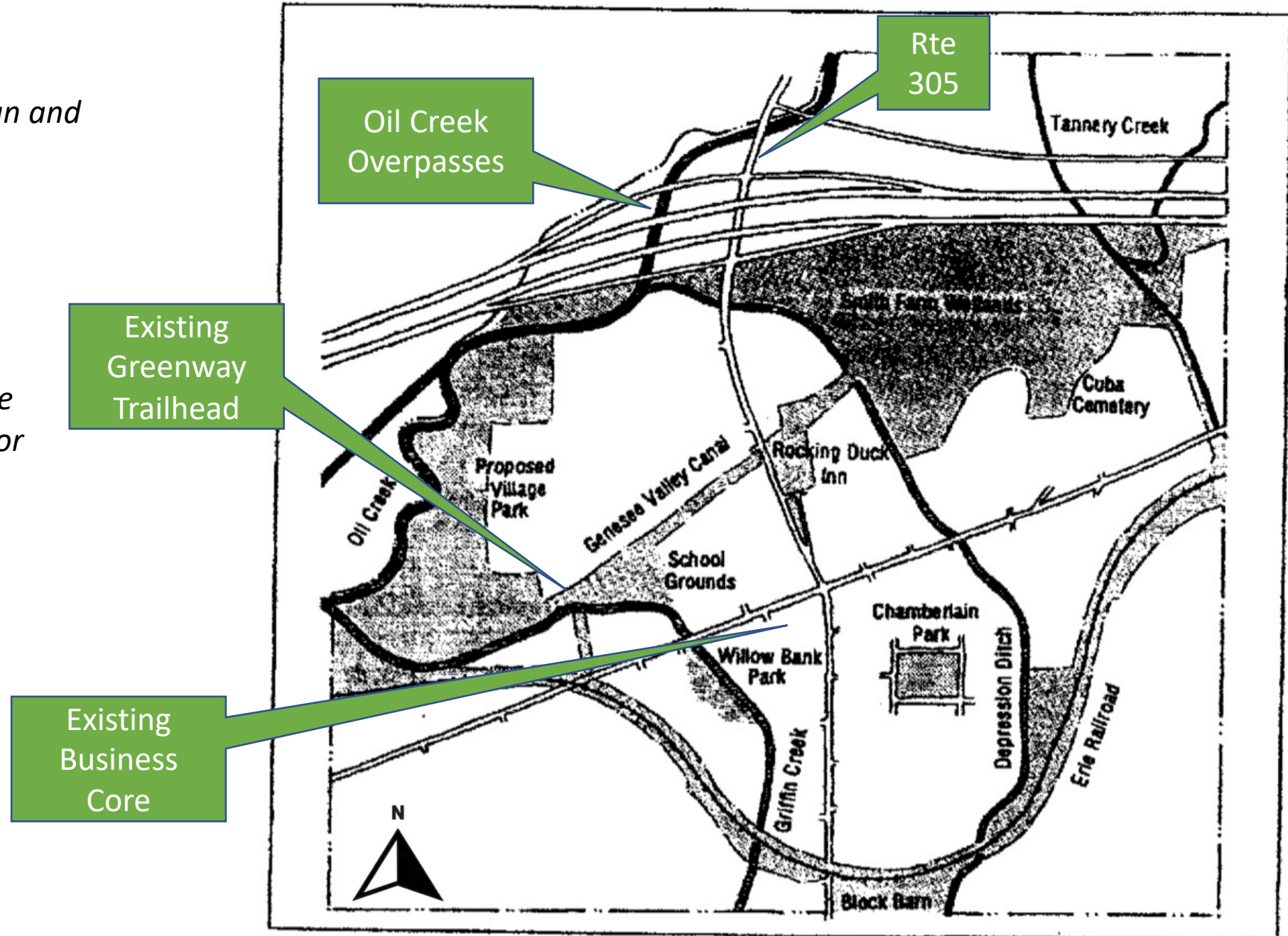
GREENWAYS AND PARKLAND

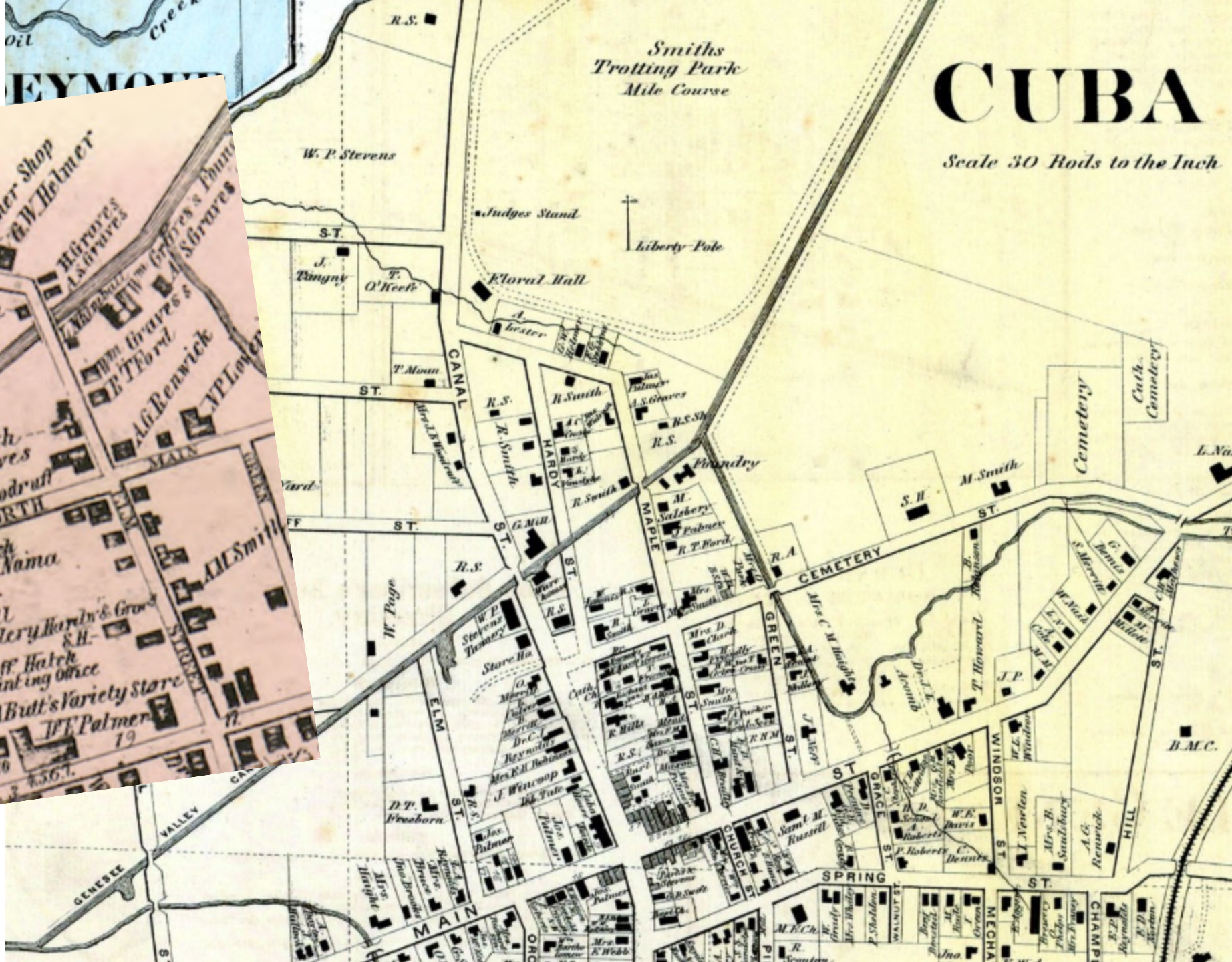
Cuba Planning (1993)

Village considered a master plan and for its open space

The Greenway Trailhead and pathway westerly has been completed

Ultimately, a green-band can be created with multiple options for cross circulation and park development





CUBA

Scale 30 Rods to the Inch



Hardy Street

Sibley Street

Genesee Street
(Rte 305)

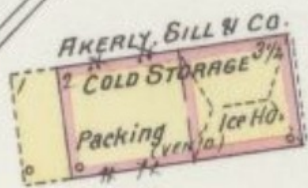
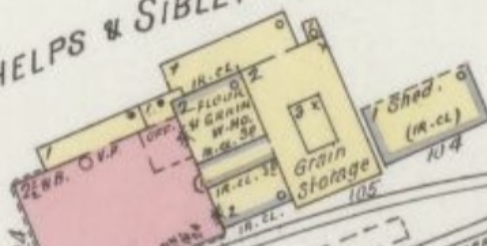
Water Street

Street

Circa 1897

Source:
Library of Congress

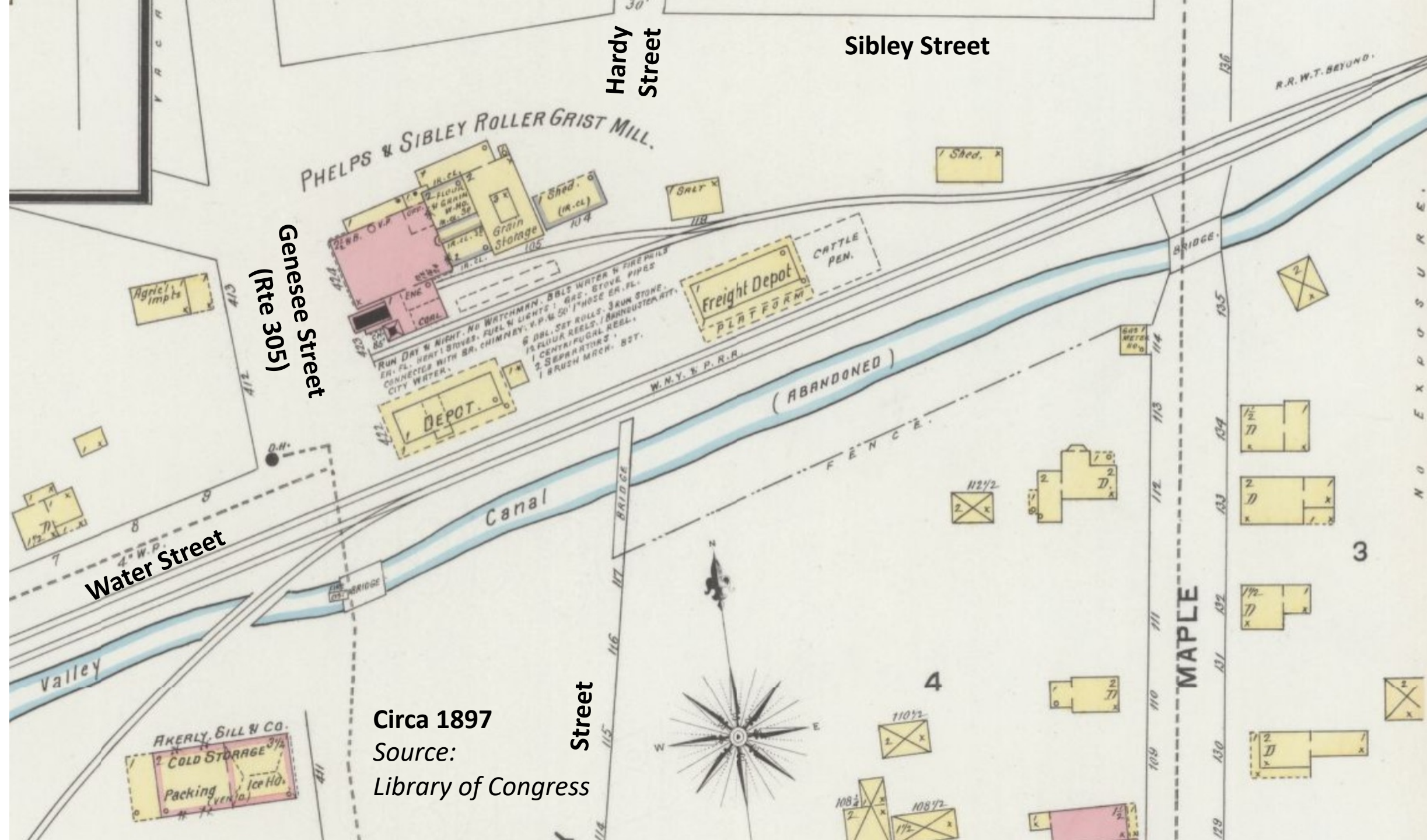
PHELPS & SIBLEY ROLLER GRIST MILL.



MAPLE

R.R. W.T. BEYOND.

N O E X P O S U R E .





Circa 2006
Source:
EagleView

Cuba Trail Town Routing Concepts

Cuba "Safe-Route Options" to consider through Village (between current GVG Trailhead & H.S.)

Green Option

Pros - opportunities for bicycle lanes, pavement markings, signage & highly visible); state funded
Cons – highest traffic, narrow corridor, multiple conflicts with utilities and driveways

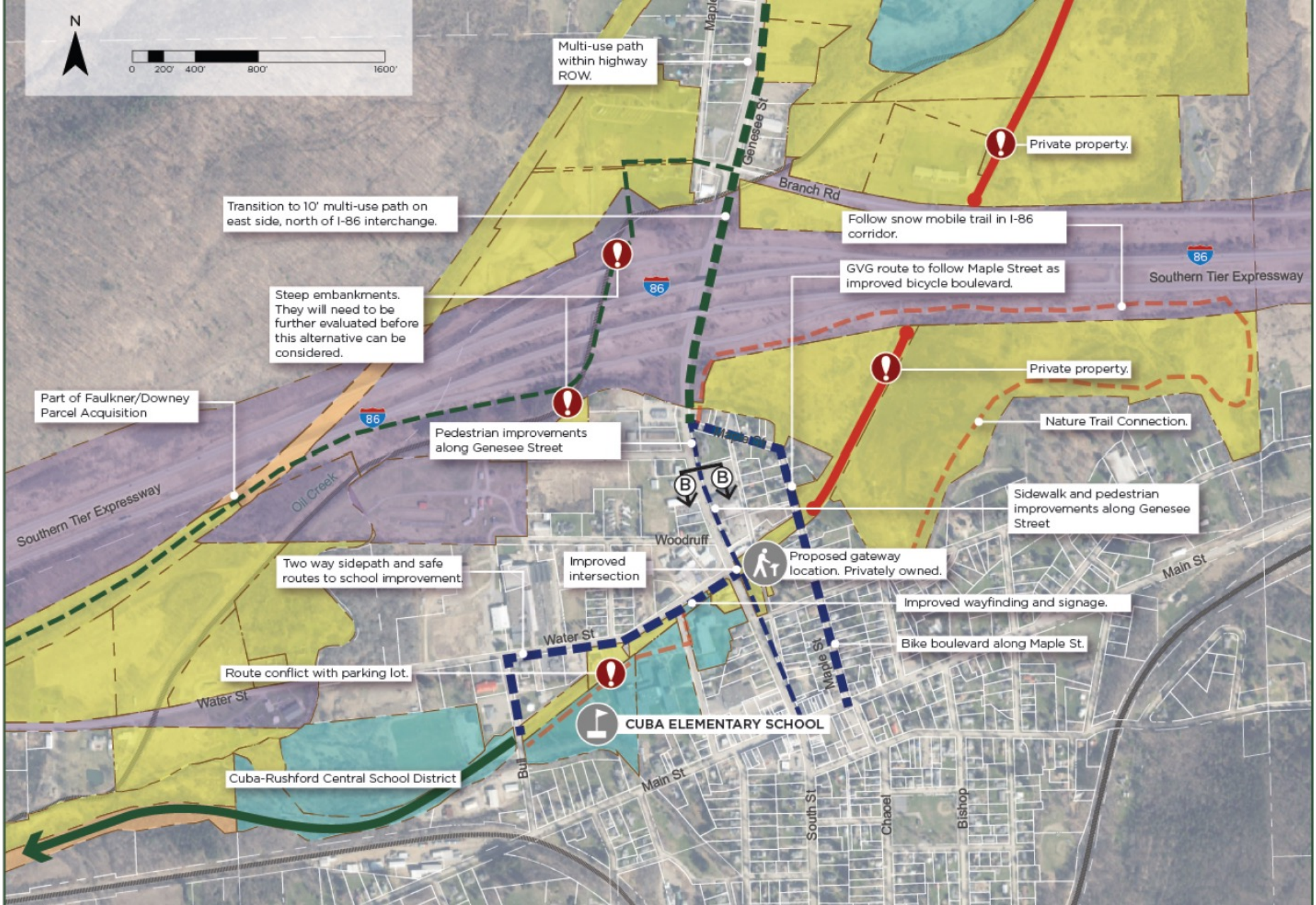
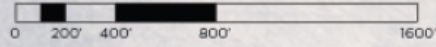
Yellow Option

Pros – less developed / traffic; large Village parcels may be utilized (nearest Oil Creek)
Cons – no sidewalks, disconnected to the central business core, less visible, private properties

Orange Option

Pros – connects to central business core, visible, historical features, "picture post-card"
Cons – mostly on streets or sidewalks





Multi-use path within highway ROW.

Private property.

Transition to 10' multi-use path on east side, north of I-86 interchange.

Follow snow mobile trail in I-86 corridor.

Steep embankments. They will need to be further evaluated before this alternative can be considered.

GVG route to follow Maple Street as improved bicycle boulevard.

Southern Tier Expressway

Part of Faulkner/Downey Parcel Acquisition

Private property.

Pedestrian improvements along Genesee Street

Nature Trail Connection.

Southern Tier Expressway

Sidewalk and pedestrian improvements along Genesee Street

Two way sidepath and safe routes to school improvement

Improved intersection

Proposed gateway location. Privately owned.

Improved wayfinding and signage.

Route conflict with parking lot.

Bike boulevard along Maple St.

Cuba-Rushford Central School District

CUBA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Bull

Main St

South St

Chapel

Bishop

Main St

Oil Creek

Woodruff

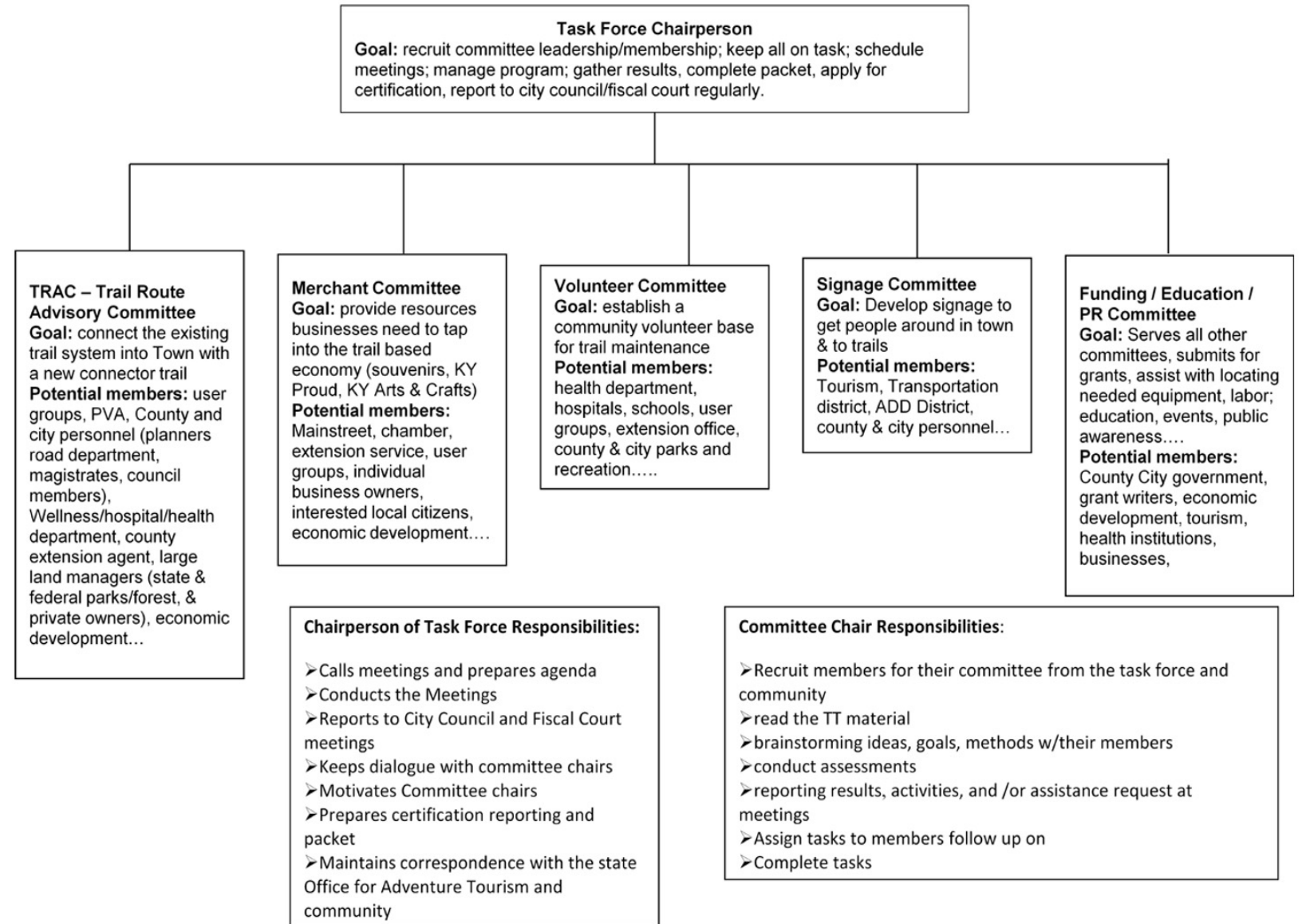
Water St

Water St



Organization

Trail Town Task Force Organizational Chart





OUR PURPOSE

To grow nature and heritage tourism in the Genesee Valley Region as a way to create jobs, diversify our rural economy, inspire stewardship and improve quality of life.

A person with long hair, wearing a green life vest, is seen from behind, paddling a red kayak on a calm river. The river is surrounded by dense green trees, and sunlight filters through the foliage, creating a shimmering effect on the water's surface. The person is holding a black paddle, and the water is dark green with bright reflections of light.

Our Opportunity

Attractive places and quality of life are at a premium in today's economy.

Letchworth attracts nearly 1 million visitors annually to our area.

Tourism and the outdoor recreation economy are creating jobs and growing faster than the rest of the U.S economy.

Digital technologies allow people to live and work where they want.



● Buffalo

MONROE

● Rochester

GENESEEE

Where We Work

○ Geneseo

Perry ○

○ Mt. Morris

WYOMING

LIVINGSTON

The Letchworth Gateway Villages (LGV) initiative was founded by the Villages of Perry, Mount Morris in Geneseo in 2017.

In 2019 LGV expanded its membership to new municipalities located in Livingston, Wyoming, Genesee and Allegany Counties within a 20 mile radius of Letchworth State Park and part of the Genesee River Watershed area.

ALLEGANY

What We Do



NETWORK-
BUILDING +
STRENGTHENING



SUPPORT FOR
ENTREPRENEURS



STRATEGY
+ INSIGHTS



In 3 years we proved the model works here too

Key Achievements

- Built a network of 70 stakeholders across 4 counties
- Revived a regional identity - the Genesee Valley
- Built a platform for regional collaboration (www.exploregeneseevalley.com)
- Increased the online presence of 270 tourism related businesses from 40% - 72% in 3 years.
- Catalyzed 12 new hospitality-related businesses.
- Created 24 and retained 47 jobs
- Generated \$832,677 in new funding that no one community could have raised on their own.

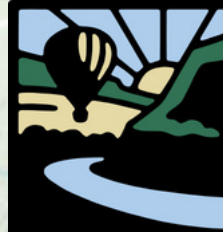




THE POWER OF A NETWORK

During a global pandemic our network secured \$1.2 Million in new federal investment:

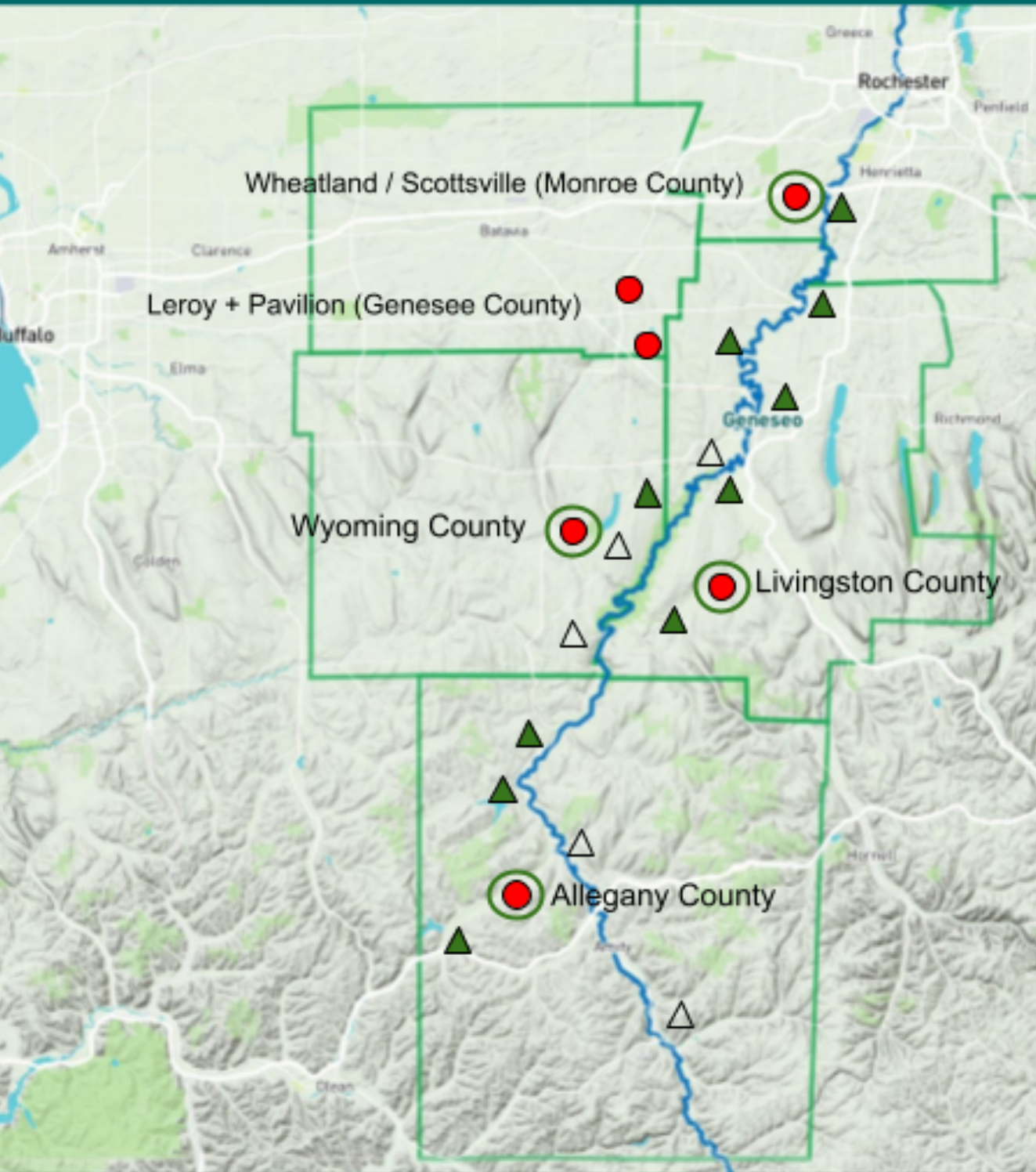
- \$268K to launch a Trail Town initiative and a digital trail mapping project to grow the region's outdoor recreation economy by connecting cyclists, paddlers, equestrians, hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts with rural communities along the 200+ miles of trails, blueways and cycling routes within the Genesee River Valley.
- \$153K to establish a Rural Innovation Institute at the State University of New York at Geneseo that will support the creation of new microcredentials and applied learning opportunities in heritage preservation, agro-tourism, downtown revitalization, and the digital economy.
- \$750K to establish the Genesee Valley Rural Revitalization Grant Program, an initiative to advance historic preservation for rural communities in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region.



GENESEE
— VALLEY —

10 Target Trail Town Communities

- Perry, Mount Morris, Geneseo (LGV)
- Avon, Nunda, York (Livingston County)
- Scottsville/Town of Wheatland (Monroe)
- Hume, Caneadea, Cuba (Allegany County)



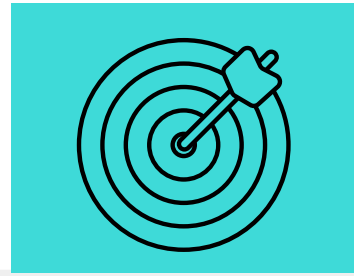
OUR APPROACH: GENESEE VALLEY TRAIL TOWN MODEL

Trail Town Programs® revitalize rural communities by growing outdoor tourism and small businesses



ASSESSMENT + RESEARCH

Self-assessments, visitor
research, business
surveys + asset inventory



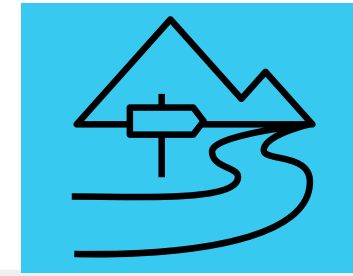
CONSISTENT TRAIL-WIDE MARKETING

Placemaking and
storytelling workshops,
digital mapping, regional
promotion



BUSINESS COACHING + NETWORKING

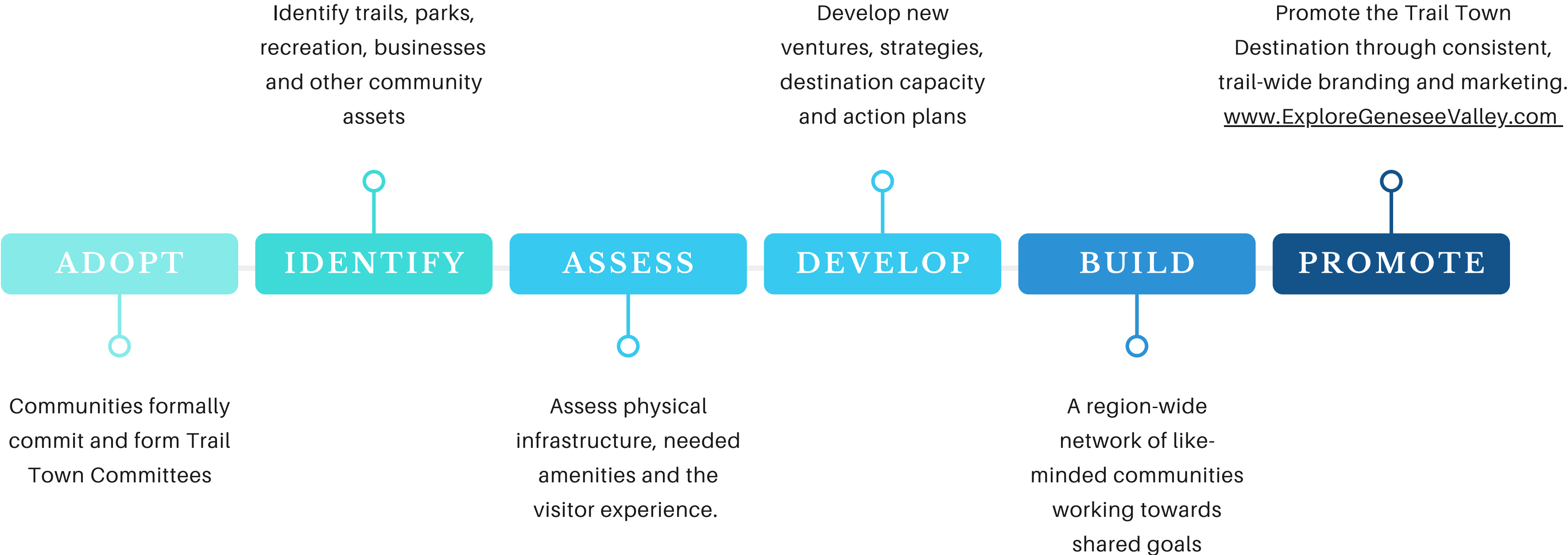
Digital coaching,
strategy, capital + venture
creation



PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS + AMENITIES

Signage + wayfinding,
bike racks, trail
improvements, facades,
kiosks + public art

THE TRAIL TOWN DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Genesee Valley Trail Town Benefits



- Small business coaching and support
- New venture creation
- Consistent marketing, branding and wayfinding for the region
- Improved municipal capacity
- A model Trail Town program to be replicated

GENESEE VALLEY TRAIL TOWNS

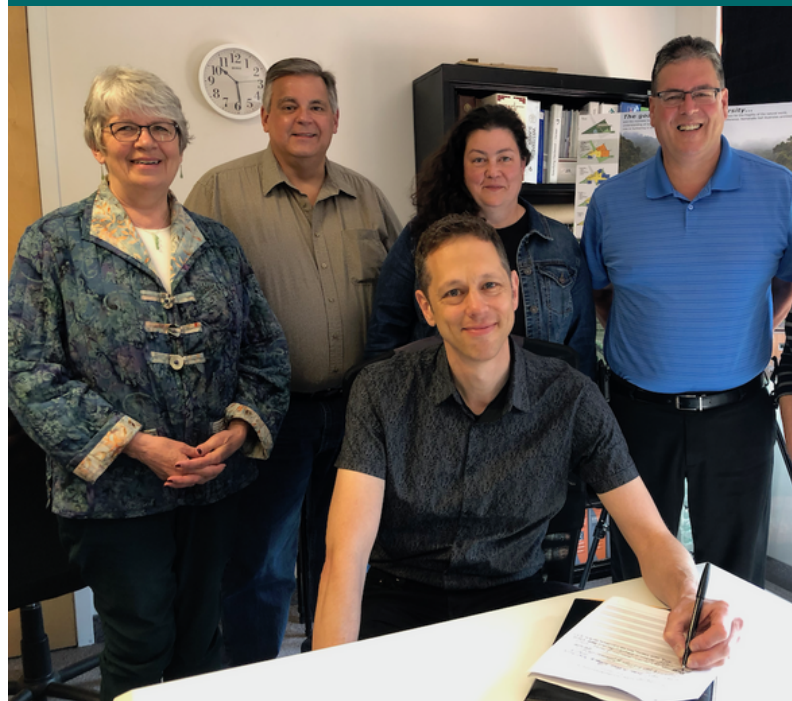
ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

- 3 Regional Branding workshops to develop each communities' unique story of place
- 10 Trail Town Landing Pages on [ExploreGeneseeValley.com](https://www.exploregeneseevalley.com)
- 8 Bike-around assessments completed
- 702 Digital audits of businesses
- 1 Visitor survey designed and deployed to collect baseline data in each community



EXPLORE GENESEE VALLEY MAP GUIDE

BUILT FOR
COLLABORATION



OPTIMIZED FOR
LOCATION



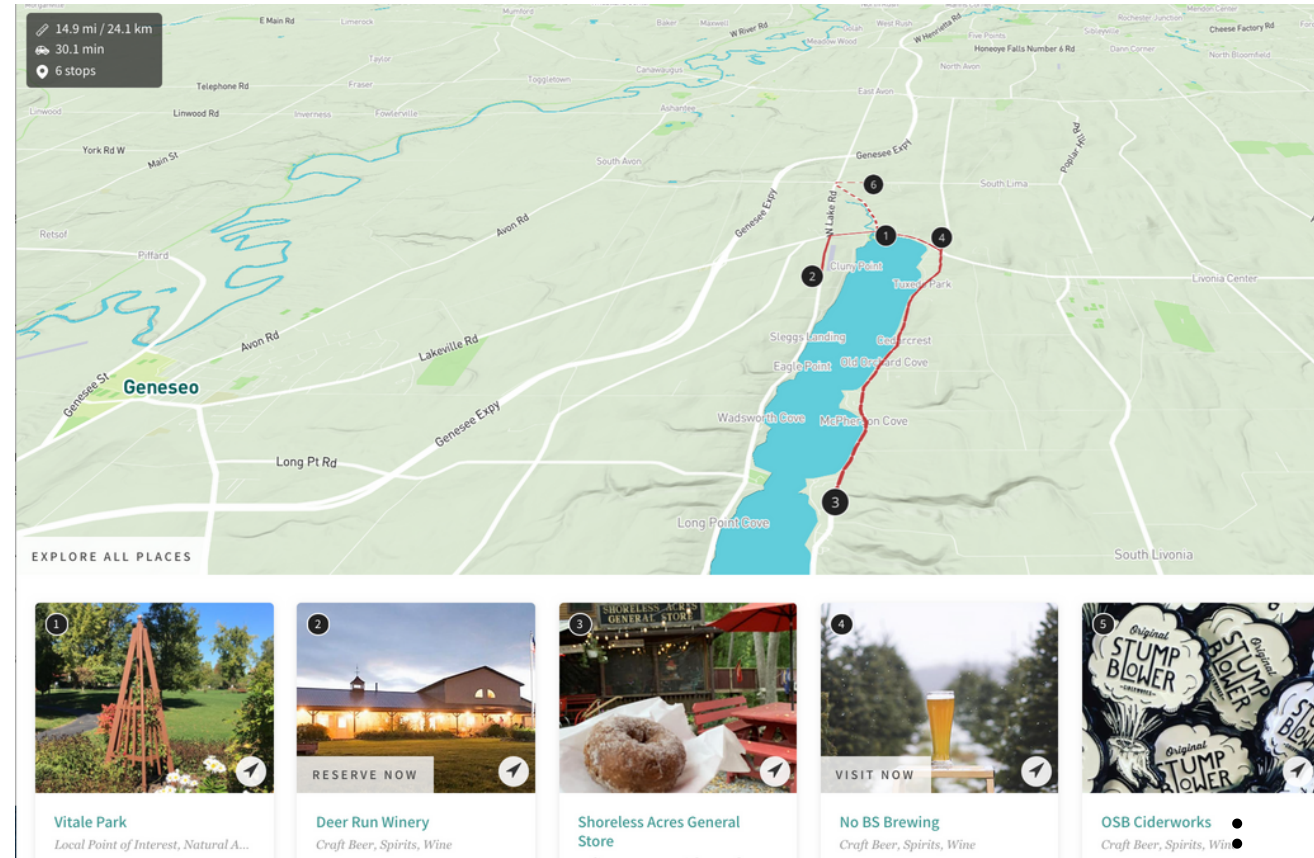
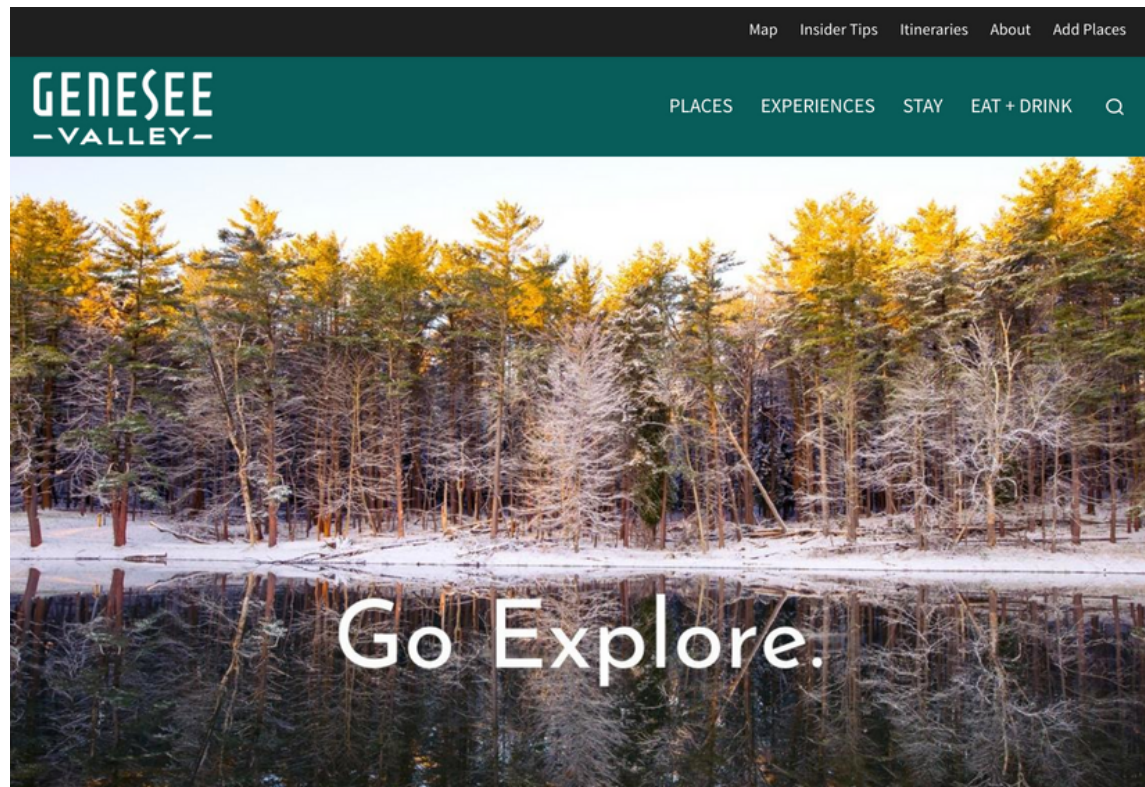
POWERED BY
LOCAL VOICES



STRENGTHENS
DIGITAL CAPACITY

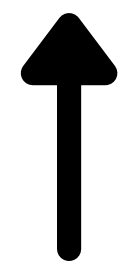


STRENGTHENING OUR DESTINATION ECOSYSTEM



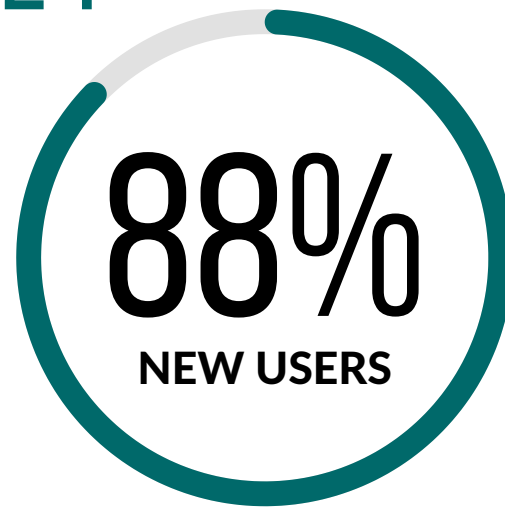
REACH & IMPACT

22,991 SITE VISITS IN 2021



200%

INCREASE IN VISITATION



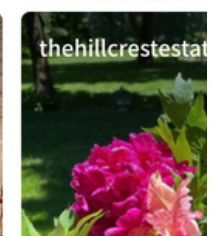
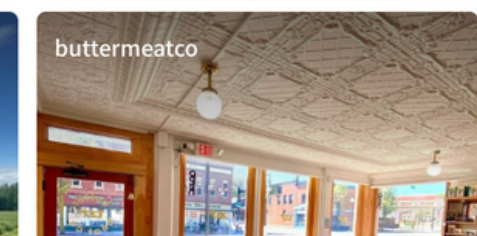
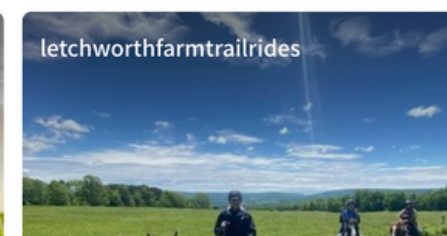
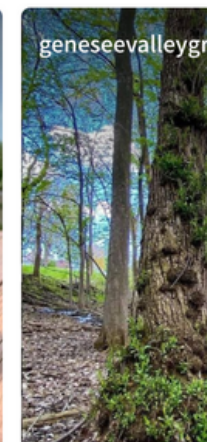
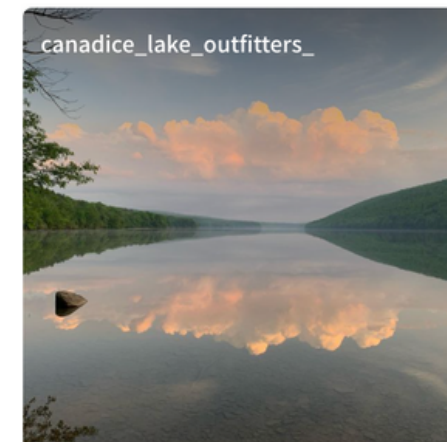
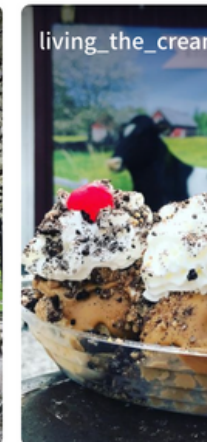
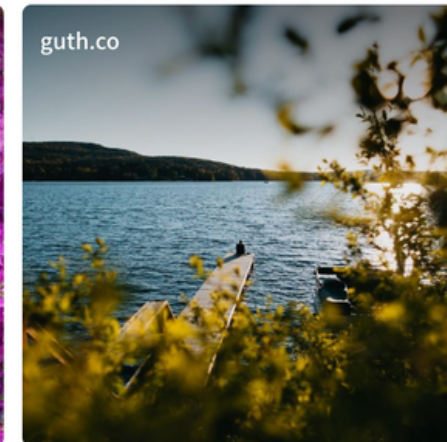
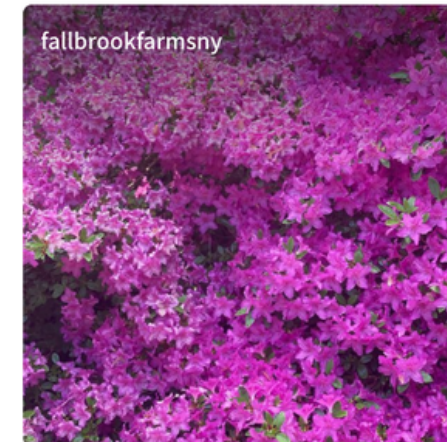
SITE VISITORS

HikeYoga
Rochester "A" List
Explore Upstate

NYC, Rochester,
Buffalo + Geneseo

INFLUENCER COLLABORATIONS

#ExploreGeneseeValley



REACH & IMPACT

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

1000+

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

15%

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT,
3X BETTER THAN THE
INDUSTRY STANDARD



Discover Genesee Valley Trail Towns

Insider Tips & Inspiration



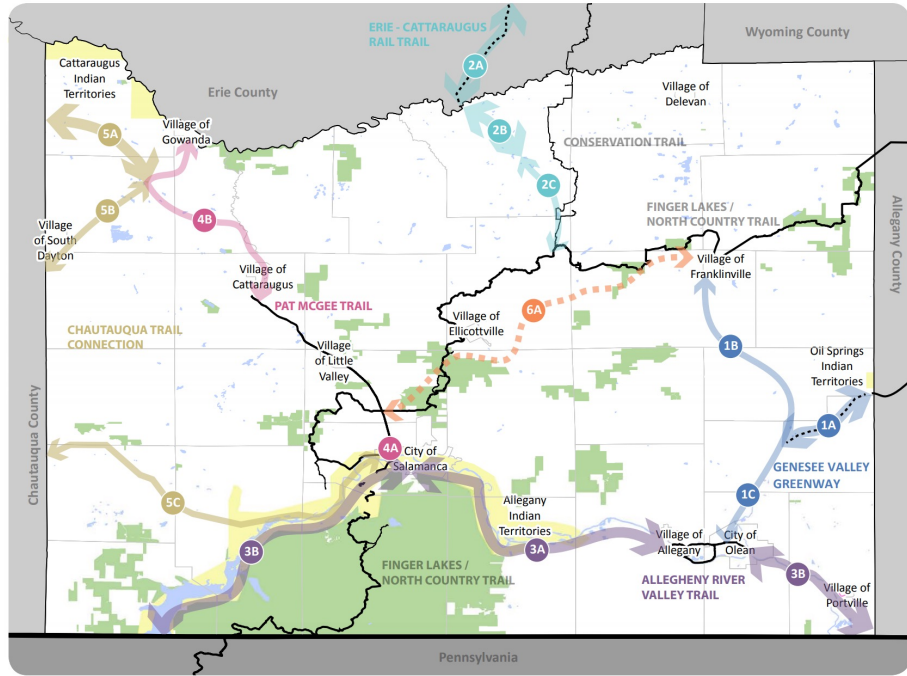
Budget Friendly Family Fun in the Valley

Insider Tips & Inspiration

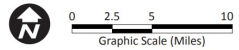
Future Opportunities

GENESEE VALLEY GREENWAY
STATE PARK
OPEN 6:00AM - 10:00PM
PETS MUST BE ON A LEASH (6' MAX.)
AT ALL TIMES
CAMPING BY PERMIT AND IN
DESIGNATED AREAS ONLY
CARRYING FIREARMS NOT ALLOWED
MOTOR VEHICLES NOT ALLOWED
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES NOT ALLOWED
THIS IS A CARRY IN - CARRY OUT FACILITY
PLEASE DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY
OUTSIDE OF THE PARK
CALL 911 IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

GENESEE VALLEY GREENWAY
STATE PARK
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation
PARK OPEN
6:00am to 10:00pm
CONTACT PARK MANAGER
585-493-3600

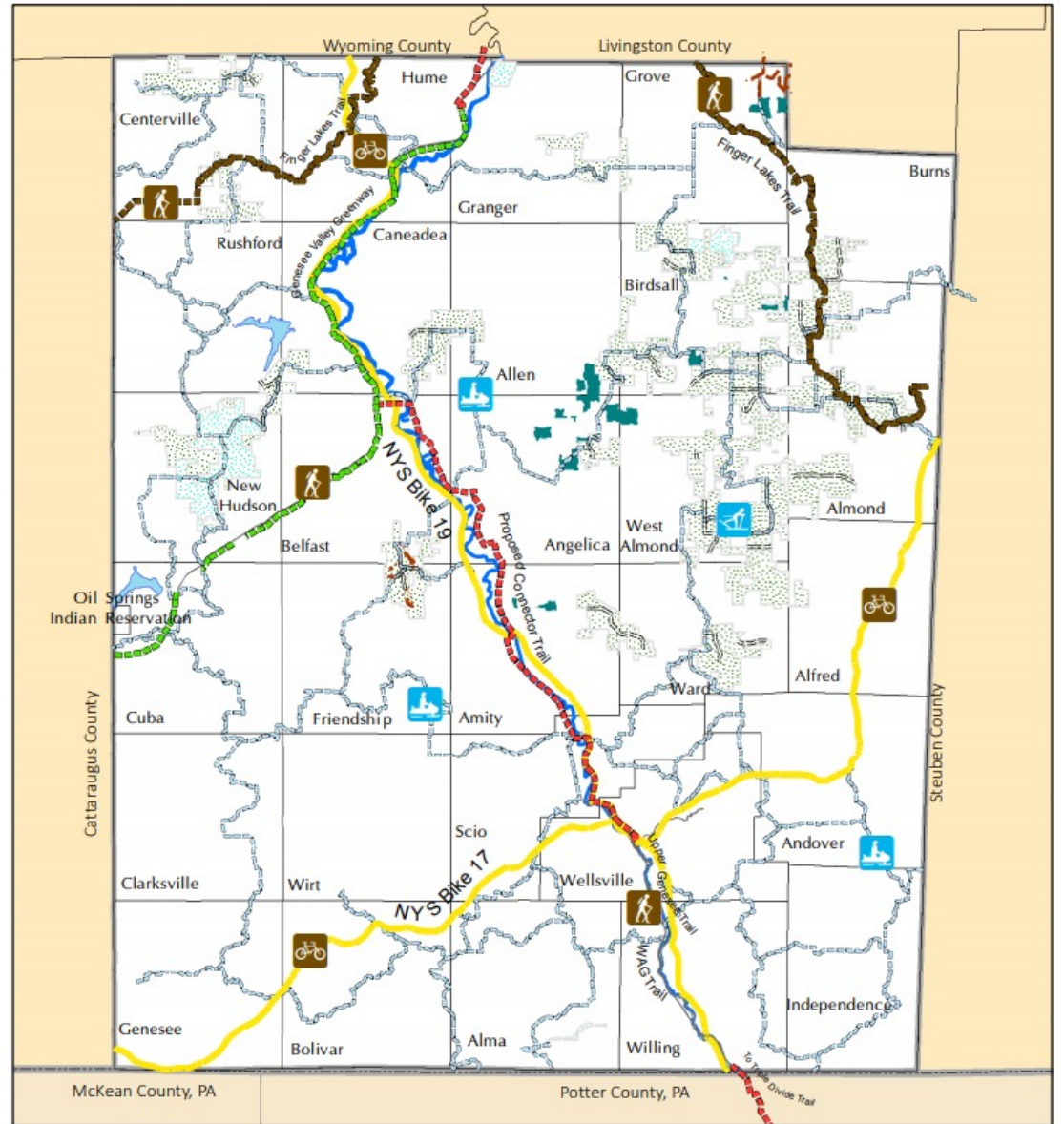


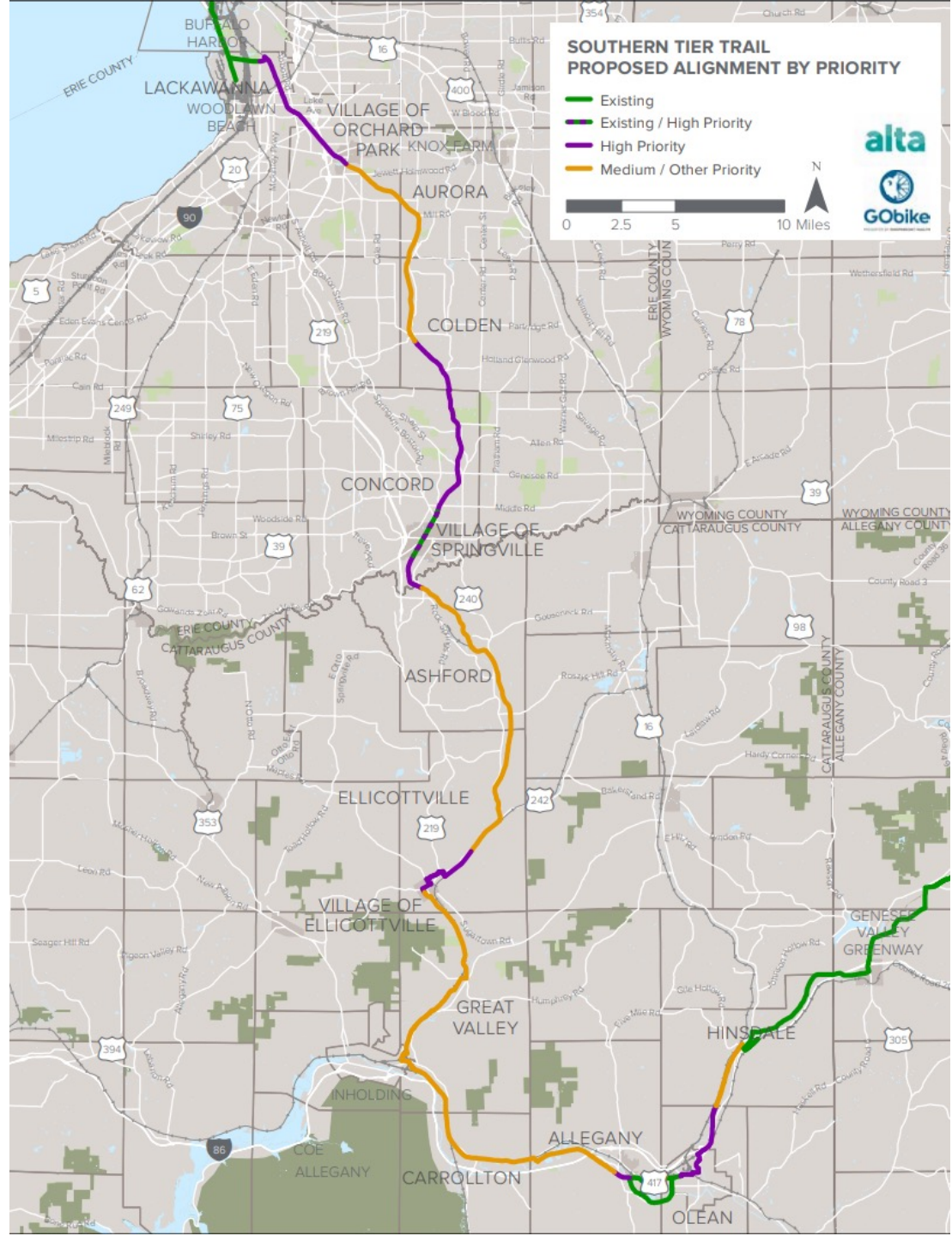
Map Sources: NYS GIS Clearing House, Cattaraugus County GIS Services



**FIGURE 1
POTENTIAL REGIONAL
TRAIL CONNECTIONS**

- Existing Regional Trails
- - - Regional Trails Under Development
- ↔ Rail to Trail Opportunities
- ↔ Rail with Trail Opportunities
- ↔ Summer Multiuse - Snowmobile Trail Opportunity
- Park Boundaries
- Seneca Nation of Indians
- ① Genesee Valley Greenway Connection
- ② Erie Cattaraugus Rail - Trail Connection
- ③ Allegheny River Trail
- ④ Pat McGee Trail Extension
- ⑤ Chautauqua Trail Connection
- ⑥ Franklinville - Pat McGee Trail







THE FUNDING LANDSCAPE

- American Rescue Plan Funding
 - EDA, USDA, County, Municipalities
 - Emphasis on regional collaborations
 - Economic recovery and resiliency
 - Infrastructure
 - Workforce development
 - Entrepreneurship + Innovation
 - Rural
-

Want to Learn More?



Visit: www.letchworthgatewayvillages.org/gv-trail-town-initiative



Attend the Genesee Valley Trail Town Summit:
Friday, October 29, 10am-4pm Genesee Country Village & Museum



Contact Us!

Nicole Manapol | director@letchworthgatewayvillages.org

Carl Schoenthal | carl7h150@gmail.com



TRAIL TOWN

Q+A
