

V. IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

A. Coordination with the Chemung River Master Plan

The Chemung River Comprehensive Master Plan describes a proposed network of river trails and facilities that link village, town and city centers, riverfront recreation facilities, boat launches, historic and cultural sites, and natural areas. The Southeast Steuben River Vision Project continues this network to the source of the Chemung River in Painted Post, Steuben County. It brings the number of river-related trails, launch sites and amenities in Southeast Steuben County into a coherent whole, dovetailing with the Chemung River Comprehensive Master Plan and filling in “gaps” in regional, state and interstate blue and green trail systems.

B. Strategies for Implementation

Various strategies and options to realize the River Vision are offered in this report. The Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) will need to adopt the maps and recommendations provided within this vision report. Resolution has been drafted for authorization by the five river communities. A list of strategies and potential funding sources are provided below for the WAC.

A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) has been cited as a necessary document in order to justify recommendations for local planning actions to implement waterfront development. It also is another means to open up state funding potential for waterfront development. This Vision Report was prepared with strict adherence to the process required by the NYS DOS in an LWRP, pursuant to NYS Executive Law, Article 42.

State or federal grant monies often provide the impetus for new development that might never be accomplished with local funding only. Usually requiring matching funds, these grants place more responsibility and ownership on the applicant, thus helping to assure the project’s success. However, there are associated costs with public money of which the applicant often is not aware. These come in the form of more complicated administration of contracts and requirements for tighter specifications, bidding procedures, bonding and construction review services. When federal or state grant monies are involved in a project, the lines between contracted services, donated services, and in-kind services must be clearly defined. Many grant programs no longer allow the value of in-kind services provided by the municipality to be used toward the required match. To construct the trail projects identified in this report, grant monies will be necessary from state or federal sources. Municipal in-kind could come from Planning efforts, engineering, parks, or public works.

Alternately, in-kind services may be used to implement a range of smaller improvements. Precedent exists for various sports and stakeholder groups in the local communities to donate skills, time, materials and equipment toward the construction and revitalization of similar recreational facilities. The Finger Lakes Trail Association is a good example of this type of coordinated effort to link the trail to the Corning region. Local businesses may agree to donate materials, use of equipment, and labor to a community improvement. For example, local nurseries might be willing to donate trees or seed for restoration. Municipal forces may handle hauling, drainage, signs and grading. A service

club might be approached about constructing a kiosk. Benches could be donated by other businesses or clubs, all in a cooperative effort to create an attractive new amenity at a reduced cost. Other local agencies should partner with communities to realize segments of the development. County Soil and Water Conservation often provides technical services to private and public entities and may supplement stabilization, seeding and planting operations.

The following strategies or options are offered for consideration depending on the level of funding that is granted and the support provided by the community.

1. Establish a strategy for furthering public support of the Chemung River Trail projects. Public outreach was necessary early in the process. It must continue with an organized and credible Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) and local support. DEC, NYSDOT and other stakeholders should be well represented on the WAC.
2. Piggy-back on other development initiatives that abut or include the waterfront improvements to implement trail segments. Many recommendations identified in Chapter IV could be supported with funds from other private, State or federal sources. An example would be enhancements related to rehabilitations to bridge structures crossing the Chemung River or State highway improvements.
3. Implement a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). To expand this Vision, communities may choose to prepare a comprehensive Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. This would serve as a comprehensive management program for the Chemung River resources. Addressing not only access, but growth management, economic development, and protection of natural and cultural resources. This volunteer program, administered by the NYS Department of State, is actively being utilized by waterfront communities throughout the State to guide revitalization of local waterfronts, as well as to establish a consensus between local and State government through a pro-active approach.
4. Secure property survey and easements or other means of negotiated passage for private properties bordering on the Chemung River where the waterfront trail is proposed.
5. Assure in-kind services and/or budgeted costs for anticipated funding (match) is accurate and approved by the City Council/Town Boards.
6. Utilize in-kind services and donations of labor and materials to construct certain improvements and weigh the impact of these donations to the public funding match. Be sure to contact the grantor for verification of match eligibility.
7. Pursue technical assistance grants for specific projects, which can often be included as part of the local match to larger funding sources. (i.e. New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council Community Improvement Grants, Municipal Challenge Grants, CDBG, DOS, DEC, NYS-Parks EPF Grants, NYSDOT-TEP, Safe Routes to Schools, and Legislative Support.

8. Lobby for legislative support of current applications and/or improvements. Invite their attendance at civic events, 4th of July Celebration, River Fest etc. Many of your state representatives have a good track record of supporting these initiatives. Be persistent!
9. Include in municipal (Parks and Public Works) budgets fixed annual commitments toward improvements and maintenance. Continue budgeting for capital improvements in subsequent years.
10. Establish a Plan with goals to implement your priority project(s) within a realistic time frame and stick to this schedule. Expect and plan for the implementation of the Vision to be in phases and as funding becomes available. Keep this phased approach in mind when developing a plan. The WAC and other agencies will support your efforts if you show the desire to carry them through.

The above strategies or options are offered for consideration depending on the level of funding that is approved and the support provided by the community. See the Chemung River Trail Assessment & Comprehensive Master Plan for additional potential Funding Sources. <http://www.cityofelmira.net/about/riverfront.html>

C. Organizing for Success

A partnership with The Friends of the Chemung River watershed will help expand the network that they have used to provide leadership and organization for many projects and events that relate to the Chemung River within Chemung County. Either the creation of a similar group or expansion of the Friends of the Chemung River to include SE Steuben County could be created to guide and advocate the River visions. In addition, interested user groups such as the Finger Lakes Trail Association, the Finger Lakes Mountain Bike Club, the NYS Department of Transportation and local schools have all emerged as potential partners to share in the support of a unified blueway and greenway trail initiative.

Members of the Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership and the Southern Tier Central Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BACPAC) as well as involved river communities were encouraged to provide members for the SE Steuben River Vision and Advisory Council. The staff of the NYS Parks and Trails “Healthy Trails/Healthy People” Program as part of the Chemung Valley Riverside Trail Project and the NYS Department of State Pedestrian and Bike Coordinator for Region 6 (Hornell) can all be solicited to provide technical assistance, where needed.

The Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board were responsible for project oversight, mapping preparation, coordination with the landscape architect team and related work. As a regional planning organization with expertise in the planning and development of our community transportation network and open spaces, they remain one of the prime resources behind efforts to pursue funding and create the network of connections. Additionally, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Transportation should have a major seat at the table to incorporate the many recommendations into their maintenance and planning programs.

Community participation in the waterfront visioning process included three public workshops, conducted as part of the waterfront visioning and consensus-building process. The Outreach Plan identified key individuals, organizations, and entities that should be involved and identified the roles and responsibilities in coordinating the entire outreach process. The Annual Chemung River Float provides a continued opportunity for public media focus on the River Vision and a chance for local official to literally “get their feet wet” as they paddle their stretch of the Chemung. Outreach to local schools should also be considered as funding sources target “safe routes” to these facilities.

D. Strategies to Address Issues

The continued consultation of various government agencies (DEC & Army Corps of Engineers), local agencies, stakeholders and private individuals will help provide resolution of key issues associated with necessary permits, approvals and easements. This will help facilitate the project through the process of permits, as all agencies will be involved. It is crucial that the government agencies back the vision, as DEC approval grants the space necessary for a substantial part of the trail in the floodplain where they have jurisdiction. The continued involvement of the local municipalities that are involved will provide strong support, as they need to issue permits for the project too. Moving forward into implementation of the Vision, a full title search of effected parcels will be necessary. Municipalities’ legal teams will be integral in working with other government agencies, stakeholders and private individuals during the implementation as these issues are addressed. The use of professional design consultants will resolve design challenges regarding access, exact alignments and placement of structures along proposed trails. Adoption of the LWRP when finished by the municipalities will help provide the necessary guidance for the individual projects associated with the project area. The LWRP gives legal backing through its legal policies. The next section will discuss the LWRP.

E. Strategies to Complete the LWRP

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) requires communities to adapt and tailor the New York State waterfront policies to their unique conditions. Through the public meetings and the inventory and analysis process, waterfront issues and opportunities have been identified. The policy development component of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program process calls upon local municipalities to formulate and adopt local approaches to address these issues and opportunities. These local approaches become the Waterfront Revitalization Program Policies. After their approval by the Department of State, they become legal tools to guide activities and development within the Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA). The LWRP policies are listed below.

GENERAL POLICY

- POLICY 1** Foster a Pattern of Beneficial Community Development in the LWRP Area That Enhances Community Character, Preserves Open Space, and Minimizes Adverse Effects of Development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- POLICY 2** Protect Water-Dependent Uses
POLICY 3 Protect Existing Agricultural Land in the Riverine Area.

POLICY 4 Promote Sustainable Use of Living Aquatic Resources

WATERFRONT NATURAL RESOURCES

POLICY 5 Protect and Restore River Ecological Resources and Habitats

POLICY 6 Protect and Improve Water Resources

POLICY 7 Minimize Loss of Life and Resources from Flooding/Erosion

GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL

POLICY 8 Protect and Improve Air Quality

POLICY 9 Promote Appropriate Use of Energy and Mineral Resources

POLICY 10 Minimize Environmental Degradation from Solid and Hazardous Waste

RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL

POLICY 11 Provide Recreational Access to and Use of Waters and Public Land

POLICY 12 Enhance Visual Quality and Protect Outstanding Scenic Resources

POLICY 13 Preserve Historic Resources of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Area

F. Funding Sources

This section offers a partial list of potential funding sources for recreation and trail development. The programs are subject to change and sources must be contacted directly to keep abreast of changing program aims and eligibility standards. Many funding sources have websites that offer up-to-date information. One enormously useful website is the Catalog of Domestic Federal Assistance, at aspe.os.dhhs.gov/cfda, which lists all the domestic assistance programs offered by all Federal agencies. Listings are indexed by topic, by agency, by eligible group, and by program name. The Federal Commons Web site allows users to search the General Services Administration catalog of federal grant programs.

<http://www.cfda.gov> or

<http://www.lgean.org/html/whatsnew.cfm?id=160>

In the past, the Land & Water Conservation Fund provided Federal funds to support open space and recreation projects through a state-run matching grants program. Since 1995, no Federal monies have been allocated to the program. However, efforts to revive the Fund resulted in a restored Land & Water Conservation Fund program under the Federal Lands Legacy Initiative. Congress passed and the President signed into Public Law 108-108, which appropriated \$91,360,000 for FY 2004 LWCF stateside assistance. In New York State, these federal funds are being distributed by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. These funds are being distributed through the same Parks Development funding program that distributes Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and Environmental Protection Funds. Grant applications currently are not available.

Safe Routes To Schools (SRTS) Managed by the New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), New York's federally funded Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Governor David A. Paterson stated, "Walking and bicycling are healthy, energy-efficient ways for kids to get to school, and these federally funded grant for infrastructure improvements and education will help children to enjoy healthy school days now and to form active habits that will last a lifetime." Under

New York State's SRTS program, the maximum project cost for non-infrastructure projects is \$150,000 and for infrastructure projects \$400,000. Maximum combined project cost is \$550,000. This program has already been used to fund a Safe Routes To School project that will provide sidewalk and cross walk improvements, along with levee top trails in the City of Corning.

The Safe Routes To School website for more information is:

<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/4373/newyork#funding>

Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) is a source that should be utilized. Grants available through the Environmental Protection Fund are a major source of assistance available to communities; it includes several individual programs. Title 11 provides grants from the NYS Department of State (DOS) for the preparation and implementation of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs, such as this Chemung River access strategy; Title 9 provides grants from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for historic preservation, park, and heritage projects; and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) provides grants for water quality projects. With respect to the waterfront access and trail projects proposed in this program, the Environmental Protection Fund grants under Titles 9 and 11 are anticipated to be key sources for implementation.

DOS is continuing to expand collaborative relationships through numerous statewide and regional initiatives to assure that the quality of life for New Yorkers continues to flourish, both within and beyond the coastal area. Prominent among these initiatives are: Heritage Areas Advisory Commission; New York State Scenic Byways Advisory Board; New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee; Canal Recreationway Commission; Hudson River Valley Greenway; and New York State Bird Conservation Area Program Advisory Committee, to name a few.

The Department of State typically solicits grant applications from local governments for 50/50 matching grants from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The website for more information is:

http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/grantopps_EPF.asp

The *Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program* - This program is funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). This program provides grants to organizations and local governments working on a local level to protect and improve watersheds in the Chesapeake Bay basin, while building citizen-based resource stewardship. The purpose of the grants programs is to support protection and restoration actions that contribute to restoring healthy waters, habitat and living resources of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. The Small Watershed Grants program has been designed to encourage the development and sharing of innovative ideas among the many organizations wishing to be involved in watershed protection activities. The application forms are now available on the NFWF website: <http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake/index.htm>

The Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) is a federal reimbursement program under the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)*, administered by the New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

In recognition that transportation systems are influenced and impacted by more than the condition of the traditional highway and bridge infrastructure, this program enables funding for transportation projects of cultural, aesthetic, historic and environmental significance.

Eligible projects must fall into one or more of the 12 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) categories. The categories are listed on the "*Eligible Project Types*" link on this Web site. Additionally, the project must have a transportation relationship with the surface transportation system and must be available for public access and use.

This program enables many sponsors and applicants to participate. Applications for this program must be submitted by sponsors as described on the "*Who Can Sponsor Enhancement Projects?*" link on this Web site. The TEP requires the project sponsor or applicant to front the cost of the project and request reimbursement. Each project requires a minimum matching share of 20% of the total project cost. Innovative finance features are available to minimize the cash outlay for applicants and sponsors. The website for more information is: <https://www.nysdot.gov/programs/tep>

Smart Growth Initiative was put into effect in 2010 by NY Governor David Patterson. The Governor's Smart Growth Cabinet and the various state agencies involved with this initiative are committed to working with localities to use smart, sensible planning to create livable communities, protect our natural resources and promote economic growth. The website lists many different opportunities for funding various types of projects. The grants are organized under various headings on the website and include Economic Development, Planning, Conservation & Environment and Transportation & Neighborhoods. The Smart Growth website: <http://smartgrowthny.org>