New York State Canal Recreationway Plan Update

Opportunity Analysis

Prepared for the New York State Canal Corporation

Fall 2014

UAlbany Planning Studio
Cover page photograph credits

The image on the top left of the cover page is of the NYS Canal Corporation’s Grand Erie Tug Boat heading southbound on the Hudson River from the dock facing West in Troy, New York. The picture was taken by Lisa A. Ford on September 5, 2014 at 1:30 pm.

The image on the top right of the cover page is of the Waterford waterfront as seen from Lock E2. The picture was taken by Lauren C. Ellmers on September 5, 2014 at 3:00 pm.

The image in the middle of the cover is of the Lakes to Locks Annual Meeting, group break-out sessions. The picture was taken by Dan Jeanson on October 8, 2014 at 12:45 am.

The image on the right side of the cover page is an Adopt-A-Trail Program sign as seen from the Erie Canalway Trail. The sign is located on the bridge where Main Street crosses the Erie Canal in downtown Fairport, NY. The picture was taken by Lauren C. Ellmers on September 19, 2014 at 1:00 pm.

The image on the bottom of the small dam on the cover page is a portion of the Old Champlain Canal sidecut in Waterford, NY near Lock E2. This picture was taken by Lauren C. Ellmers on September 5, 2014 at 3:00 pm.

The image in the center of the cover page was taken aboard the NYS Canal Corporation’s Grand Erie Tug Boat heading northbound toward Waterford, New York. The picture was taken by Lisa A. Ford on September 5, 2014.

The image on the bottom left of the cover page is of a Canalway Trail sign as seen from Liftbridge Lane E in downtown Fairport, NY. The picture was taken by Lauren C. Ellmers on September 19, 2014 at 1:00 pm.

The image on the bottom right of the cover page is of the Sam Patch, a charter boat operating from Pittsford, NY. The picture was taken by Lauren C. Ellmers on September 19, 2014 at 1:00 pm.

This report has been made available for persons with disabilities.
PROJECT TEAM

The University at Albany Fall Planning Studio

Instructor

Marcia O. Kees

Class Members

Farokh Bagheri
Audrey Burneson
Katherine Czajkowski
Lauren Ellmers
Chanchilo Ezung
Lisa Ford
Dan Jeanson
Robyn Keefe
Tristan Lowery
Jenny Majkut
Debra Nelson
Joseph Seman
Ayse Tezel
Samantha Young
# Table of Contents

Project Team 2
Acknowledgments 4
MRP Description 5
Introduction 6
Summary of Identified Themes 7
Opportunity Analysis 8
  - Coalition 9
  - Environment 16
  - Infrastructure 23
  - Amenities 28
  - Trail 30
  - Multimodal Connections 34
  - Linkages 38
  - Marketing 44
Bibliography 48
Appendix A 53
  - Coalition Research 54
Appendix B 67
  - MRP Biographies 68
Acknowledgments

The University of Albany Studio Members would like to extend their appreciation to the New York State Canal Corporation for their support and assistance throughout the semester. Studio Members would like to thank them for the opportunity to initiate and participate in the planning process for the update of the Canal Recreationway Plan.

Although we cannot name everyone who assisted us with this effort, we would like to express our gratitude in particular to Sharon Leighton, John DiMura, and Rocky Ferraro. Their willingness to take the time to assist us has been very much appreciated throughout the course of this process.
Master's in Regional Planning at the University at Albany

The Master's Program (MRP) in Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Albany provides a solid foundation for students to enter into professional planning practice and research. Hailing from many states and countries across the globe, the graduate students learn and apply planning methods to improve the quality of life in communities and regions.

The University at Albany's 48-credit two-year Master of Regional Planning Program in Urban and Regional Planning was established in 1982 and is fully accredited by the Planning Accreditation Board, the sole national accrediting body for planning.

The MRP program is interdisciplinary, student-centered and participative, emphasizing the importance of creativity, public involvement, social justice, professional ethics, and environmental sustainability.

The program is strongly oriented towards professional practice and provides a thorough foundation in land use planning, a range of technical skills and internship opportunities, and the opportunity to specialize in one of three alternative fields:

- Environmental and land use planning
- Housing, local economic development and community planning
- Transportation planning

MRP graduates are well-poised to enter the professional planning arena. MRP alumni include university faculty, professional consultants, PhD students, and planners practicing in several regions of the United States and many foreign countries.

The MRP Planning Studio provides collaborative team planning exercises to design, evaluate, plan, and manage projects and programs. The Fall 2014 Planning Studio is working with the New York State Canal Corporation as they launch the planning process to update the New York State Canal Recreationway Plan. The Fall 2014 Planning Studio graduate students are:

- Farokh Bagheri
- Audrey Burneson
- Katherine Czajkowski
- Lauren Ellmers
- Chanchilo Ezung
- Lisa Ford
- Dan Jeanson
- Robyn Keefe
- Tristan Lowery
- Jenny Majkut
- Debra Nelson
- Joseph Seman
- Ayse Tezel
- Samantha Young
- Instructor: Marcia Kees
Beginning in the fall semester of 2014, University at Albany Planning Studio Class Members began the process of gathering information and conducting outreach to stakeholders and community members interested in the New York State Canal System. The goal of the semester-long process was to gather and use the information to provide the New York State Canal Corporation with a series of recommendations for the update of the New York State Canal Recreationway Plan. The recommendations presented in this document, are the culmination of a semester long process involving research, interviews, and a public meeting.

Planning Studio Members began their process by reviewing the 1995 Canal Recreationway Plan, prior studies, and relevant websites. Studio Members attended the Tugboat Roundup held on September 5, 2014, located in Waterford, NY. Several members were able to participate in the Tugboat parade by riding on the state-operated Grand Erie. This provided students with the opportunity to witness one of the most widely celebrated events on the canal, and gain firsthand experience boating on the Canal. The class also met with Sharon Leighton, John DiMura, and Rocky Ferraro to discuss their thoughts and insights, and to provide guidance for the role of the Studio Class Members. Sharon Leighton is the Director of Community Relations at the NYS Canal Corporation, and John DiMura is the NYS Canal Corporation Trail Director. Rocky Ferraro, executive director of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, serves as the chair of the Canal Recreationway Committee, responsible for reviewing drafts of the plan updates.

Over the course of the semester, two documents were produced by Planning Studio Members:

**Stakeholder Interviews:** Studio Members conducted twenty nine informational interviews with individuals that have been involved with the canal both professionally and personally. The list of stakeholder names was provided by the NYS Canal Corporation. Several major themes emerged from the stakeholder interviews: cohesion, community engagement, historic awareness, and public/private balance.

**Lakes to Locks Passage Annual Meeting:** In conjunction with the annual Lakes to Locks Passage board meeting, held on October 8, 2014, in Glens Falls, NY, Studio Members developed a set of participatory activities and led small group discussions for meeting attendees. Attendees provided input and suggestions for programs or projects that they felt were important for the success of the Canal System. Ten themes emerged from these discussions: history, partnerships, marketing, tourism, recreation, education, community development, infrastructure development, and commercial shipping.

The information collected and analyzed through the above processes was instrumental in the creation of the opportunity analysis that follows.
Summary of Identified Themes

Create a coalition to increase information sharing and promote best practices. There is a need to create a single system-wide coalition that would serve state and local governments, business owners, and citizens of canal communities. Encouraging partnerships among canal communities will promote the sharing of resources and information to make a stronger Canal System.

Protect, foster, and preserve the natural environment. Studio Members feel the historic, legendary treasure that is the Canal System requires integrated water, air, and land quality acceptable as a municipal watery supply, fishery areas, wildlife refuge, and use for recreational tourism, to benefit canalside communities and visitors alike.

Maintain the Canal System infrastructure and build in resilience against the effects of extreme weather. The Barge Canal System is approaching 100 years of age with infrastructure in need of continual maintenance and upkeep. The need for maintenance and repairs is ongoing to allow the canal to be functional and aesthetically pleasing to visitors and tourists.

Invest in amenities and facilities along the Canal System to improve canal experiences. Investing in amenities such as Wi-Fi, shuttle services for boaters, building harbors and marinas, and public facilities such as restrooms and drinking water fountains, will provide a better experience for canal goers.

Enhance connectivity along the Canal System by completing the Canalway Trail. Many stakeholders stated that completing the Canalway Trail was key to improving recreation along the canal and we, the Studio Members, agree with the stakeholders. Completing the Canalway Trail will connect the Canal System to the local canal communities, increasing economic development and tourist experiences.

Develop and expand multimodal connections within and between canal communities. Both visitors and locals would have an improved canal experience by increasing motorized and non-motorized options along the Canal System. Studio Members feel this is important because it will allow people to visit multiple canal communities and different sections of the canal by water and land.

Create new and develop existing informational linkages among points of interest along the Canal System. With technology today being as powerful as it is, an opportunity exists to link points of interest along the Canal System which would greatly benefit tourism. Web-based trip planners, interactive maps, mobile applications, and uniform, consistent signage along the canal would benefit tourists visiting the canal and improve the public’s perception of the Canal System as a destination.

Invest in marketing. Marketing the Canal System as a recreational and tourism destination will give canal communities an advantage by increasing economic development across New York State. This should include developing a multi-tiered marketing campaign, capitalizing on existing marketing strengths, using marketing opportunities to improve the public’s image of the canal, attracting new markets, and employing a wide variety of marketing strategies and techniques.
OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS
Coalition

Create a Coalition to Increase Information Sharing and Promote Best Practices

A recurring comment and theme heard from both the stakeholder interviewees and Lakes to Locks Passage meeting attendees was the need for better communication not only among canal communities, but also from “the State level” down to the community level and back. The Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority, is seen as the managing authority of the Canal System. However, there are also several other state agencies that play an important role in either managing or assisting with various aspects of the Canal System. These agencies include, but are not limited to: the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York State Department of Transportation, and Empire State Development, which includes “I Love NY.” The differentiation of responsibilities among these State agencies, as well as the numerous other organizations that serve the Canal System, can be confusing. Studio Members recognized that there is a need for better communication among all of the organizations that serve the Canal System, and there is a need for better communication among these organizations and the canal communities.

While state, regional and local agencies and organizations involved with the Canal System exchange information during various meetings and events such as the bi-annual canal conferences, there is currently no coordinated strategy in place, that Studio Members are aware of, that addresses how to collectively strategize; how to ensure that coordination and communication takes place in a planned and organized manner; and how best to reach those at the community level.

In response to this need, Studio Members recommend the creation of a system-wide coalition which would consistently serve as the conduit between state and local governments, business owners, and citizens of canal communities by addressing needs which cross governmental and organizational boundaries. The proposed coalition could meet these needs through communication, planning, coordination, education and outreach, and technical assistance provided by partners and stakeholders interested in the New York State Canal System. Fostering collaboration among the various organizations would provide opportunity for stronger partnerships and greater financial efficiency and resource allocation, providing a platform for communication between partners and communities, and promoting the sharing of resources and information. One of the initial goals of the coalition should be to develop and implement a communications plan that addresses the best way to communicate not only with each other, but also with, and among, canal communities. As suggested and detailed in this report below, creation of a web portal for coalition members, accessible to coalition members only, may provide one venue for implementation of this communications plan. Any strategic plan formulated for communication should also include formalizing an operational structure for the coalition that can be implemented as part of this strategy.
a. Structure the coalition in a way that is similar to those researched and referenced below.

In formulating this recommendation, several existing regional entities, as described below, were examined for research purposes to analyze their organizational structure and function. All of these organizations work, or have worked with a variety of stakeholders and partners in an organized and structured manner, and appear to have found success in the implementation of the plans and objectives of their various organizations. There is overlap in membership of each of these organizations, and even within these organizations themselves. These partners include federal and state agencies, federal and state heritage areas, chambers of commerce, private and public sector representatives, and representatives and citizens of canal communities. Through creation of a system-wide coalition, stronger and greater connections can be made among various communities and stakeholders through membership and shared events. While it may not be feasible to include the greater public in this coalition membership, representation on a regional level may best serve the implementation of the goals and mission of this coalition. It will be a duty of the coalition to ensure that the greater public is kept educated, informed and involved in canal-wide activities.

When planning and working on such a large system-wide scale, challenges can be as basic as uncertainty over the structure and leadership of the coalition, acquiring stakeholder buy-in, establishing and maintaining effective communications, and establishing clear responsibilities for moving forward. In implementation of this opportunity, it is imperative to ensure that all interested stakeholders have a voice in planning and implementation, that there is fair and equitable representation, and that all interests and voices are heard. It is hoped that this recommendation will be seriously considered by the NYS Canal Corporation and its many partners.

Each of the organizations referenced within this section below appear to have satisfactorily addressed these types of challenges in implementing their programs. Roles and responsibilities are very clearly defined and members are committed to following through on assigned tasks while building consensus and cooperation among all stakeholders. Perhaps elements of the past work of these organizations could be studied to inform the process of the creation of a system-wide coalition.
Coalition
Create a Coalition to Increase Information Sharing and Promote Best Practices

**Canal New York** is a private sector organization that was established in 2007 to serve and represent all canal communities in New York State and to partner with government, private businesses and organizations to support the growth, development and marketing of the canal. The management structure is a 16 member board that oversees activities of the organization. To date, there are 120 members from the private and the public sector that belong to Canal New York.¹

The **Canal Recreationway Commission** was created in 1992 by the New York State Legislature to advise the New York State Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation on canal-related activities. This commission is comprised of 24 members that represent state agencies and individuals involved in canal use, development, and local governments from counties adjacent to or intersected by the Canal System. The goals of this commission include preserving the best of the past, enhancing recreational opportunities along the Canal System, and fostering appropriate and sustainable economic development. This commission was responsible for creation of the 1995 Canal Recreationway Plan and the New York State Canal Revitalization Program, which focused on four major elements: canal harbors, canal service port and lock projects, the Canalway Trail and a Canal System marketing plan.²

**Canal Society of New York State** is a not-for-profit organization that was established in 1956 to foster study of the history of New York canals and their effect on the life and economy of the state, as well as to provide a means for exchange of information, to promote interest in the canals and to encourage the preservation of canal records, relics, structures and sites. The management structure of this organization is an 18 member board that oversees the activities of this organization, both public and private. In addition to housing a significant number of artifacts and collections relevant to the history of New York State Canals, the Canal Society of New York State organizes and sponsors trips to canal sites throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, as well as organizing events, conferences and forums such as the New York State Canal Conference and the yearly Canal Society Symposium. The Canal Society has also acted as a past sponsor of the World Canal Conference.³

---

The **Canalway Trails Association New York** is a volunteer organization operating under the not-for-profit status of Parks & Trails New York and which functions in partnership with the New York State Canal Corporation. This organization has a three-tiered organization structure: 1) A statewide Board of Directors that is comprised of representatives from each of the Regional Canalway Trail groups and 3 at-large members; 2) Regional Canalway Trail Groups – there are 12 regional groups which were formed by either county or other geographical considerations; and 3) Local Adopt-A-Trail groups – comprised of volunteers. The statewide board develops and implements the organization’s programs and initiatives and addresses trail issues and concerns from a statewide perspective. The Regional Canalway Trail group is involved in the planning, development and maintenance of specific segments of the Canalway Trail as well as recruiting and organizing local Adopt-A-Trail groups, organizing events and developing environmental and historic educational programs. Local Adopt-A-Trail groups help care for the Canalway Trail within their communities.4,5,6,7

**Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor** is managed by a 27-member federal commission and the not-for-profit Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, and receives staff support from the National Park Service. The Corridor spans 524 miles across upstate New York and includes the Erie Canal, the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, the Oswego and the Champlain Canals, and encompasses 234 municipalities adjoining this Canalway corridor. The mission of this organization is to unite and coordinate existing federal, state and local plans and multiple points of views, while focusing on partnerships that cross jurisdictional boundaries and build on mutual interests. They provide support, funding, technical assistance and in-kind services to others to assist in leveraging and implementing projects that advance the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Preservation and Management Plan. Additionally, they work to educate and communicate with decision makers, entrepreneurs and residents, and seek to establish a fundraising partner or foundation to develop support for implementation of the Plan.8,9

---


Hudson River Valley Greenway was established by the Hudson River Greenway Act of 1991 and is comprised of the Greenway Communities Council, which is funded through state appropriations and acts like a state agency, and the Greenway Conservancy, which is a public benefit corporation. The 1991 Act created a process for voluntary regional cooperation among the 264 communities within the 13 counties that border the Hudson River. The Hudson River Valley Greenway is a state-sponsored program created to facilitate the development of a regional strategy for the preservation of scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources, encouraging economic development while maintaining the tradition of home-rule for land use decision making. The management structure of this organization has three arms - the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council and an Advisory Board.10

Lakes to Locks Passage is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that was established in 2002 to further the appreciation, recognition, stewardship and revitalization of the natural, cultural, recreational and historic assets of the communities along the interconnected waterway of the Upper Hudson River/Champlain Canal, Lake George, Lake Champlain, Chambly Canal and Richelieu River. The management structure of this organization is a 20 member board, 5 officers and 2 staff persons. This group works to foster knowledge, research and investigation of the history and heritage of this interconnected waterway, as well as seeking grants and coordination of activities for garnering national and international recognition.11

Parks & Trails New York is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit that was established in 1985 by statewide parks advocates in order to fulfill their mission to expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open spaces throughout our state for use and enjoyment by all. The management structure includes a Board of Directors, an Advisory Council and 11 staff members. They partner with private business, media, tourism promotion agencies and the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor. They provide assistance in building a strong citizen constituency advocating for parks and trails to decision makers and the media, work with communities in planning and developing multi-use trails, manage and promote the 524-mile Canalway Trail, and work to increase accessibility to New York’s parks and trails.12

Coalition
Create a Coalition to Increase Information Sharing and Promote Best Practices

**Western Erie Canal Alliance** is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that was established in 2006 as the conduit through which the communities of the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor could connect to regional opportunities to preserve, sustain and promote their unique individualism into a strong united regional economy. The Alliance encompasses 47 historic communities within the counties of Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Monroe and Wayne. The management structure of this organization is the Western Erie Canal Alliance and the Western Erie Canal Advisory Committee, which is comprised of representatives from each of the five counties of the Alliance. This group provides education and training, resources, tools and advocacy, as well as coordinating the Western Erie Canal Main Street Program.13

**Western Erie Canal Main Street Program** was established in 2008 by the Western Erie Canal Alliance under the auspices of the National Trust Main Street Center to coordinate and assist in connecting all communities in the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor to develop and enhance regional quality of life, as well as to encourage resource conservation. The organizational structure of the Main Street Program is based on a comprehensive strategy known as the “Main Street Four-Point Approach” which encompasses four distinct areas: Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion and Organization, which works to not only divide the workload and clearly delineate responsibilities, but also to build consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.14,15

b. Create a web portal for coalition partners.
In order to support a system-wide coalition, Studio Members recommend the creation of collaborative platform for coalition partners. A web portal, housed in an easily accessible manner for partners, could greatly facilitate the sharing of information such as grant or funding opportunities, events, proposed or ongoing projects, success stories, best practices, a partner directory and community toolkits.16

---

14Western Erie Canal Main Street Program (2013). Retrieved from the Western Erie Canal Alliance website on November 28, 2014, from [http://www.westerneriecanal.com/#main-street-program/cee5](http://www.westerneriecanal.com/#main-street-program/cee5)
Not only would information across the system be more accessible to partners, but this type of collaborative tool could reduce the amount of staff time needed to coordinate and communicate with partners and support implementation of system-wide plans, including the updated NYS Canal Recreationway Plan.

Studio Members acknowledge that this type of web platform would require a significant upfront investment as well as a dedicated IT professional to update and provide maintenance to the site. In addition, the web platform would need to be taught to community members, requiring ongoing workshops or video training. Because many of the potential partners are older, having been involved with the canal for much of their lives, some may be uncomfortable with using the web, causing there to be some pushback or confusion. Still, Studio Members believe that these challenges could be overcome with membership fees (addressed below) that help pay for the platform and education on the use of the technology. Overtime, the benefits of having such a tool would outweigh the costs.

c. Structure funding for coalition based on membership dues.
Funding is always of tantamount concern. Many organizations already in operation along the Canal System have built-in funding mechanisms. The most common fee structure implemented are pre-determined “membership dues”, fees which are structured at various levels of participation. Because community population and proximity to a canal varies across the system, a fee-based structure based either on population size or water/canal frontage is suggested to ensure equity.
Historic song and legend have made the canal a significant part of our national heritage. A ceremony marking the state Barge Canal being listed on the National Register of Historic Places occurred on October 22, 2014. Returning the nationally significant waterway to its former glory encourages recreation and tourism. “Environmental Stewardship is one of our primary responsibilities at the Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation,” according to Executive Director Thomas J. Madison on June 17, 2014. “We have the great privilege and responsibility of maintaining one of our nation’s premier engineering marvels, and a large part of that responsibility is respecting the environment around the Canal System,” according to former Canal Corporation Chairman Howard P. Milstein, on June 17, 2014. No matter how long something’s been done one way, there’s always an opportunity to do it a better way” said New York State Senator Joseph Griffo. The success of the Canal Recreationway is dependent upon the natural and man-made resources that have made canaling a unique and magical experience since the time of DeWitt Clinton. Consideration for health and safety thereby enables responsible promotion of the Canal System as a source for recreation, drinking water, fishing, tourism, and wildlife protection. For these and many other reasons, caring for the environment of which the canal is comprised, as an integrated, sustainable system, is an important opportunity.

a. Work with appropriate partners to develop a strategy to improve water quality throughout the entire Canal System to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act’s "fishable, swimmable" goals.

Some of the Canal System waterways still do not meet the Clean Water Act’s mandate of "fishable, swimmable" despite the fact that nationally required levels of pollution control technology have been implemented. For example, the Hudson River at Waterford and above the Mohawk River have had multiple instances of sampling above EPA thresholds of effluent limitations in 2014 alone, according to the Quality Assurance Project Plan.

---

Environment

Protect, Foster, and Preserve the Natural Environment

According to the EPA’s website\(^{24}\): The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires states to identify waters that are not “fishable/swimmable” and to develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for them, with oversight from the EPA. These TMDLs play a key role in watershed management. The Federal Clean Water Act made it unlawful to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit is obtained under its provisions. Water quality standards are set for all contaminants in surface waters. It prohibits an unacceptable adverse effect on municipal water supplies, shellfish beds, fishery areas, wildlife, or recreational uses. It requires that states develop toxic waters cleanup strategies and the application of “best available technology” as well as discharge standards to support public health. The law also recognizes nonpoint source management control programs, on a watershed basis, and the need for planning to address these critical problems.

b. Retrofit the entire New York State Canal Corporation’s work boat fleet to an all-electric powertrain system.

The Studio Members recognize an opportunity to build upon an existing pilot program by continuing to retrofit the New York State Canal Corporation’s work boat fleet to an all-electric, cleaner powertrain system, while respecting the historical value of the current fleet. This pilot program supports Governor Cuomo’s initiative to promote cleaner transportation resources by increasing the use of zero-emission vehicles in the transportation sector. It is also delivers on Governor Cuomo’s important commitment to transform the energy industry into a more resilient, clean, cost-effective and dynamic system. These combined efforts will preserve, rehabilitate, and revitalize the Canal Recreationway system infrastructure, enhance recreational opportunities for water and land-based users and promote tourism. In addition, Studio Members encourage the effort to enhance transportation access and provide additional multimodal connections as alternative forms of zero-emission transportation, such as the Canalway Water Trail for non-motorized boaters/paddlers.

---

c. Designate all waters of the 524-mile Canal System, as a “no waste-discharge zone”.
The Studio Members support designation of all waters of the 524-mile Canal System, as a “no waste-discharge zone” due to its explicit use as drinking water to 220,000 people\textsuperscript{25}, fishing, wildlife, and recreational uses. As of May 2010, the entire New York State Canal System is a “no discharge zone” to boaters, which means that boats are banned from discharging sewage into the canals.\textsuperscript{26} While every measure helps, for industrial and research facilities, sewage and wastewater treatment plants, etc., loophole exception carve-outs exist for those areas where the proper permitting provisions are obtained, and meet pretreatment standards through achievement of the effluent limitations in its permit.\textsuperscript{27} The problem is that many of these permitted exceptions are not consistently and continuously meeting the effluent limitations.\textsuperscript{28} This puts at risk municipal water supplies, shellfish beds and fishery areas, wildlife, or recreational uses along the canal.

One existing program attempting to address such issues includes the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) which has taken the lead role in organizing a consortium to develop a comprehensive inter-municipal Long-Term Control Plan (LTCP) for Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO: overflows from combined storm and sanitary sewers) discharging into the Hudson River Estuary.\textsuperscript{29} Total flows exceed the capacity of the combined sewer system or the treatment plant.\textsuperscript{30} Water quality standards requirements of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), as set out by the EPA through the Clean Water Act, often surpass maximum allowable effluent limits. This presents a health and safety risk to the public water supply, recreational uses, wildlife and fish. Responsible promotion of these activities to capitalize on opportunities are subsequently diminished.

d. Responsibly promote environmentally significant wildlife habitat preservation and management areas to provide additional opportunities for recreational tourism.
The Studio Members support the Canal Corporation working with partners to promote responsible, environmentally significant wildlife habitat preservation and management areas to provide additional opportunities for recreational tourism, such as birding and other “watchable wildlife” activities.

The Studio Members believe this requires an implementation program for the restoration and maintenance of the integrity of wetlands and other important conservation areas. Wildlife or habitat conservation corridors promote habitat protection of significant wildlife and natural ecosystems. Continuation and expansion of conservation efforts is recommended. Along the canal/riparian embankment, Studio Members suggest the protection and maintenance of recreational/aesthetic view sheds; especially where there are extensive open stretches along the waterway, both to and from the canal. The Studio Members encourage the conservation of open space and protection of significant topographical features. DEC has a guide to some of the natural resources along the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation has an abundance of information on Bird Conservation Areas.

e. Work with partners to continue remediation of brownfields located along the canal to create opportunities for canal oriented development in canalside communities.

The Studio Members support continued efforts working with partners in brownfield remediation. This not only improves the aesthetic value of the canal but can also draw people to an area. Under the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program, the New York State Department of State (DOS) provides financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations. Funding can be used to complete revitalization plans and implementation strategies for areas affected by the presence of brownfield sites. Therefore, the opportunity exists to offer scenic places along the waterfront for people to enjoy which can contribute to community development. One example of remediation along the New York State Barge Canal is Paper Mill Island Park in Baldwinsville, Onondaga County. This site served for approximately a hundred years as a paper mill, followed by numerous industrial/commercial enterprises until it was abandoned in the 1980’s. The Studio Members support addressing this issue system-wide along the canal. Incorporating parks and other open space concepts are discussed in further detail in the Canalway Trail section of this report.

---

f. Educate communities on the economic impact of environmental stewardship.
The EPA states, “[e]xperience with the Clean Air Act since 1970 has shown that protecting public health and building the economy can go hand in hand.” The EPA also asserts their “[a]ctions to implement the Clean Air Act have achieved dramatic reductions in air pollution, preventing hundreds of thousands of cases of serious health effects each year.” The Hudson River Valley Greenway is another example of New York, as a home rule state, accomplishing desired outcomes of bringing communities voluntarily within a set of environmentally acceptable standards. The Studio Members support educating local communities on the potential economic development opportunities associated with environmental stewardship.

g. Continue to monitor and report PCBs.
Environmental dredging is performed to reduce the exposure of fish, wildlife, and people to contaminants, and to prevent the spread of contaminants to other areas of the water body. These pollutants are introduced to waterways from point sources such as sewer overflows, municipal and industrial discharges, and spills; or may be introduced from nonpoint sources such as surface runoff. Since the early 1980s, New York State has been unable to dredge the navigation channel in the Hudson River portion of the Champlain Canal due to the presence of sediments contaminated with PCBs. This recommendation is discussed in further detail in the infrastructure section of this report. Holding polluters accountable and responsible for environmental dredging and its ripple effects on navigational dredging, and thus economic development, is an ongoing challenge; one for which the Studio Members and the participants at the public meeting both expressed concern for.

---

A July 2006 report by the Hudson River Natural Resources Damage Trustees, a group representing the U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, declared that the surface waters and navigational channel of the Hudson River were injured by the presence of PCBs in the sediment. For the NYS Canal Corporation to allow for future safe recreational uses and/or continued commercial shipping in the Champlain Canal, continued monitoring and reporting is recommended by the Studio Members.

**h. Seek additional funding for environmental stewardship and pursue improved accountability.**

In order for the Canal Recreationway to be promoted in a responsible manner for recreational and tourism uses, management and funding of environmental resources and planning for purpose of public safety is paramount. To maintain the public confidence and a high standard of integrity and conduct, Studio Members recommend increased transparency and enhancing public disclosure. “It is the policy of the New York State Thruway Authority and any subsidiary corporations thereof to govern and to have its employees govern themselves in an ethical manner consistent with law…”

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) strategy addresses water quality needs by funding the construction of sewage treatment plants. New York State’s CWSRF is jointly administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC). The Studio Members recommend the Canal Corporation and its partners support the EPA and apply the CWSRF to its legally intended purpose of constructing or rehabilitating sewage treatment plants and wastewater treatment facilities, especially in communities that are currently discharging point source pollutants that exceed regulatory levels. This funding can be allowed up to the full cost of the project.

---


The funding also covers projects including stormwater management, the closure of landfills, and habitat restoration and preservation projects that protect marine life. Making full use of this funding source for these intended purposes discontinues further and future water quality degradation and ensures that the designated uses are protected. The Studio Members support capitalizing the full range of these, and all other, opportunities associated with environmental stewardship.

The Studio Members suggest working with partners to ensure strong monitoring to protect the responsible use of this federal funding source, specifically to address water quality based environmental concerns so that funds are being used as efficiently and effectively as possible for their intended purposes. Health and safety must be considered a leading factor in the planning process when attempting to update a recreation plan for the purpose of promoting tourism.

Public servants effectively carry out their responsibilities when fairness and due process are honored in providing honest services to the public. The Studio Members suggest an expanded oversight role, and appropriate training and reporting mechanisms for violations. Acting solely in the public interest should help in restoring citizens’ confidence as well as enhance the public’s view of State government. The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct states, “We shall not, as public officials or employees, engage in private communications with planning process participants if the discussions relate to a matter over which we have authority to make a binding, final determination if such private communications are prohibited by law or by agency rules, procedures, or custom.” Therefore, we agree with the NYS Canal Corporation when they state, “[s]uccessful implementation [of] environmental stewardship requires that all Authority/Corporation employees take on the role of environmental stewards.”

---


Lead the charge by “adapting our century-old infrastructure to provide cleaner and more efficient service to our customers and neighbors along New York’s Canal corridor”, stated Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton on June 17, 2014.\textsuperscript{51} Infrastructure is defined as the basic physical components of interrelated systems and organizational structures needed for an operation which facilitates the production, and distribution of goods and services. The term typically refers to the technical structures that support a society, including roads, bridges, ports, bicycle paths, pedestrian walkways, curbside landscaping, etc. all of which are encompassed by the New York State Canal System and its accompanying Recreationway. The canal’s most basic elements are its waters, the surrounding land and its man-made structures.\textsuperscript{52} The often-repeated statement that water is the most destructive force in nature certainly holds relevance in context to the water based nature of the Canal System.

Some areas of the Barge canal are at or near a hundred years in operation. In order to meet the demands that any infrastructure project intends to provide, maintenance must be of critical importance to ward against the effects of time and degradation processes. This is an eventual imperative, as nothing is permanent. Few, if any other priorities can occur if the canal is not functioning. Proper, safe, effective, and efficient operation of the canal infrastructure - the walls, locks, pumps, indeed the water itself, as well as all those items listed above, defines a challenging set of interrelated systems, some of which currently date to well beyond their original designed lifespan. Every major city in New York State was historically founded upon and grew along the 524 miles of the Canal System or its adjacent waterways. The Canal System passes through 25 counties and nearly 200 villages, hamlets and towns.\textsuperscript{53} There exists an urgent need to maintain and modernize New York State’s aging canal infrastructure.

a. Plan for extreme weather events.
New York State has had three 100-year weather events since 2011. This is defined as those that have a 1% probability of occurring in any given year. These three alone occurred within a two year period (Hurricane Irene: $16.6 billion in 2011 USD, Tropical Storm Lee: $1.6 billion in 2011 USD, and Hurricane Sandy: at least $68 billion in 2012 USD). In fact, there have been nine federally declared disasters in New York State in the prior three year period.\textsuperscript{54}


Planning for future extreme weather events and implementing strategies to minimize their effects makes more financial sense than not. In Section c. below, Studio Members go into more depth on how to increase system resilience.

b. Improve canal navigation through dredging.
There are noteworthy opportunities for the commercial shipping industry to flourish. This will require navigational channel dredging for sediment management to accommodate tonnage increases in cargo. Dredging is the removal of sediments and debris from the bottom of lakes, rivers, harbors, and other water bodies. It is a routine necessity in waterways because sedimentation, the natural process of sand and silt washing downstream, gradually fills channels and harbors.\textsuperscript{55} Navigational dredging would also better facilitate recreational boats.

Sediment that has been removed from the Canal System is routinely reused for both public and private benefit. Through Beneficial Use Determinations (BUD) received from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, sediment has been reused for a wide variety of applications.\textsuperscript{56} Since the early 1980s, New York State has not been able to maintain the navigation channel in the Hudson River portion of the Champlain Canal due to the presence of sediments contaminated with PCBs.\textsuperscript{57} Canal Corporation analysis indicates that the EPA-directed remediation projects currently underway will address less than 15\% of the navigational dredging needs in the Champlain Canal. The remaining 85\% of the navigational dredging would presumably have to be conducted by the Canal Corporation at great cost.\textsuperscript{58}

This was an issue of concern for the participants at the Lakes to Locks Passage Annual Meeting. Studio Members recommend the Canal Corporation pursue all legally available recourses. There is opportunity in requiring that polluters complete all necessary navigational dredging in the damaged waterways and compensate for Canal Recreationway related economic development losses in the surrounding upstate communities, which were and continue to be hindered.\textsuperscript{59} Studio Members also recommend regular scheduled maintenance dredging to widen locks to their fullest capacity, and providing more boat launch points along the canal to create additional opportunities. Without the increased dredging of the Canal System, the safety of recreational boaters and anyone directly utilizing the canal is threatened, making the Canal System less attractive as a whole to potential recreational uses and tourists.

c. Build system resilience through additional detention/retention storage volume. All projects planned for the canal are suggested with sensitivity to water management issues. Studio Members see floodplain management as an opportunity area of particular importance given the expected increase in extreme weather related events. Most canal owned lands are located in flood plains. NYSDEC regulations mandate that certain agencies manage state owned lands to meet floodplain management requirements. Building system-wide structural and non-structural flood control resiliency projects along the Canal System as early as possible provides for less disaster related damage in the future. Flood control efforts included projects such as modified channels, floodwalls, levees, ponding areas and various drainage structures as needed. As part of this resiliency effort, Studio Members highly recommend strengthening the workforce necessary to be dedicated specifically to watershed hydrology management using “best available technology.” Hydrology is a science. Hydrologic models can predict with relative accuracy, those areas of potential flooding during rain events. It is suggested that actions be taken to regulate the flow volume in the system during such events so as to minimize the potential for flooding and the need for disaster relief.

Studio Members recommend the responsible establishment of comprehensive water level operating guidelines throughout the entire Canal System. The Canal Corporation is currently in the process of creating an early flood warning/detection system cooperatively with the University at Albany. The concept consists of a series of monitors to provide early indication of flood conditions. This will allow implementation of an integrated strategy to open/close specific elements of the Canal System. It will also provide information to early responders at various levels of government so that determinations can be made to prevent damage to roads/bridges/structures and when it may be necessary to evacuate people. Studio Members suggest the implementation of just such an aggressively proactive approach to saving lives and communities.

To minimize the severe damaging impacts related to flooding and storm runoff, or severe drought conditions, continuous and careful monitoring of weather related water level conditions throughout the Canal System are recommended. There are efforts underway within the Hudson and Mohawk River watersheds to monitor stream elevations. At Lock 8 there is an "Ice Jam Cam" between December and April which monitors the ice jams along the Mohawk, which have historically caused flooding in the Stockade Area of Schenectady. This is part of a project in partnership with USGS, Union College and DEC’s Mohawk River Basin Program.

Opportunities also exist to build additional detention and/or retention storage volume into the system for waters to accumulate and regulate the flow volume release. Studio Members suggest utilizing the opportunity to compartmentalize areas of the Canal System. This will facilitate the ability to lower levels in different areas in advance of summer rainfall, or spring snowmelt, for example.

The opportunity exists to regulate water levels to provide reserve capacity sufficient to contain updated standard levels of runoff posed by the increased severity of extreme weather events. It is suggested that municipal water supplies be given the highest priority to ensure a stable, reliable water supply throughout low water summer months. Navigation levels and critical habitat concerns also drive target levels toward the high side of the range to ensure against damage to delicate natural resources.

Partnerships to include in the endeavor of attempting to preemptively respond to storm systems require close coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Weather Service, the U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers, the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Ultimately though, NYSDEC is New York State’s flood plain management agency and is the state’s coordinating agency for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The New York State Canal System spans 524 miles comprising four historic waterways, and many natural lakes and rivers. It is a delicate balance, not only regarding flooding but also regarding critical habitats, navigation, irrigation, etc. Even when a storm is known to be heading to an area, the exact amount of water produced from a rainfall event, at the exact locations cannot always be predicted completely accurately. This is especially true in New York State where the watershed is such that rainfall on the other side of a hill or mountain region can completely change the outfall location. While hydrology can be very predictive, weather patterns can be less predictable. It is a constant balancing of needs between competing interests for target water level ranges.

d. Reconstruct and rehabilitate canal walls.

Studio Members see opportunities in emphasizing an integrated, informed history with infrastructure development. The NYS Canal System historically has and continues to impact New York State; there are many adjacent locations and buildings that could be highlighted and/or repurposed. There are also many structural pieces that could be preserved. Original canal walls, and foundations, could be restored or repurposed. Maintaining and caring for these pieces will allow more opportunity for education and interest in those areas.

These improvements will help canal communities. An important opportunity recommendation is the installment of additional visitor centers and other amenities at locks. Such additions would help provide users with knowledge of the local area, showcase local points of interest, businesses and services, and increase intermodal connections.
Infrastructure
Maintain the Canal System Infrastructure and Build in Resilience Against the Effects of Extreme Weather

As a result, revitalizing canal infrastructure into a more resilient system is imperative and can enhance recreational opportunities for both water and land-based users as well as promote tourism. Studio Members recommend addressing a host of canal related infrastructure maintenance related items regarding the condition and scarcity of boat launch points, canal ports, docks, marinas, visitor centers, and hydraulic bridges. Studio Members suggest implementing a program of installing solar recharging stations at ports for electric boats and for boaters to recharge electronics. Studio Members also suggest specific infrastructure maintenance programs or projects for the Canal System and/or canal communities including stormwater management, wastewater control projects, brownfield remediation, all of which have been described previously in the Environment section of this report.

Studio Members recommend capitalizing on local public education about the Canal System’s importance. This can restore an appreciation for New York’s historic Canal System and its role in making New York the “Empire State.” It may also serve to educate the public to the fact that construction of the canal was responsible for establishing the very first civil engineering program in the nation in Troy, NY. Some might consider this accomplishment a source of pride for New York State.
Studio members recommend that the Canal Corporation invest in certain amenities and facilities to improve the experience of the average canal visitor. These investments will require funding that presently may not be available. Partnerships with public and private organizations can combine resources and leverage funding. Some of these could be done with little cost, while others would be more expensive, long-term investments. Stakeholders agree that in order for the Canal System to compete with destinations on a regional and international level, investments have to be made. Among the ‘wish list’ items expressed were expanding Wi-Fi services, introducing shuttle services for boat travelers, improving harbors/docks, and providing basic amenities like bathrooms, showers, and picnic tables.

**a. Expand Wi-Fi services.**
Wi-Fi access is already provided at many of the harbors, public docks, visitors’ centers, and private businesses along the canal.\(^62\) Partnering with more local governments and businesses can expand this amenity to other areas that do not currently have it. This investment would enhance travelers’ experience and safety. Some areas along the canal lack 4G, or high-level cell phone service. Providing this service would allow boaters and cyclists to access the Internet on their phones to research nearby businesses and services. The New York State Thruway, who owns and runs the Canal Corp, has experience in providing Wi-Fi along the Thruway. These services are provided for free at all 27 Thruway Travel Plazas.\(^63\) This expertise and experience could be utilized to expand Wi-Fi at the canal’s harbors, marinas, and other highly traveled areas.

**b. Provide shuttle and ferry services.**
A landside shuttle service will serve boaters visiting canal communities. When a boater docks on the canal, some of the village and town centers are separated from the canal by some distance. A participant in the input session at the Lakes to Locks Annual Meeting, a local government official, described how he personally drives boaters from the docks in his village to downtown Saratoga Springs in order to take advantage of the restaurants and stores there. This amenity will connect boaters with canal towns and businesses. While too expensive for system wide adoption, targeted shuttles during special events at the largest harbors or towns could serve many people in a short period of time.

A ferry service connecting popular waterfront areas could cross-promote sites, improve visitation and increase spending. A private company with all-day access passes and partnerships with the 9/11 Memorial Museum and the Statue of Liberty have successfully implemented this idea in New York City.\(^64\) These recommendations are discussed in further detail in the upcoming multimodal section.

---


c. Continue to build harbors and marinas, while considering their effect on similar private businesses.

The development of canal harbors that emerged from the original 1995 plan have had mixed success. The experience of communities like Fairport and Waterford should be shared with and expanded to other parts of the system. Events like Fairport’s “Canal Days” and Waterford’s “Tugboat Roundup” are extremely popular and successful. These events are community organized and are the result of partnerships between those local communities, the state, and private businesses. The potential partnership opportunities for canal communities to participate in the harbors program is essential because the most successful harbors are in communities that not only welcomed them, but also have a stake in the process.

There is concern among some in the canal community that publicly offered marinas and docks are unfair competition to private marinas. The public marinas and launch-sites are usually free, while the private businesses charge, this pressures the private services to lower prices and some of them have closed in response. The recommendation is not to get rid of the public services altogether, but to charge a nominal fee for them, especially if they are close to a private competitor. This would not only level the playing field but also provide a source of revenue to provide some of the amenities described in this section.

d. Invest in basic amenities.

On a more basic level, the Canal Corp should invest in long-term, small-scale infrastructure improvements that would improve the experience of the canal’s visitors. These include more public bathrooms, showers for boaters and other overnight travelers, picnic tables, bike racks, more food options, and trashcans. An ongoing commitment of this type should be carefully planned and evaluated to ensure that resources are not wasted. These types of investments, while not as visible as others, would improve the experience of the most visitors to the Canal System.

Large-scale improvements can sometimes lead to controversy and community upheaval. Questions about financing, implementation, and the effects on the community from gentrification can plague large projects. Smaller investments can benefit communities in ways that don’t radically change and/or uproot residents yet still be measurable in their effects.65

---

The 1995 New York State Canal Recreationway Plan defines the Canal Recreationway as “a linear park to be developed for boating and other recreational use, taking advantage of the Canal’s historic heritage, conserving its beauty and natural character, and utilizing recreationway improvements to enhance the economic development potential of the Canal.” An instrumental component in the completion of a linear park is the Canalway Trail. The 1995 Recreationway Plan identified the Canalway Trail as a priority project, and significant progress has been achieved to date. Completing the Canalway Trail would be a notable accomplishment for the NYS Canal Corporation.

The major function of a linear park is its ability to increase accessibility between recreational destinations and other community facilities. As presented in the New York Statewide Trails Plan (December 2010), trails provide tremendous benefits to communities and individuals. They improve access to healthy activities, serve as a community development tool, offer educational opportunities, and support a sense of pride among community members.

Considering the important geographical characteristics of the canal as a continuous system running through upstate New York, completing the end-to-end Canalway Trail would enhance landside access along the entire length of the canal. This would further the goal articulated in the New York State Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2019: "Continue to develop a comprehensive, interconnected recreation-way, water trails, greenway, and blueway trail system.”

In 2014, the need to provide multi-use trails as a community amenity is greater than ever. As is outlined by the New York State Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2019, the demographics of the NYS population are changing. The median age is increasing state-wide. With the aging of the population, "walking for enjoyment--including jogging/day hiking--is now the recreation activity enjoyed by most New York residents.”

---

Completing the Canalway Trail and increasing connectivity should be a critical theme in the updated Canal Recreationway Plan. The Canalway Trail has been cited during stakeholder interviews and by Lakes to Locks Passage meeting participants as a priority task, as well as a project that has demonstrated significant successes. The complete end-to-end Canalway Trail presents a significant accomplishment, not only for its recreation opportunities, but also as a tool to facilitate and increase connectivity along the Canal Recreationway system, and between the Canal System and landside communities. Connectivity between the Canalway Trail, downtowns/historic Main Streets, and cultural attractions will draw more and more visitors to the Canal System, which consequently leads to the cultural and economic prosperity of canal communities.

**a. Connect the Canalway Trail with educational resources and historic attractions.**

The Canalway Trail is a marketable component of the Canal System, providing such great opportunities as making the canal more visible to visitors, connecting various locations and providing additional connections to the Canal System. As part of the Economic Impact Report-East Region Case Study, a survey was conducted at historic and cultural sites throughout the canal corridor. Respondents were asked “What brought them to the site today?” The top response was recreational activity, garnering 148 responses. Following behind was historic/cultural resources, with 110 responses. 61% of visitors came to the corridor for a specific historic site or event. While these events and attractions serve as the major draw for canal users, the Canalway Trail can facilitate connectivity between sites and communities. Providing information about the recreational opportunities at these sites and events can encourage users to visit the Canalway Trail. As a result, canal users can be pushed by marketing and informational guides along the trail to other attractions. The Canal Corporation should explore opportunities to increase the connection between recreation and historic/cultural uses throughout the corridor.

---


b. Build upon the previous success of the Canalway Trail to promote year-round recreational opportunities.

To date, the Canalway Trail demonstrates significant progress with 287 off-road miles complete. The Canalway Trail excels in a traditional bike-hike trail function, however there are opportunities to expand recreational activities. It is essential to encourage winter usage of the canal. The Canalway Trail could be used for passive recreation such as cross country skiing, and snowshoeing. Other uses that should be explored include snowmobiling. A trail usage that is determined at the municipal level. Utilizing the oversight of a coalition, canal communities at different stages of developing recreational amenities could provide best practices to other municipalities looking to do the same (This recommendation was discussed in further detail in the Coalition section).

c. Demonstrate the value of completing gaps in the Canalway Trail and the economic benefits that would accrue to trailside communities.

The Economic Impact Report-East Region Case Study and the Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail provide significant data and economic impacts of the NYS Canal System and Canalway Trail.73 Capitalizing on this information provides some insights and support for the completion of the trail. On a yearly basis, the Canalway Trail attracts 1.6 million visitors. Seventy percent of users visit the canal trail for a day-trip, and 80% are from New York State. The impact of this tourist traffic is $253 million in sales revenue, the creation of 3,440 jobs, $78 million in labor income, and $28.5 million in taxes.74 Detailing this information and providing it to municipalities provides significant leverage to complete remaining segments of the trail.

d. Integrate Canalway Trail easements into the comprehensive plans, and small-area plans for canalside cities, towns, and villages.

After neighboring communities have gained a better understanding of the economic impacts of the Canalway Trail, partnering with the communities to achieve success becomes a key priority. In areas where barriers remain, it is important to implement the Canalway Trail during key planning stages. These key stages would be during updates to regional plans, local comprehensive plans, or the creation of small-area plans. One way to facilitate this integration would be offering grants to communities to complete such plans.

---


The NYS Canal Corporation could stipulate funding guidelines that would require easements for a Canalway Trail. Integrating the Canalway Trail into formal planning processes provides a strong foundation and encourages appropriate zoning to follow. One example would be the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and associated grants.

**Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP):** Implemented by the Department of State, LWRP participation results in a plan and program intended to guide waterfront development and harbor management. As a component of New York State’s Coastal Management Program, LWRPs strive to balance a variety of conflicting uses. A successful waterfront plan will serve as a consensus document detailing the role of passive and active recreation, commercial use, natural resources, climate change, and multiple regulating authorities.

LWRP serves as one successful model for waterfront development. It is a program that could be replicated (as appropriate) by the NYS Canal Corporation, but with a focus on just canalside communities. Designing a grant program that requires a planning component would establish the foundation for future trail construction. Planning for a trail allows zoning to follow and sets precedence for the future use of easements. Incentivizing the planning process, and demonstrating the economic impact of the trail to decision-makers at the community level, encourages the completion of the Canalway Trail. Once the Canalway Trail has been completed, it can achieve its potential as a recreational amenity that encourages connectivity between historic/cultural attractions and canalside communities.

---

Multimodal Connections
Develop and Expand Multimodal Connections Within and Between Canal Communities

Studio Members recommend that connections within and between canal communities be strengthened, or in some cases, created. There remains a gap in corridor planning that fully addresses multimodal considerations and community development issues. It has been noticed that many of these communities would benefit from economic and community development that multimodal access, via both land and water, would provide. Increased boating would attract a variety of people who enjoy motorized boating and/or non-motorized; this combined with water taxis/ferries and shuttle services would offer users a greater opportunity to visit multiple canal communities. Access to points along the canal by car, bus, and train would also provide visitors and tourists with greater prospects of places to visit, while having the ability to attract people located further away. Visitors and locals would both gain by increasing the number of motorized and non-motorized options that would allow them to enjoy the NYS Canal System Recreationway.

a. Develop and expand multimodal connections via waterways.
Connecting canal communities via waterways and providing access to more multimodal services has been mentioned as a tool to help promote the use of the New York State Canal System in the 1995 New York State Canal Recreationway Plan. Many stakeholders and public participants believe that raising awareness of the Canal System is critical to its success; providing increased access and activities will help in marketing this asset. Working with partners to develop and expand these connections will establish a sustainable, end-to-end, multi-use transportation network that will attract a variety of users and tourists. These opportunities will provide communities with the benefits of increased traffic which will in turn increase economic development, while preventing congestion at access conflict points.

Expand upon non-motorized boating: It is shown that there is an increase in public interest in existing and potential water trails, which is a good way to keep people active and promote public health. The Canalway Water Trail is a part of a growing system of water trails across New York State, both the Eastern Erie Canal and Champlain Canal locations join up with the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail, which was designated a National Water Trail by the United States Department of Interior in 2012.76 The use of canoes, kayaks, rowboats, racing shells, and other non-motorized boats is increasing, and there are studies finding that there is substantial economic impact from this type of recreation.77 The Canal Corporation should promote the fact that there are currently no permits or fees required for non-motorized boats locking through the canal to further encourage this type of recreational activity. It is important to clarify to users that in order to maintain the health of these waterways, boats and fishing equipment need to be properly cleaned to prevent the spread of invasive species.78

Expand upon motorized boating: Boating is a primary recreational activity on the Canal System, and the opportunity to observe boats is also a major attraction. Using boating as a means of transportation or activity is yet another way to expand the use of the canal while also drawing interest from locals and tourists. The Canal System offers tremendous opportunities for services that can be transported from town to town by boat. These services might include a floating museum, performing arts/cinema barge, more educational boats, or a festival market for local produce, crafts and flea markets. By coordinating with local canal communities as to when events or festivals are being held, municipalities would be able to capitalize on these events, which would enliven both the canal and the local ports. Continuing with the idea of alternate transportation and connecting canal communities is the option of water taxis and/or ferries. This was suggested in the 1995 Plan and would provide a way for communities to work together and engage local businesses. A water taxi/ferry could be available at scheduled times as alternative means of public transportation, possibly only on weekends and for canal events at the launch of the amenity, and would link individuals across the state. The captain and crew will be able to share information on places to visit at the various stops, coordinate with businesses to promote specific venues, and provide history on the communities. These boats also allocate advertising opportunities; those interested can buy space to market themselves on the side of the boat, similar to any taxi. New York City has a successful water taxi/ferry service that provides many different tours throughout their harbors and would be a good model to follow.

Expanding and increasing multimodal transportation within and between communities has many benefits that will help to promote the NYS Canal System as a world-class destination and provide canal communities with an increase in economic development that will help spark community development. However, it is important to keep in mind that these recommendations do not come without challenges. Increasing the non-motorized boating market will require portage routes around locks, campsites, and boater regulations, which limit wakes, especially in narrow canal sections. An increase in non-motorized and motorized boat rentals requires more access to the water and the same applies to those who own a boat; more boat-launch sites at convenient locations would need to be provided as well as boater facilities. The challenge of creating more sites is funding; launch sites are often provided by, operated, and maintained by local communities. Perhaps it could be structured where the increase in rentals and a modest launch or parking fee could help offset costs. Day trips or excursion boats with on-board activities already exist on the canal; increasing marketing will help augment this attraction. Creating a water-taxi/ferry system would require collaboration between many communities statewide to establish an entity to lead this initiative.

Multimodal Connections
Develop and Expand Multimodal Connections Within and Between Canal Communities

Dredging is also an important consideration, and the recommendations are discussed in further detail in the infrastructure section; without the proper points of entry it would be difficult to rely on varying means of water transportation.

b. Develop and expand multimodal connections via landside access.
The Canalway Trail recommendations were discussed in further detail in the trail section, however it is significant to note its importance of expanding multimodal transportation within communities while providing access to other communities along the canal. It should accommodate a variety of uses, the more options that are available the more likely it will attract various users both near and far, too many locations along the canal. Working with partners to connect the land and water together is especially important in order to accommodate the many needs of users.

Shuttle Service
Having a shuttle service available to both water and land users of the Canal System will better encourage those interested to use the canal as a recreationway. It makes end-to-end day hikes possible for hiking parties that only have one car and is a service many people would appreciate. The shuttle would also create the same accommodations for those boating along the canal with non-motorized boats. People will have the chance to experience more along the canal without worrying about turning around. For motorized boaters traveling through New York and stopping at ports it provides the option to get off the boat and enter the community. Many times travelers are unfamiliar with the various attractions nestled inland, however that does not mean they are not interested in having a nice night out. It is not possible to have shuttles sitting and waiting for potential users, so having a shuttle phone at main points of access and partnering with the water taxi service would make this more of a possibility.

Vehicle entry
Expanding access landside is especially important to build upon for car entry; proximity of the canal to the New York State Thruway provides a significant opportunity to attract motorists and bus excursions. The New York State Thruway provides transportation for over 250 million vehicles a year\(^6\) and the closeness of the canals to the Thruway and Northway creates significant opportunities to provide additional canal access and market the Canal System to highway travelers. Attracting these travelers into communities at the various access points will not only provide an economic benefit for these communities, it will provide an increased awareness of activities along the canal, whether by using the trail or waterway.

Furthermore, provided there is proper signage, the additional traffic can be directed to historically significant and scenic highways to increase tourism by either personal vehicle or bus excursion. Creating access to bus companies encourages bus tours throughout New York State from locations all over the U.S. and provides individuals with the opportunity of chartering a bus to various locations along the canal. It is important to keep in mind that many of the small communities are unable to house a bus tour of people at one location, so developing lodging to accommodate tourism is critical.
Multimodal Connections
Develop and Expand Multimodal Connections
Within and Between Canal Communities

**Rail access**

Trips by rail should also be encouraged, as they would connect major points along the canal and provide boaters, hikers, and cyclists a fast and convenient way to visit the Canal System. Currently Amtrak is developing relationships with public officials and local communities to rebuild and revitalize stations as part of the Great American Stations project because a well-planned station is one of the best investments a community can make as it seeks to expand tourism. Enhancing multimodal transportation and access, both to and along the Canal System will provide NYS the opportunity to increase tourism options and locations; driving a significant economic impact.

In addition to improving upon existing resources, the Canal Corporation should consider collaborating with partners to expand upon their offerings. For example, the Canal Corporation could collaborate with the Department of Environmental Conservation to help provide and maintain launch sites. Expanding on the partnership with I Love NY, and possibly I Love NY Canals, provides an opportunity to increase marketing for floating services and expand on additional services with water taxis/ferries to improve linkages between canal communities. I Love NY is a good marketing tool to build recognition of this unique asset. Another useful collaboration would be between the Canal Corporation and local not-for-profits, flea and farmers markets, as well as with dining and entertainment facilities to help fund alternate water activities and can be encouraged as part of the Canal Landings projects. Water taxi/ferry service may consider coordinating with land taxi companies, museums and other places of interest to create relationships statewide. Providing more landside access presents partnerships with AAA, Yankee Trails, Greyhound, and Amtrak that will allow for day and overnight trips that can provide passenger discounts, regional tour packages, and multi-ride tickets to explore an array of waterside municipalities.

The New York State Canal System is a unique asset that should be more holistically utilized. There are several opportunities that are offered and can be expanded on to create the recognition of a world-class destination that it deserves. The challenges have been touched upon for each means of transportation but the benefits for Canal System recognition, tourism, and economic development between communities would be priceless. By strengthening and building partnerships, combined with knowledge of the foreseen benefits, it is likely many communities would appreciate the opportunity for increased access and linkages with one another.

---

Linkages
Create New and Develop Existing Informational Linkages Among Points of Interest Along the Canal System

To further promote the Canal System we highly recommend that the NYS Canal Corporation invest in informational resources and partnerships that thematically link points of interest along the canal. Canal stakeholder interviewees and Lakes to Locks Annual Meeting participants indicated an interest in increasing information provision and linkages along the canal, often citing the need for varying tiers of marketing (statewide, whole system, regional, and local) as identified in the Lakes to Locks Annual Meeting report. Many of these multi-tiered informational linkages or marketing products already exist in a virtual form, but could benefit from various improvements, increased centralization, and promotion. In addition, physical informational linkages such as uniform and consistent signage across the Canal System was widely advocated for by Canal System stakeholders and Lakes to Locks Passage meeting participants as another method of whole system branding.

Providing virtual and physical informational and thematic linkages is a tourism strategy that is quickly gaining popularity across New York State and the nation for many reasons. First, informational linkages encourage visitation to multiple points of interest under a common theme, which in turn spreads tourism dollars out across multiple communities or may even increase the likelihood that visitors may stay overnight. Second, by further connecting area recreational activities, educational programs, tourism opportunities, services, restaurants, and overnight accommodations pertaining to certain linkages, these resources can create an “experience” for the visitor that not only keeps them coming back to perhaps try other areas along the canal, but may also increase the economic impact for canal communities. Finally, it is important to note that these informational linkages are becoming easier and easier to create through technology-based platforms. At the time of the 1995 Canal Recreationway Plan, the web was still new in use and development. Thus, the plan did not address a web-based strategy. Research shows that currently the largest amount of cultural and heritage travelers receive their information from websites. Many existing web-based platforms already exist and are ripe for increased attention to the Canal System. We recommend that the Canal Corporation capitalize on this opportunity.

a. Expand and improve upon existing web-based trip planners.
Currently, several web-based platforms that provide linkages to points of interest along the canal and throughout the state already exist.

---

Lakes to Locks Passage Interactive Map Guide: At the regional tier focused on the Champlain Canal is the Lakes to Locks Passage Interactive Map Guide. The map provides multiple thematic layers displaying icons the user can click on to learn more about points of interest. Examples of some of the layers include accommodations, cultural attractions, experiences, food and drink, natural areas, etc. The user can select or deselect as many layers as they want in order to provide only relevant icons. Users can also sign up to save their favorite places to a “pack basket” or itinerary tool on the website or even add places that are not currently represented.\textsuperscript{83} We recommend this tool be used as a model to expand upon the current whole canal mapping tool offered at the New York Canals website.

Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor - Plan Your Visit: Perhaps the trip planning tool most focused on the Canal System as a whole is the one offered by the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor website, a tool that separates the Canal System into regions with a list of attractions and activities in each region (thus, also linking information at the regional tier). This tool is very useful in that it both promotes canal regions and thematically organizes attractions according to recreation opportunities, nature preserves and parks, and canal structures and engineering marvels. By presenting links or adding layers to the map that highlight services, restaurants, overnight accommodations, trails, etc., the website would become even more useful as a tourism generator.

Path Through History Trip Planner: A statewide web platform and program that should be improved and expanded for the canal is Governor Cuomo’s recent Path Through History initiative, which includes unified signage for sites of historic significance and a web-based trip planner that connects attractions under a common historical theme (including a theme that pertains to transportation and canals).\textsuperscript{84} One challenge that would need to be addressed under this program is consistent signage, given that many stakeholders and public meeting participants have called for uniform canal signage.


Linkages
Create New and Develop Existing Informational Linkages Among Points of Interest Along the Canal System

Parks and Trails New York – Cycling the Erie Canal: The PTNY website has an excellent example of a trip planner, in this case focused on bicycling. In addition to an interactive map showing the available trails, nearby bike shops, important locations, and what to expect in each section of trail (on-road, off-road, paved, and unpaved), the site offers lists of attractions along the route. The attractions are grouped by location, or by “themed itinerary” suggestions. The site also provides a list of places to stay, and other useful information for bikers traveling along the Canal System.85 This site is a good model for what is needed for all canal users – not just bikers.

I Love NY (Canals): As the Canal Corporation strengthens its partnership with I Love NY, a statewide program based in the NYS Department of Economic Development, we recommend that there be a push for giving the Canal System its own portal or trip planner based at the I Love NY website. Currently, I Love NY shows a map of New York split into regions with no emphasis on the Canal System at all, meaning that the user is not given an “image” of a canal network rich in its own history and experience opportunities. It is hard to even find “canal” on the website. When clicking “canal”, the web user only gets a description of the Canal System with a link to the New York Canals website. This brief description of the Canal System may be misleading, giving the web user the impression that there must not be a lot to do along the Canal System.86 As the I Love NY travel site grows in popularity, it will be increasingly important that the Canal System be adequately represented there.

In addition to improving upon existing resources, the Canal Corporation should consider collaborating with partners to expand upon their offerings. For example, the Canal Corporation could collaborate with Parks and Trails New York to improve its linkages to website resources such as birding areas, bike maps, heritage trails, historic sites, parks, etc. or to develop a unified web map resource showing the connections between the Canal System and parks. Another useful collaboration would be between the Canal Corporation and the Department of Environmental Conservation. Connections could be explored between the Canal System and hunting and fishing sites, state forests, etc. Finally, the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation would also have a lot to contribute in websites and resources, including a Statewide Trail Plan.

The ultimate goal is to develop the image of the Canal System as its own entity, separate from other New York regions or attractions. However, there are some challenges to be acknowledged in this task, including common difficulties experienced when collaborating with external entities with varied missions and visions that may be different than that of the Canal Corporation as well as the fact that many of these resources may need to be promoted as a resource. However, by building on existing resources and partnerships, it is likely the Canal Corporation could overcome these challenges.

b. Expand upon existing and develop new mobile applications.
Mobile applications are a great and portable informational resource for the Canal System user. Just in the last year or two, several new mobile apps have come available or are in development for the canal, including the following:

**The Canal Guide**: Created by Troy Web Consulting, LLC., this mobile app is currently being used as a pilot project for the Champlain Canal with the intention of then expanding the service to other waterways. The app is a navigational and touring tool, developed specifically for mariners that are planning a trip on the Canal System. The app provides mariners with up-to-date data on buoys, beacons, and preferred navigational channels, as well as highlights amenities along the route that are accessible to boaters.\(^{87}\)

**PassPort**: Developed by Lakes to Locks Passage, Inc. in partnership with National Geographic, PassPort is a mobile app that is under development. This app utilizes Google Fieldtrip technology (GPS tracking) to provide users with historical information pertaining to their location along the passage. Eventually the organization plans to expand the app to include additional historical trails along the Canal System.\(^{88}\)

We recommend that both of the above mobile apps be featured prominently on partner websites and brochures once they are completed. It is also important to note that both I Love NY and Path Through History have apps from which the Canal System could receive increased exposure. An additional app that would be useful would be one that provided more information about the businesses, services, and attractions available in canal communities alongside the Canal System. As canal-community physical connections are strengthened, the canal corporation should advocate for this app to be developed by interested partners.

---


Linkages
Create New and Develop Existing Informational Linkages Among Points of Interest Along the Canal System

Mobile apps are likely to significantly increase the accessibility of information pertaining to the canal as well as enhance the experience of traveling the canal itself. However, some challenges that may arise include limited Wi-Fi access areas or cell signal along the Canal System. While offline apps may solve the problem of information access while on the Canal System, they may potentially drain cellphone batteries or take up too much memory. These obstacles are likely to be overcome as more Wi-Fi infrastructure is developed along the canal and technology continues to advance.

c. Develop a strategic and centralized location for links to trip planners, mobile applications and other important web resources for the canal.

While the New York State Canals website has the beginnings of a useful mapping tool for figuring out where to go and what to do along the Canal System, it would benefit from additional resources for bikers, campers, hikers, and casual visitors. With additional information and links, this page could become a central information interface for canal users. Adding information about places in nearby communities that may be of interest to users of the Canal System would be an opportunity to draw those users into the communities.

In addition, many organizations related to the Canal System have complementary information on their websites. Linking these sites in an obvious manner would make it easier for potential visitors to find the information they need.

Suggested Canal-related links:

- [Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor](#)
- [Canal Society of New York State](#)
- [Canal New York](#)
- [Canalway Trails Association New York (CTANY)](#)
- [Parks and Trails NY](#)
- [National Park Service](#) - (More National Heritage Corridor)

---

d. Provide uniform and consistent signage for points of interest across the Canal System.

We recommend that all wayfinding signage throughout the Canal System have uniform components and be consistently distributed throughout the canal. Consistent and cohesive signage was addressed as a goal in the 1995 Canal Recreationway Plan\textsuperscript{90} and has been addressed in many plans since that time. Despite the fact that the NYS Canal Corporation already has a set of signage design guidelines for communities to adhere to in their trail and waterfront projects, many stakeholders and participants in the Lakes to Locks Passage Annual Meeting expressed that they would like to see more uniform and consistent signage throughout the corridor to not only assist in wayfinding, but to also shape the public’s perception of the Canal System as a destination.\textsuperscript{91} Given that there is clear support for it, we recommend that there be a specific investment in signage infrastructure along the Canal System by either the canal corporation or a “coalition” of partners.

In this effort, we recognize that a few challenges may be encountered. As discussed above, uniform canal signage may conflict with other statewide efforts such as Path Through History. Communities may be resistant to a state entity removing nonconforming local signage and replacing it with its own. Also, an overly brand-like identity may interfere with a couple of the Canal System’s greatest assets: its historic character and its diversity. In order to overcome some of these likely challenges, we recommend that there be transparent public involvement and collaboration involved in the process with clear sensitivity to the need to preserve the unique historic character of individual communities.


Throughout the course of our research, destination marketing of the New York State Canal System was recognized as a particularly beneficial application of the Canal Corporation’s resources. Many participants enthusiastically recommended enlarging the scope and intensity of these promotional activities, and called for greater investments in marketing in order to attract tourism. Tourism is a proven catalyst for economic development and could represent a great source of revenue for communities, businesses, and organizations associated with the New York State Canal System. Marketing the Canal System as a tourism destination is essential to maintaining current visitorship, attracting new audiences, and increasing the public visibility. Successful and innovative marketing strategies could also be designed to connect canal communities, strengthen existing partnerships, and to identify and create new avenues of collaboration. In addition to providing greater visibility for tourism and recreational activities, a successful marketing campaign could also complement and augment other Canal System developments, such as increased commercial use and infrastructural improvements.

a. Develop a multi-tiered marketing campaign.

As the Preservation and Management Plan for the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor astutely recognizes, “a critical challenge facing the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is how to overlay a consistent, cohesive visual identity across the diverse range of resources, destinations, and materials that already exist.” Tourism marketing of the Canal System is currently carried out by an assortment of local, state, and federal government entities, as well as private sector interests, nonprofit organizations, and advocacy groups. These efforts represent a diversity of approaches, varying degrees of purpose and focus, and have yielded at times uneven results. In this respect, participants in this planning process cited a lack of cohesive marketing strategies, inadequate branding, and the overall geographic disparities (e.g. distance) inherent in the Canal System as obstacles to successful Canal System marketing campaigns. Some respondents felt that current marketing efforts were too limited and that canal tourism has suffered as a result. While many argued for a cohesive, system-wide marketing scheme to overcome such discrepancies and barriers, we strongly recommend the implementation of a tiered marketing effort that would include more concentrated, locally-specific campaigns. The Champlain Valley Lakes to Locks Passage was cited as a model for successful regional branding, while the incorporation of the state Canal System as part of a greater navigational and recreational system was suggested as an example of marketing at the largest scale. A combination of such efforts may represent the approach best suited for coping with the great size of the Canal System, the diversity of its components, and the fragmentation of political and economic interests and opinions. For example, a structure for such a layered approach to marketing could follow the outline below:

---

Tier 1 - From the broadest geographic perspective, some participants recommended marketing the entire waterway loop or “water highway”, as well as what lay beyond the canal, including connections to lakes and communities.

Tier 2 - At the next level down, participants strongly supported marketing and interpreting the canal as a whole entity with attention paid to all parts of the system. Many participants felt that current marketing efforts primarily target the Erie Canal, with the Champlain Canal getting less attention.

Tier 3 - Some participants also recommended regional branding, citing the success of the Lakes to Locks Passage. It was suggested that there could be broader information of regional resources.

Tier 4 - Finally, at the most local level, participants recommended more marketing and education targeting local residents as a method of increasing word of mouth marketing of canal history and offerings to canal users.

b. Assess public image, identify audiences, and capitalize on existing marketing strengths. Components of a successful promotional campaign should include an assessment of the current public image of the Canal System, identification of target audiences, and research into a variety of marketing techniques. Some of the most encouraging and positive public perceptions of the Canal System relate to heritage and recreational tourism; these were regularly recurring themes in our marketing discussions. No successful marketing campaign of the Canal System would be complete without harnessing the historic appreciation and leisure opportunities offered by the Canal System. There was substantial agreement that the Canal Corporation should invest in further marketing research to increase and improve its activities in these areas.

c. Use marketing opportunities to reform undesirable public image and attract new markets. Marketing was also cited as an effective approach to creating and reinforcing a positive public image for the Canal System in other areas. Carefully considered marketing strategies could be used to fulfill public relations opportunities along the Canal System, particularly the perceived obsolescence of the Canal System and its environmental problems (e.g., industrial pollution). Such a reinvention of this public image might also represent an invaluable opportunity to diversify visitorship and recreational opportunities throughout the Canal System. Specific goals in this direction could include attracting lucrative visitorship from New York City and Canada, in addition to more specific campaigns designed to attract niche tourists like history buffs, cyclists, and birdwatchers.
d. Investigate new and bolster existing marketing partnerships.
An overhaul of the Canal’s marketing strategies would also provide a useful opportunity for new partnerships. Potential partnerships to be explored by the Canal Corporation should include relationships with canal communities, the hospitality and service industry, recreational outfitters, historical societies, libraries, educational institutions, chamber of commerce, volunteer groups (for education, cleanup, etc.), and private sector tourism outfits. Such partnerships could capitalize on cross-marketing opportunities in order to encourage extended local stays and multiple-site visits.

I Love NY: Of the many collaborative relationships suggested in our research, perhaps none was suggested as enthusiastically as a potential partnership with “I Love NY”, which could make full use of the state’s internationally-known tourism program to promote the Canal System (an “I Love NY Canals” campaign could be an effective and easily-implemented approach to merging these marketing efforts). The I Love NY program currently offers a variety of marketing resources that could be easily tailored to canal-specific tourism, including travel guides, trip planners, and tourism offers and deals. Additionally, the New York State Canal System is a valuable and unique resource that could be incorporated to great effect in the marketing efforts of I Love NY. The successful marketing model represented by I Love NY is consistent with the tourism objectives of the New York State Canal Corporation and a stronger partnership between these two entities could provide many mutually beneficial opportunities for collaboration. These recommendations were discussed in further detail in the “Multimodal Connections” and “Linkages” sections of this report.

e. Employ a wide variety of marketing strategies and techniques.
Information technology: New and emerging information technologies should play an important role in future canal marketing efforts in order to exploit the incomparable reach and immediacy of social media platforms, mobile applications, website improvements, and greater Wi-Fi access. These recommendations were discussed in further detail in the amenities section.

New itineraries and package tours: More traditional marketing efforts could be investigated to promote multi-day and multiple site tourism, including package tours, programmed itineraries, and thematic tourism based on agriculture (e.g. winery tours) or history (e.g., an Underground Railroad and abolition history trail).

Canal passport program: Implement a passport program (similar to the National Park Passport Stamps program) in order to encourage multiple site visitation throughout the New York State Canal System.
Conventional tourism literature and advertising: The Canal System should continue to offer and update traditional tourism documents such as offline maps, as well as engaging in conventional but well-placed print and sign advertising of downtowns, main streets, and business districts. These recommendations were discussed in further detail in the multimodal connections section.

Canal events: The many cultural, educational, and recreational events that take place on or near the Canal System should be harnessed for their obvious marketing potential. In particular, the upcoming 2017 Erie Canal Bicentennial should be recognized as an important opportunity to increase Canal System exposure and visitorship.

Grassroots promotion: Based on the responses we received, the usefulness of more conventional efforts such as grassroots and word-of-mouth marketing, public mailings, and an increased Canal System presence at trade shows and conventions (at both domestic and international events) should not be underestimated as techniques to increase the visibility of the canal system.

The upcoming 2017 World Canals Conference will be hosted in from September 25-28 in Syracuse, N.Y. This event will celebrate both the bicentennial of the Erie Canal groundbreaking and the centennial of its still-operating successor – the New York State Barge Canal System. This important annual conference will be jointly hosted by the New York State Canal Corporation and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and represents an unmatched opportunity to showcase the New York State Canal System on an international stage.

Marketing the New York State Canal System in its entirety poses certain inevitable difficulties. The Canal System comprises an extensive geographic area and a host of coordination challenges. Many respondents during this planning process felt strongly about the valuable opportunity for Canal System growth offered by successful marketing that recognizes the importance of historic appreciation and recreational opportunities, reinforces community character, and strives to improve the experiences of New York State Canal System visitors.
Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


APPENDIX A

Coalition Research
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Canal New York Marketing and Business Alliance, Inc.</th>
<th>New York State Canal Corporation – Canal Recreationway Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Established</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Established to represent all canal communities in New York State and partner with government, private businesses and organizations to support the growth, development and marketing of the canals.</td>
<td>The New York State Canal Recreationway Commission was created by the New York State Legislature in 1992 under Article XIII-A, Section 138-a of the Canal Law, to advise the Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation on canal-related activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private or Public</td>
<td>Private Sector Organization</td>
<td>Public – State Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission:</td>
<td>To serve as the one generally accepted private sector entity dedicated to tourism, marketing, legislative advocacy and business collaboration; to support existing and new business opportunities within New York State’s canal communities.</td>
<td>To develop a conceptual framework for fostering the development of the Canal System into a recreationway system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members:</td>
<td>~120 members from private and public sector</td>
<td>The Commission is comprised of 24 members, of which there are 14 voting members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal system-wide business alliance</td>
<td>In 1996, the Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation launched a five-year, $20.3 million initiative to preserve and develop the Canal System for the 21st century. The Canal Revitalization Program, administered by the Canal Corporation and the Canal Recreationway Commission and based upon the 1995 Canal Recreationway Plan, presents a realistic and achievable approach to Canal System development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Structure:</td>
<td>16 member board</td>
<td>There is a 24 member board with 14 voting members. The 14 voting members include 10 individuals involved in canal use, development, preservation, enhancement, and local governments from counties adjacent to or intersected by the Canal System. There are ten non-voting members of the Commission, comprised of two state agencies (Department of State and Empire State Development) and eight regional planning boards whose regions are intersected by the Canal System: Lake George-Lake Champlain Regional Planning Board, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program, Central New York Regional Planning Board, Southern Tier East Regional Planning Board, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning Board, Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Planning Board, and Erie &amp; Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals:</td>
<td>• Bring business to its members</td>
<td>• Preserving the best of the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Economic and Business development along the entire NYS Canal System Corridor</td>
<td>• Enhancing recreational opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Member organizational development</td>
<td>• Fostering appropriate and sustainable economic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s in the Tool Box?</td>
<td>• Focuses on bringing business to its members through tourism marketing programs, educational outreach, legislative advocacy and member organizational development</td>
<td>The Canal Recreationway Plan was prepared and adopted by the Commission in August 1995. The New York State Canal Revitalization Program was completed in September 1996. It focused on four major elements: Canal Harbors, Canal Service Port and Lock Projects, the Canalway Trail, and a Canal System Marketing Plan. Section 384 of Thruway 2000 legislation authorized the Thruway Authority to undertake and finance certain transportation projects, including the Syracuse Inner Harbor. In an effort to improve canal frontage at lock sites and municipalities along the Canal System, ninety-six Service Port and Lock projects of varying complexity were proposed in the Recreationway Plan. Under the Revitalization Program approximately 40 miles of Canalway Trail have been developed, resulting in 230 miles of completed Canalway Trail statewide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sponsor seminars, workshops and events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distribution of materials for member organizations (marketing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When completed, it will be a continuous 500 mile trail and will be the longest in the country, making it a significant eco-tourism destination.

The Canalway Trail will also expand close-to-home recreational opportunities, providing quality of life benefits to canal community residents.

| Partners: Membership levels: | NYS Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation  
| | NYS Department of State  
| | NYS Empire State Development Corp  
| | NYS Department of Transportation  
| | NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
| | NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
| | Lake George-Lake Champlain Regional Planning Board, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program, Central New York Regional Planning Board, Southern Tier East Regional Planning Board, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning Board, Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Planning Board, and Erie & Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board.  


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Organization Name</strong></th>
<th><strong>Canal Society of New York State</strong></th>
<th><strong>Canalway Trails Association New York</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year Established</strong></td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>N.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History</strong></td>
<td>Founded in Buffalo in October 1956, at the annual meeting of the New York State Historical Association.</td>
<td>Multiple ownership and management arrangements along the trail corridor call for a statewide coordination organization – and that organization is Canalway Trails Association New York. Planning and building the Canalway trail was only a small part of the picture. Managing the multi-use trail, encouraging local participation in the management and maintenance of the trail are keys to its success. A significant part of Parks &amp; Trails New York’s work has focused on designing a management structure along the entire length of the trail that will ensure a consistently positive experience for all trail users, both local and from further away. The solution for this was the formation of the Canalway Trails Association New York, a statewide organization formed to assist localities in developing, managing and maintaining the Canalway Trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private or Public</strong></td>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Volunteer organization operating under the not-for-profit status of Parks &amp; Trails New York; functions in partnership with the NYS Canal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission:</strong></td>
<td>The purpose and aim of this society shall be to foster study of the history of New York canals and their effect on the life and economy of the state; to provide a means for exchange of inquiry and information; to promote interest in the canals and to encourage preservation of canal records, relics, structures and sites.</td>
<td>Making the Canalway Trail a world-class, multi-use recreational trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members:</strong></td>
<td>Membership is open to individuals interested in the history, folklore, and engineering of former canals and the present condition of the state’s remaining man-made waterways. Membership levels for public and private: Individual, Family and Institutional Membership Rates</td>
<td>Trail owners/maintainers, volunteer trail user groups, regional Canalway Trail groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canal Society members study New York canal history, including its effect on the life and economy of the State; exchange information; promote interest in the canals in the United States and abroad; educate the public and encourage preservation of canal records, relics, structures and sites; and help restore abandoned canals and historic vessels, including replicating their structures.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Management Structure:** | 18 member board – includes public and private sector representatives | 3-tiered organizational structure:  
  - Statewide Board of Directors – comprised of representatives from each of the Regional Canalway Trail groups and 3 at-large members. This board develops and implements the organizations programs and initiatives and addresses trail issues and concerns from a statewide perspective  
  - Regional Canalway Trail Groups – these groups are generally formed by county boundaries or other geographical considerations. There are 12 groups and they are involved in the planning, development and maintenance of specific segments of the Canalway Trail, they recruit and organize local Adopt-A-Trail groups, organize events and develop environmental and historic educational programs.  
  - Local Adopt-A-Trail Groups – help care for the Canalway Trail in their communities. They undertake several different types of maintenance tasks such as litter pick-up, mowing, trimming brush, removing fallen branches, raking, patching the trail surface, maintaining signs, painting and landscaping  
  - The Board of Directors includes delegates from each Regional Canalway Trail Group plus 3 at-large directors elected by the full board for a 3 year term. |
### Goals:

- To bring together canal enthusiasts from across the state, to learn about the history, development and ongoing activities throughout the Canal Systems of New York State.

Protection and preservation of historic canal sites, canal records and features; restoration of abandoned canals and historic vessels, including replication of their structures.

- Development of canal ports, recreational facilities, canal trails and other related amenities.

- Presentation or interpretation of canal history and related topics.

- Provide a forum of visiting canal sites around the state and an opportunity for sharing information and ideas relevant to preserving the history and traditions of the canal.

- Making the Canalway Trail a world-class, multi-use recreational trail

- Assist state agencies, local municipalities, counties and civic organizations in developing, maintaining and promoting the Canalway Trail

### What's in the Tool Box?

- Access to individuals with extensive knowledge of canals

- Organizing and sponsoring trips to canal sites throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.

- Organizing events, conferences and forums:
  - New York State Canal Conference
  - Exploratory field trips
  - Canal Society Symposium
  - Past sponsor of the World Canal Conference

Artifacts held by the Society include the 1894 canal hotel and bar, the Erie House, situated along the old Erie Canal bed at Lock 52 in Port Byron, N.Y.

The Society owns a number of collections which include large lithographs, dating from the 1850s through 1900, with aerial views of 19th Century towns.

- **The Madden Collection**: printed and manuscript materials relating the history of the New York canals, with a concentration on the Genesee Valley Canal.

- **The Gayer Collection**: documents on the construction of the original Erie Canal, photographs and slides of the Barge Canal System, pamphlets, and other ephemera, oral histories of people who lived and worked on the old Erie Canal and the Barge Canal System.

- **Bob Rose's Collection**: hundreds of aerial photographs of the abandoned routes of the New York Canals as well as of the Barge Canal System as they appeared in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

- **Channing Soule Collection**: thousands of postcards showing the Erie Canal; maps, charts and plans of canals and canal structures

- **19th Century Staffordshire pottery**: large platters, bowls, pitchers and other forms were decorated with scenes of the original Erie Canal in blue and white.

- **Other collections**: models of both canal boats and canal structures. Boat building tools.
### Partners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canal enthusiasts</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Trails New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and International Partnerships</td>
<td>NYS Canal Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local municipalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civic organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canal enthusiasts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

| Organization Name | Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Established</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>The United States Congress recognized the significance of the Erie Canal to the nation’s history with the creation of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private or Public</td>
<td>Managed by a 27 member federal commission and the not-for-profit Erie Canalway National Heritage Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission:</td>
<td>To serve as an “umbrella” to unite and coordinate existing federal, state and local plans and multiple points of views, focusing on partnerships that cross jurisdictional boundaries and build on mutual interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members:</td>
<td>27 member Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Structure:</td>
<td>The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor spans 524 miles across upstate New York and includes the Erie Canal, the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, the Oswego Canal and the Champlain Canal. Encompasses all 234 municipalities adjoining the canalway corridor. The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Preservation and Management Plan builds upon a number of state and local plans for portions of the region. The Corridor’s plan is designed to coordinate and enhance existing plans rather than overtake or replace them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals:</td>
<td>• build public support and awareness for preservation and enhancement of critical historic and cultural resources. • Protect and enhance the authenticity and integrity of the Corridor’s historic resources and canals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Organization Name | Hudson River Valley Greenway
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Established</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>The Hudson Valley Greenway Act of 1991 created a process for voluntary regional cooperation among 264 communities within the 13 counties that border the Hudson River. The HRVG is a state-sponsored program created to facilitate the development of a regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources while encouraging economic development and maintaining the tradition of home rule for land use decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private or Public</td>
<td>Greenway Communities Council – funded through state appropriations, acts like a state agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission:</td>
<td>To continue and advance the state’s commitment to the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley while continuing to emphasize economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members:</td>
<td>Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley – 14 board members, 8 ex-officio members HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY COMMUNITIES COUNCIL - 19 member board, 8 ex-officio members ADVISORY BOARD – 4 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Structure:</td>
<td>The Greenway Communities Council – coordinates with local and county governments for the development and enhancement of local land use planning techniques and the creation of a voluntary regional planning compact for the Hudson River Valley. Provides Greenway Communities with planning grants, compact grants and technical assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals:</td>
<td>• Establish a Hudson River Valley Trail System. • Promote the Hudson River Valley as a single tourism destination area. • Assist in the preservation of agriculture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### What’s in the Tool Box?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s in the Tool Box</th>
<th>What’s in the Tool Box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide support, funding, technical assistance and/or in-kind services to others to assist in leveraging or implementing projects that advance the plan.</td>
<td>• Community planning – assist with comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, community design guidelines or standards; subdivision of site plan review ordinances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Catalyze collaboration among those whose decisions impact heritage resources and among organization in allied pursuits.</td>
<td>• Public participation – increase public participation in the planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Educate, communicate and advocate for the Plan as a guiding document for decision makers, entrepreneurs, residents.</td>
<td>• Open space protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Raise the profile of the Corridor as a whole, bringing greater local and world-wide recognition of its unique history and resources.</td>
<td>• Cultural Resource protection – assist with cultural resource inventories; historic preservation plans and ordinances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Build a foundation for the future to ensure the stability and long-term sustainability of National Heritage Corridor activities.</td>
<td>• Natural Resource Protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seek to establish a fundraising partner or foundation to develop support above and beyond its present sources for projects to advance its preservation, conservation, recreation, interpretation, economic revitalization, and tourism development goals.</td>
<td>• Economic development – tourism development plans; agricultural protection plans and implementation strategies; ag marketing and agri-tourism development plans; main street revitalization plans; water front revitalization plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scenic Resource Protection – viewshed analysis; scenic impact review guidelines; scenic road protection; scenic easement programs.</td>
<td>• Grants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trail development.</td>
<td>• Trail development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Partners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners:</th>
<th>Partners:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The National Park Service</td>
<td>• National Park Service:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alliance of National Heritage Areas</td>
<td>• National Endowment for the Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New York State Canal Corporation</td>
<td>• New Baltimore Conservancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation</td>
<td>• Preservation League of New York State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New York State Education Department</td>
<td>• Scenic Hudson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parks &amp; Trails New York</td>
<td>• Winnakee Land Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Canal Society of New York State</td>
<td>• New York State Department of Environmental Conservation - Hudson River Estuary Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lakes to Locks Passage Scenic Byway</td>
<td>• NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mohawk Towpath Byway</td>
<td>• NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Western Erie Canal Alliance</td>
<td>• NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RiverSpark State Heritage Area</td>
<td>• NYS Dept of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NYS Department of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Empire State Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NYS Office of General Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hudson Valley Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Historic Hudson River Towns
- Mohonk Preserve
- New York/New Jersey Trail Conference
- Palisades Park Conservancy
- Parks and Trails New York
- I LOVE NY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Lakes to Locks Passage11</th>
<th>Parks &amp; Trails New York12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Established</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>In 1992 New York State designated the Champlain Trail as a New York State Scenic Byway. The Lakes to Locks Passage was recognized as an All-American Road by the United States Department of Transportation in 2002 for the byway's historic and recreational assets. As an All-American Road, Lakes to Locks Passage is one of a select group of roadways in the country that the Federal Highway Administration promotes as a “premier destination” in their marketing efforts for national and international tourism.</td>
<td>Started by statewide parks advocates, this organization was formed in 1985 as “New York Parks and Conservation Association”. In 2004 the name was changed to “Parks &amp; Trails New York”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private or Public</td>
<td>501(c)(3) not-for-profit</td>
<td>501(c)(3) not-for-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission:</td>
<td>To further the appreciation, recognition, stewardship and revitalization of the natural, cultural, recreational and historic assets of the communities along the interconnected waterway of the upper Hudson River/Champlain Canal, Lake George, Lake Champlain, Chambly Canal and Richelieu River</td>
<td>To expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open spaces throughout our state for use and enjoyment by all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members:</td>
<td>22 board members and staff</td>
<td>21 member board of directors 13 member advisory council 11 member staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Structure:</td>
<td>20 board members, 5 officers, and 2 staff persons</td>
<td>Board of Directors, Advisory Council and 11 staff members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Goals:            | • Create a great place to live  
• Establish a grassroots forum for voluntary inter-municipal planning and implementation of NYS Byway, waterfront and community revitalization programs  
• Assist communities with community revitalization  
• Unify the region’s historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources to establish a world-class destination for national and international travelers | To expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open spaces throughout our state for use and enjoyment by all |
| What’s in the Tool Box? | • Foster knowledge, research and investigation of the history and heritage of the interconnected waterway;  
• Foster recognition, appreciation and preservation of the resources and artifacts of the interconnected waterway  
• Foster regional partnerships of public, private and non-profit organizations  
• Plan, develop, organize, prepare, maintain and publicize events and programs.  
• Promote an awareness of local history and the significance of the waterway to local communities and to tourists.  
• Assist in the coordination of activities of those seeking national and international recognition  
• Seek grants, donations and contributions.  
• Provide support and technical assistance to communities and organizations to implement community revitalization and quality-of-life initiatives | • Parks & Trails Advocacy, building a strong citizen constituency speaking out for parks and trails to decision makers and the media.  
• Healthy Trails, Healthy People, a statewide program to assist communities in planning and developing multi-use trails.  
• Canalway Trail, helping complete, manage, and promote a continuous 524-mile multi-use trail, and encouraging resource-based planning along the historic Erie Canalway.  
• Accessible Parks and Trails, to increase the accessibility of New York’s parks and trails to people with physical limitations.  
• Bicycle Tours -- Cycling the Erie Canal and Cycling the Hudson Valley, are multi-day bicycle tours to promote trails and eco/heritage tourism. |
| Define interpretive story through four regional themes | National Geographic |
| Coordinates interpretive programs of partners | New York State Canal Corporation |
| Build regional identity and assist with identity branding activities | National Park Service |
| Improve infrastructure, programs and products for "experiential" tourism | Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce |

**Partners:**

- National Geographic
- New York State Canal Corporation
- National Park Service
- Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
- Adirondack Regional Tourism Council
- America’s Byways – National Scenic Byways Program is part of the US Dept of Transportation
- NYS Department of Transportation Scenic Byways Program
- Washington County Tourism

- Private business
- Media
- Tourism promotion agencies
- Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor

---


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Organization Name</strong></th>
<th>Western Erie Canal Alliance</th>
<th>Western Erie Canal Main Street Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year Established</strong></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History</strong></td>
<td>136 mile stretch along the Erie Canal was designated a New York State Heritage Corridor in 1999.</td>
<td>In 2008, the Western Erie Canal Alliance established the Western Erie Canal Main Street Program under the auspices of the National Trust Main Street Center to coordinate and assist in connecting all communities in the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor to develop and enhance regional quality of life, as well as to encourage resource conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private or Public</strong></td>
<td>501 (c)(3) not-for-profit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission:</strong></td>
<td>Gatekeeper or conduit by which the communities in the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor can be connected to regional opportunities. Goal is to help communities preserve, sustain and promote their unique individualism into a strong united regional economy</td>
<td>Coordinate and assist in connecting all communities in the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor to develop and enhance regional quality of life, as well as to encourage resource conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members:</strong></td>
<td>47 historic communities in the counties of Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Monroe and Wayne</td>
<td>3 Main Street Programs Currently: Albion Main Street Alliance; Lockport Main Street, Inc.; Lyons Main Street Program 2 New Communities recently became members: Clyde and Savannah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor (WECHC) was designated in 1999 by New York State as a Heritage Area. The WECHC represents the five (5) western counties of the Erie Canal: Wayne, Monroe, Orleans, Niagara & Erie counties. In 2006 the Western Erie Canal Alliance (WECA), a 501(c) 3 was established to implement the WECHC management plan developed by the National Park Service. The Western Erie Region features the longest section of the canal that still follows its original path and retains its historic relationship to the communities along its banks.

The organizational structure of the Main Street Program is based on a comprehensive strategy known as the “Main Street Four-Point Approach” which encompasses four distinct areas: Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion and Organization. The Main Street Four-Point Approach is a community-driven, comprehensive methodology strategy used to revitalize older, traditional business districts throughout the United States. The structure of this program works to not only divide the workload and clearly delineate responsibilities, but also to build consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

**Management Structure:**

- 8 Member Board of Directors and Executive Staff
  - Executive Staff:
    - Regional Program Coordinator/Executive Director
    - Project Manager/Marketing Services

Albion Main Street Alliance:
The Albion Main Street Alliance (AMSA) is a nationally accredited organization comprised of a volunteer group of committed citizens wanting to revitalize Albion, coordinated and supported by a paid program director. Members include: business and building owners, government representatives, educators, representatives from community-based and service organizations, veterans, neighbors, residents and more. Anyone can join AMSA.

Lockport Main Street, Inc.:
Envisions a growing inviting and vibrant Historic District that is filled to capacity and serves the heart of the community, attracting residents and tourists of all ages. This vision is achieved through a strong working Board of Directors, a broad base of volunteers, community support, reliable funding sources, as well as partnerships with private and governmental entities, all working toward common goals.

Lyons Main Street Program:
The Lyons Main Street Program is a community-based organization supported by community members. The LMSP is funded through business and industry pledges, private donations, and fund raisers as well as contributions from local government and Industrial Development Agencies. The LMSP is a 501(c) 6 organization. Contributions & donations are tax deductible for businesses as a business expense.
### Goals:
- Develop a vibrant regional economy
- Enhance regional quality of life
- Encourage resource conservation
- Increase appreciation of the natural and unique cultural resources

### What’s in the Tool Box?
- Provide education and training, resources and tools and advocacy
- Main Street Development
- Regional Coordination
- Assistance with making connections
- Building a personnel infrastructure to collect critical information from each community, local, state and national organizations.
- Public Relations and Marketing Support
- Organizing and distributing communication materials
- Workshops and Conferences
- Education Training Loan Services for Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs
- Western Erie Canal Main Street Program

- Consultation services and start-up assistance for new and existing.
- Work with local organizations to create a strong and growing business community.
- Organize and coordinate volunteer clean-up and beautification projects along the Erie Canal and throughout the community.
- Promote programs such as a realtor introduction to Lyons, a year round Shop Local program, and how to meet & greet visitors to our community and much more.
- Preservation and promotion of historic buildings and heritage through educational programs, grant support and guidance.
- Sponsors events such as the annual fall festival PumpkinPalooza held the 3rd Saturday in October

### Partners:
- Canal communities
- Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
- New York State Agencies
- Private Sectors
- Other Partners
- Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council
- Erie Niagara Framework for Regional Growth
- Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership

- Western Erie Canal Alliance
- Community volunteers
- Business Members
- Building owners
- Government representatives
- Educators
- Community-based and service organizations
- Residents

---

2. Western Erie Canal Main Street Program (2013). Retrieved from the Western Erie Canal Alliance website on November 28, 2014 from [http://www.westerneriecanal.com/#main-street-program/cee5](http://www.westerneriecanal.com/#main-street-program/cee5)
APPENDIX B

Fall 2014 UAlbany Planning Studio
**Farokh Bagheri**

Farokh Bagheri is a motivated student pursuing his Master's in Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Albany. Mr. Bagheri received his bachelor's degree at Allameh Tabatabai University (ATU), the largest specialized state social sciences university in Iran and the Middle East. After completing his bachelor's degree, Mr. Bagheri assisted the former head of the Iranian Sociological Association, compiling and editing *The Bibliography of Social Theory*. He also served as research coordinator on four major projects in Iran, addressing community development and planning, neighborhood planning, sewerage and surface water management. Currently, Mr. Bagheri works as a graduate assistant at the Global Institute for Health and Human Rights (GIHHR) and the International Academic Program (IAP) at the University at Albany, and is a student assistant at the New York State Department of Health, Center for Health Care Policy and Resource Development. Mr. Bagheri’s graduate studies concentrate on sustainable community development, neighborhood planning, and neighborhood revitalization. He strongly believes in public participation and the main role of community in the process of decision making in neighborhood planning.

**Audrey Burneson**

Audrey Burneson is a graduate student pursuing her Master's in Regional Planning and Certificate in Geographic Information Systems at the University at Albany. She has a Bachelor's of Art in Anthropology from the State University of New York at Geneseo, with a secondary major in Geography and a minor in Environmental Studies. Audrey was previously an intern at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in the Division of Lands and Forests, Bureau of State Land Management developing maps of recreational opportunities on state land. She is currently looking for an internship in the field of transportation planning.

**Katherine Czajkowski**

Katherine Czajkowski is currently employed by the Water Resources Institute at Cornell University as the Mohawk Watershed Coordinator, assisting the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in coordination and implementation of the Mohawk River Basin Action Agenda. Prior to this, she was employed by Schenectady County Soil and Water Conservation District as the Regional Stormwater Control Specialist assigned to the Region 4 and 6 offices of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, charged with delivery and implementation of the Phase II Stormwater Construction and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) programs in accordance with the Clean Water Act. Ms. Czajkowski is a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Regional and Urban Planning from the University at Albany where she is currently pursuing a Master's of Regional Planning (with a concentration in environmental and land use planning).
Lauren Ellmers

Graduating in December 2014, Lauren is completing the Master’s in Regional Planning program with a concentration in housing, economic development, and community planning. She is currently an intern with the Town of Glenville where she is responsible for updating the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. Previously, she completed two terms of AmeriCorps*VISTA service where she managed programs designed to fight poverty, increase college access for low-income individuals, and attract job opportunities to struggling communities. Lauren is interested in pursuing a career in public service with a focus on economic development and public policy. She holds a bachelor’s degree in public policy from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York.

Chanchilo Ezung

Chanchilo Ezung is a graduate student in the Urban and Regional Planning program at the University at Albany concentrating in transportation planning. Chanchilo is interested in sustainable transportation, and in the development and reconstruction of underdeveloped towns and cities. She graduated with a Bachelor in Engineering (Civil) degree from the National Institute of Engineering at Mysore, India. As part of her engineering degree, she was involved in survey and design of expanding a village road to a district road. Prior to joining the University at Albany, Chanchilo worked as a Junior Engineer at the Department of Irrigation and Flood Control in Nagaland, India.

Lisa Ford

Lisa Ford is a Certified Intern Engineer in the State of New York. She attends the University at Albany in the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning, specializing in transportation planning and sustainability concepts wherein she is learning the value of collaborative communication skills. Lisa achieved her Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) with specialization in transportation/traffic/highway design. While at RPI, she developed excellent critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Lisa’s previous relevant work experience includes thirteen years as a drafter/CADD/engineering technician, mostly in the Central Florida region, as an independent contractor. Lisa has a strong sense of personal ethics which align with the American Society of Civil Engineers’ code. She is detail-oriented, motivated, and able to work independently with outstanding results. Lisa has successfully taken on leadership roles for which she has received a number of accolades and scholarships. She epitomizes passionate progressive values, perseverance, and vociferous activism. Lisa personifies an appreciation for diversity as well as a strong desire to serve the public good.
Dan Jeanson
Dan Jeanson is currently attending the University at Albany and is enrolled in the Master’s in Regional Planning program. He earned his Bachelors of Arts degree from the University at Albany, dual majoring in Urban Studies & Planning, and History. He is currently an intern at the Hudson River Valley Greenway/ Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. His professional experience also includes five years as a Supervisor of Operations for the American Red Cross, Biomedical Services Department from June 2008 until January 2014. His interests include environmental causes, transportation and infrastructure issues, and politics.

Robyn Keefe
Robyn Keefe is a second-year graduate student in the Masters of Regional Planning (MRP) program at the University at Albany, specializing in community, heritage and universal access planning. Over the summer of 2014, Robyn co-authored a report providing research and analysis to Partners for Albany Stories, a group of cultural and historical organizations collaborating to develop a citywide interpretive plan for Albany, N.Y. Robyn has also contributed to a strategic planning process at the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. Prior to beginning the MRP program, Robyn worked for many years as a professional community advocate, serving in nonprofit employment and social development programs for persons with disabilities. Robyn holds a bachelor’s degree in special education from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. As a planner, Robyn aspires to facilitate the development of communities that recognize and address the needs and interests of all who have, do, and will live(d) there - past, present and future.

Tristan Lowery
Tristan Lowery is a second-year student in the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Albany, pursuing a concentration in environmental and land-use planning. He is currently complementing his studies with an internship at the Hudson River Valley Greenway in Albany, N.Y. As an avid amateur naturalist, Tristan has a broad interest in the environmental effects of development, with a particular concern for urban biodiversity and habitat conservation. Tristan holds a bachelor’s degree in media studies from Queens College, City University of New York, Flushing, N.Y.
**Jenny Majkut**

Jenny Majkut is currently a second year student in the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program at the University of Albany, specializing in environmental planning. Jenny received her Bachelors of Science in Architecture at the University of Nevada - Las Vegas. She returned to the Albany area to combine her education in planning and architecture to be well equipped to pursue her passion of helping areas develop comprehensively. Jenny is an avid believer in the importance of sustainability and redevelopment, and plans to focus in these efforts throughout her career. Jenny is currently an intern at the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), working in their residential department, which offers incentives to contractors and customers in an effort to make their homes more energy efficient.

**Debra Nelson**

Debra Nelson is a Strategic Policy Advisor with the NYS Department of Transportation with more than 20 years’ experience in environmental leadership in the transportation realm. Deb is a prominent national leader in environmental stewardship, planning and sustainability in transportation. She chairs the International Conference on Ecology and Transportation, serves on the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences, and advises the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, the Strategic Highway Research Program, and the National Highway Institute. Debra has been certified as a Professional Wetland Scientist by the Society of Wetland Scientists, and as a Certified Ecologist, conferred by the Ecological Society of America. Debra earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and is earning a Master of Regional Planning at the University at Albany. Deb is an ardent champion for making transportation decisions that support a sustainable society.

**Joseph Seman**

Joseph Seman is an Albany, New York-based graduate student in the field of urban studies and regional planning. An upstate New York native, Joseph graduated from the University at Albany with a bachelor’s degree in urban studies and planning. He has continued his education at the University at Albany in pursuit of a graduate degree in regional planning, with graduate certificates in both urban policy and geographic information systems and spatial analysis. With community development as a focus, and an increasing concentration towards rural community development, Joseph intends to practice sustainable community planning in accordance with the AICP code of ethics and professional conduct in his post graduate career.
Ayse Tezel
Ayse T. Tezel is currently a second-year student in the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Albany, concentrating in environmental and land use planning. She holds a bachelor’s degree of urban and regional planning from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in Istanbul, Turkey. As an admirer of history and nature, Ayse studied urban renewal laws and policies in Turkey for her bachelor’s thesis, and worked as an assistant planner in an architecture firm focused on restoration of historic buildings. She also has an interest in water resources management and conservation.

Samantha Young
Samantha Young is currently a second-year student in the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning at the University at Albany, specializing in environmental and land use planning. Samantha received her bachelor’s degree in environmental science with a concentration in geography and a certificate in Geographic Information Systems from the University at Albany as well. Samantha is supplementing her graduate studies by working at the U.S. Geological Survey, providing IT and mapping support on current environmental research issues. Samantha is an admirer of the outdoors and conservation practices. She wishes to pursue a career using GIS to help make the world a more sustainable place to live.

Instructor: Marcia Kees
Marcia Kees has served as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University at Albany since 2011, teaching planning law, park and historic preservation planning, and planning studio courses. She completed thirty-five years of public service employment, retiring in 2010 from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Ms. Kees has written or reviewed plans or projects in most of New York’s sixty-two counties, including participation in over fifty major plans or studies. She has provided technical assistance on heritage and greenway planning and development, historic preservation, community and economic development, waterfront revitalization, heritage tourism, and interpretive programming and exhibit design. Ms. Kees worked on special assignment to the National Park Service to oversee the production of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Preservation and Management Plan, which received the 2007 Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan from the American Planning Association. Ms. Kees conducted her undergraduate work in history and social sciences at State University of New York at Oswego and graduate work in city and regional planning at Cornell University. She is past president of the New York Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association and the Capital District Planners Association and has served as a board member or advisor for several non-profit organizations.
New York State Canal Recreationway Plan Update
Opportunity Analysis
Prepared for the New York State Canal Corporation
UAlbany Planning Studio
Fall 2014