

Highland Park / Canalway Connector Trail Study

Executive Summary UPWP Task #6520

*The Genesee Transportation Council
City of Rochester
Town of Brighton
Monroe County, NY*

Qualifying Statement : The following recommendations are conceptual only in nature and do not reflect the exhaustive and thorough analysis required for implementation of the plan. They do reflect the desires and wishes of Town of Brighton and City of Rochester staff, and the knowledgeable volunteers on the Project Advisory Committee and others for the location and configuration of the proposed trail. We offer these recommendations with the full knowledge that some may undergo modification or prove to be unworkable or unnecessary when placed under the scrutiny of more thorough analysis. Specific elements of the recommendations that fall under the jurisdiction of the Monroe County Department of Transportation such as the configuration of road crossings at Westfall Road and Elmwood Avenue, the introduction of traffic signals at those locations, road widening, restriping and the addition of bicycle lanes on city streets from Highland Park to the Genesee River all must receive the appropriate attention and scrutiny when this project moves into the next stages of design and implementation.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the Highland Park/Canalway Neighborhood Connector Trail Study is to develop a recommended concept plan and design for a multi-use trail between the Erie Canal Heritage Trail (the “Canalway Trail”) and Brighton Town Park, north to Highland Park and the Genesee Riverway Trail near Mt. Hope Cemetery. The trail would provide connections from neighborhoods in the Town of Brighton and the City of Rochester to both the Canalway Trail and Genesee Riverway Trail as well as provide access to several important parks and open space resources in both communities. A PAC (Project Advisory Committee) was assembled consisting of representatives of the City of Rochester, Town of Brighton, The University of Rochester, the Genesee Transportation Council, and relevant City and Town neighborhood organizations. This group was active throughout the course of the project guiding the study process, reviewing and evaluating alternatives, and providing input on key decisions.

Project Objectives

The project objectives are to:

- Develop an understanding of the function and likely users of the proposed trail;
- Explore alternative locations for the trail;
- Select a recommended trail route;
- Produce a concept design and cost estimate for the recommended trail, and
- Develop an implementation plan that identifies issues involved in implementing the trail, such as land ownership, at-grade crossings, wetland mitigation, and project funding.

The trail design needs to satisfy two interrelated objectives, first as a transportation facility and second as a recreational facility. It is expected that pedestrians (walking and jogging), in-line skaters, bicyclists, skateboarders, and non-motorized scooter riders will be using the trail and are accounted for in the overall design philosophy.

Background

The construction of a Connector Trail linking the Canal to Highland Park to the Genesee River has been discussed for several years now by the various concerned parties in the Town of Brighton and the City of Rochester. It was identified in the Town of Brighton 2000 Comprehensive Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan as a route and has been reinforced by Town planning guidance related to the development of St. John's Meadows, the proposed 'Mansions at Brighton' development, and Brighton Meadows Office Park. The City of Rochester is interested in developing this connection as part of its Genesee Riverway Trail corridor. The Genesee Transportation Council has also listed it as a priority project in its Regional Trails Initiative - Phase I Action Plan (completed in 2002).

Project Location

A **Project Map** illustrating the route of the proposed connector trail in relation to the Town of Brighton and the City of Rochester is shown in **Figure 1**.

Recommendations

The proposed Trail route utilizes both public and private lands, including existing streets that will require signing and other upgrades. As the Trail continues north and westward, the proposed route follows existing city streets including Goodman Street, Highland Avenue, South Avenue, Robinson Drive, Mt. Hope Avenue, and McLean Street. Adjacent land uses along the proposed project route, which includes residential, office, and institutional developments and zoned lands, were explored for recommendations for potential trail linkages.

The project would involve two road crossings between the Erie Canal and Highland Park - Westfall Road and Elmwood Avenue. A Traffic Report has been prepared as part of the study that addresses the road crossings and the use of city streets and intersections for the on-street portion of the trail route. Suggestions are included for reconfiguration, re-striping, signage, and other improvements to make those areas safer for the trail users.

