

GENESEE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

Resolution 11-134 Accepting the report, *Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study* as evidence of completion of a component of UPWP Task 6510

WHEREAS,

1. The *FY 2011-2012 Unified Planning Work Program* includes Task 6510, Priority Trails Advancement, for the purpose of advancing concept-level planning and design for priority trail improvement projects identified in the Regional Trails Initiative;
2. A component of said Task has been completed and has resulted in the *Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study*, which provides concept-level planning and design recommendations for the development of a multi-use trail along the NYS Route 104 Corridor in the Towns of Webster, Ontario, Williamson, and Sodus in Monroe and Wayne Counties;
3. Said report has been reviewed by GTC staff and member agencies through the GTC committee process and its recommendations have been found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the GTC Long Range Transportation Plan and worthy of further development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Genesee Transportation Council hereby accepts the report, *Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study*, as evidence of completion of a component of UPWP Task 6510; and
2. That this resolution takes effect immediately.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned duly qualified Secretary of the Genesee Transportation Council certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Genesee Transportation Council held on December 8, 2011.

Date _____

ROBERT A. TRAVER, Secretary
Genesee Transportation Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study

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This report summarizes the analysis and preliminary design studies of the Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study. The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) contracted with **edr** to conduct site analysis, assess feasibility, and produce concept-level planning and design for a multi-use trail in the Route 104 Corridor in the Towns of Webster, Ontario, Williamson, and Sodus in Monroe and Wayne Counties, New York. Preliminary cost estimates and guidelines for the design and implementation of the trail were prepared.

Financial assistance for the preparation of this report was provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through GTC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The Genesee Transportation Council is solely responsible for its content and the views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Genesee Transportation Council assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, age, gender, or income status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. GTC further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not.

Overview. The purpose of the Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study is to assess the feasibility of developing a 17-mile Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant multi-use trail within the highway right-of-way and/or parallel with New York State Route 104 (Route 104). Route 104 is a 182.41-mile long east-west state highway in Upstate New York. The study area for the Route 104 Corridor Trail begins at the eastern end of the existing Route 104 Trail in the Town of Webster and extends east through the Town of Ontario, the Town of Williamson, and part of the Town of Sodus, ending at the western boundary of the Village of Sodus.

With the growing national interest in active transportation and complete streets, this was a very interesting and timely case study. Incorporating an active transportation facility into a heavily auto-dependent environment made for a study that, in some ways, was a rural application of the complete streets approach to transportation planning. The project was guided by the following objectives:

1. Provide active transportation between community resources;
2. Provide universal access;
3. Maintain user safety;
4. Offer a high-quality user experience;
5. Protect and enhance existing resources; and
6. Emphasize sustainability & maintainability.

The planning process included outreach to both the general public and to key stakeholders. Representatives from all affected municipalities and from interested trail organizations served on the advisory committee. The general public was invited to two public information meetings, and meetings were held with stakeholders who may be affected by the proposed trail. The Route 104 Corridor Trail Feasibility Study builds on a number of previously completed planning initiatives in Monroe and Wayne Counties. The study has been conducted with bicyclists and pedestrians considered to be the primary user groups, but other trail users were also considered.

Inventory and Analysis. The feasibility study involved extensive inventory and analysis of existing conditions in the Route 104 Trail Corridor. The topics addressed include the physical and environmental conditions of the study area, property ownership, circulation and transportation, and an assessment of key issues. The following environmental conditions are summarized: topography, soils, ecological character, drainage and water-related issues, and land use.

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Property ownership adjacent to the trail corridor was assessed, as well as easements and rights of way within the study area. A significant number of properties (and their associated driveways) are located in the area immediately adjacent to the Route 104 R.O.W. Other easements and rights of way were inventoried within the study area that could potentially be used to accommodate a multi-use trail. These include County Road 103/ Ridge Road, Ontario-Midland Railroad, and property that is owned/accessed by the Town of Ontario for trail development.

Over the past few years, the Town of Ontario has been developing an east-west trail across the Town. Town officials have negotiated access, used Town land, or acquired new properties to create 5.5 miles of multi-use trail. 3.6 miles are built or in development and 1.9 miles are in the process of negotiation. The planned Ontario trail extends from Dean Parkway in the west to just beyond Furnace Road in the east. Town officials expressed their desire to connect the Route 104 Corridor Trail to this trail, rather than create a parallel trail nearby.

In regards to circulation and transportation, the following characteristics were assessed during the study: pedestrian access, sidewalks, trails, roadways, intersections, and mass transit. All of the roads that intersect with Route 104 within the study area boundary were inventoried and assessed. The intersection summary includes ownership, functional classification, general physical and operational characteristics, and average daily traffic volume (ADT). Basic gap studies were conducted at four of the road crossings along the Railroad Trail/Town of Ontario Trail alignment. Roads were selected based on the ADT.

There are a number of factors to consider when locating a trail. Topography, soils, ecological character, habitat, drainage, wetlands, land use, destinations, property ownership, access, circulation and transportation are all matters that were evaluated. Of these factors, only a few presented significant constraints. Providing safe access to a trail located in the Route 104 R.O.W. did not seem promising once the constraints were mapped, which led to the consideration of other solutions.

Alternatives. The alternatives that are described in detail are not the alternatives that were anticipated at the beginning of the study. When it was determined that the right-of-way was not the best place for a trail, there was a need to think differently about possible solutions. The goal of the study – to have a safe corridor where non-motorized users could travel between Sodus and Webster – could be achieved in a few different ways.

Alternative 1 is a multi-use trail located in the expanded right-of-way of the Ontario Midland Railroad. In addition to being safer, the trail corridor is more scenic than Route 104. According to authorities at Ontario Midland, who operate in a corridor owned by Rochester Gas and Electric/Iberdrola USA, a 25-foot expansion of the railroad right-of-way is planned. The proposed trail could easily fit into this enlarged right-of-way, and would allow a public benefit to be associated with a right-of-way expansion that might be controversial to some landowners.

Alternative 2 offers an active transportation package that expands on the existing transportation network, which is a different type of solution altogether. Instead of creating a new trail, this alternative proposes a package of transportation enhancements that would make Ridge Road more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The proposal is a rural application of complete streets principles, and though using a different approach, still achieves many of the objectives of the study. In addition to improvements to Ridge Road, this alternative recommends improving bicycle and pedestrian connections between Ridge Road and Route 104.

The other alternatives considered, which are not recommended, are multi-use trail alignments located on the north and the south sides of the Route 104 right-of-way. The proximity to Route 104 would allow for good access to many destinations, but the location would create a less desirable trail user experience. Trail users would have to deal with

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truck traffic, noise, and air quality issues related to the highway. This alternative would have significant access and safety concerns related to the number of property owners and associated driveways. Drainage is also a concern. In addition, most of the destinations are located on the south side of the highway. Providing access to these destinations from a trail on the north side of Route 104 might create unsafe crossings.

A feasibility assessment matrix was developed to evaluate the different alternatives. The matrix utilizes the following criteria: environmental impacts, community connectivity, compatibility with other plans, public support, people to benefit from trail, ownership and access, safety, construction costs, and sustainability. Alternatives 1 and 2 both received a similar number of points (22 and 21 stars, respectively). The Route 104 R.O.W. Trails (North and South) received a similar number of points to the No-Build Alternative (16 and 15 stars, respectively).

Preferred Trail Alignment. The preferred trail alignment is Alternative 1, the Railroad Trail. The trail would begin where the existing Route 104 trail ends, at the southwestern corner of the intersection of Salt Road and Route 104. The trail would cross Salt Road and head north along the eastern side of Salt Road, traveling under Route 104 to the railroad right-of-way. At the railroad right-of-way, the trail would head due east along the northern side of the tracks for 1.25 miles until the trail reaches County Line Road and the Town of Ontario.

In the Town of Ontario, the trail continues in the railroad corridor for approximately one-half mile to Dean Parkway, where the trail heads north for 700 feet. At the intersection with Timothy Lane, the trail turns in an easterly direction, running adjacent to Timothy Lane. The trail then turns slightly to the north and continues in an easterly direction to Lakeside Road. From here, the trail trends slightly south while continuing in an easterly direction. At Slocum Road, the trail turns and heads in a northeasterly direction for approximately 0.7 miles in the RG&E utility corridor.

Approximately 400 feet from Kenyon Road, the trail turns due east for 350 feet, and then turns southeast/east across the old Town landfill. The trail crosses Ontario Center Road and travels due east along the long narrow pond in Casey Park to the park entrance at Knickerbocker Road. The trail continues to travel due east, after crossing Knickerbocker, for approximately 1,100 feet, then turns due south for about 700 feet. At this point, the trail turns to the east again and goes across Town land to Furnace Road. The trail heads south along Furnace Road for approximately 700 feet. From Furnace Road, the trail turns and heads to the east for about 2,200 feet. From this point, the trail heads south to the railroad corridor again, and continues for 0.80 miles to the town line at Fisher Road.

The 5.5-mile Williamson section of trail begins at Fisher Road and continues in the railroad corridor to Tuckahoe Road. A slight jog to the north or south will be necessary for 0.75 miles between Tuckahoe and Lake Avenue. At Lake Avenue, the trail jogs back to the north side of the railroad tracks and continues on to East Townline Road. (However, between Lake Avenue and East Townline Road, there are potential choke points that will need to be addressed in later design development phases.) From East Townline Road, the trail then travels 3.25 miles to the intersection of Route 104 and Route 88. This entire section is in the railroad corridor. The estimated cost for the entire trail development project, including design, construction and permitting can be seen in the following chart.

Town	Proposed Trail Length	Basic Trail Cost – Stone Dust, No Gateways	Enhanced Trail Cost – Asphalt and Gateways
Webster	1.4 miles	\$504,914	\$555,876
Ontario	6.8 miles	\$2,493,425	\$2,629,421
Williamson	5.5 miles	\$2,560,907	\$2,710,499
Sodus	3.3 miles	\$1,716,410	\$1,826,592
Total	17.0 miles	\$7,357,767	\$7,804,499

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Trail Design. A 10' wide trail, composed of either stone dust or asphalt, is recommended. Helical-pier boardwalks would be used to traverse federal and state wetlands, streams, and poorly drained areas. A drainage swale with native wet meadow plants would be located between the tracks and the trail to address drainage needs and to provide separation between trail users and the railroad tracks. An open field condition would be maintained in this area in order to keep open sight lines for safety and visibility. At a minimum, the trail would be located 50 feet away from the railroad tracks. Locating the trail in the railroad corridor maximizes natural resources, views, and rural scenic value. The trail is close enough to commercial areas to make it a useful transportation connector, but is far enough away from Route 104 to protect the safety of trail users, and to enhance the scenic quality of the trail.

Phasing. The proposed Route 104 Corridor Trail is a lengthy multi-use trail that passes through four different towns and two different counties, making it likely that the trail will be built in multiple phases. A phasing plan has been developed, with phases breaking at or near municipal boundaries. The first phase that will be necessary is someone to lay the groundwork for a multi-jurisdictional trail project. The trail will need a management structure, access agreements, and funding. After these pieces are in place, trail development can commence.

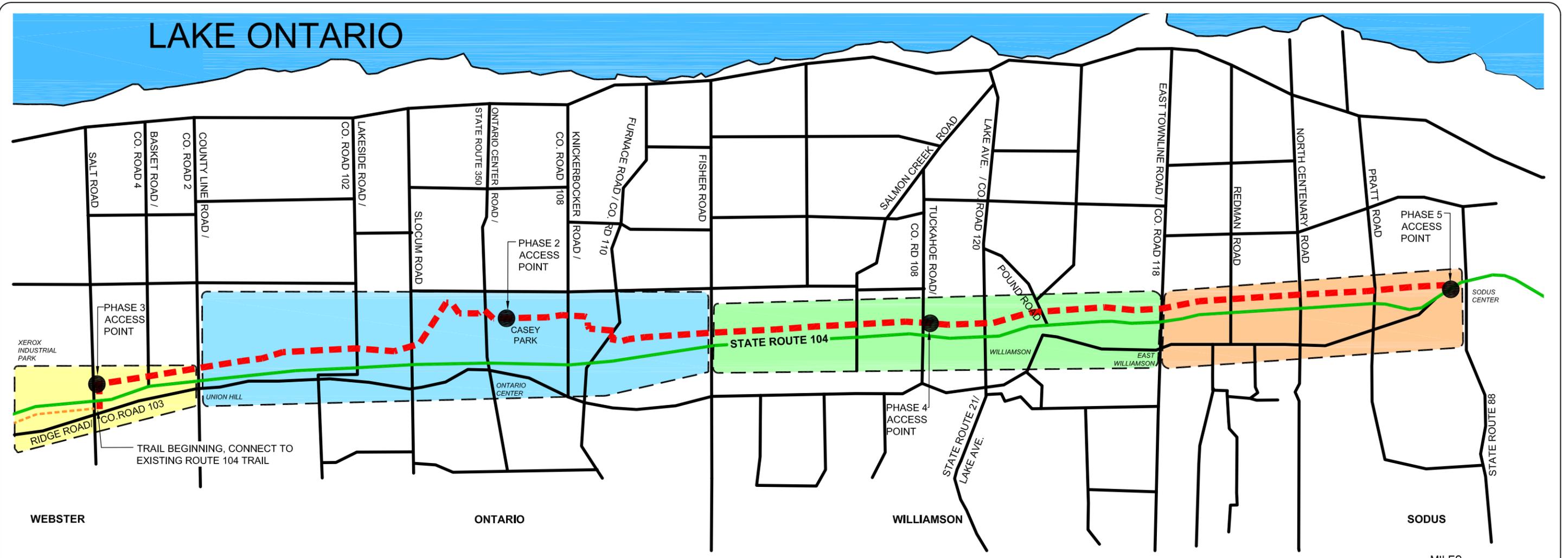
The following phasing plan seemed the most appropriate at the time of the study, but is subject to review as future conditions change.

1. Groundwork – management structure, access agreements, and funding.
2. The Town of Ontario, with sections of trail already built or under development, is the most logical location for “official” trail development to begin.
3. Once the trail is completed in the Town of Ontario, the next logical piece of trail to develop is the Webster segment. This section of trail will connect the existing Route 104 Trail to the portion of trail in Ontario.
4. The next phase of trail development will be the section located in the Town of Williamson. This segment would extend the trail from Webster through Ontario and Williamson.
5. The final phase of trail development would extend the trail into the Town of Sodus. This section would connect Webster and Sodus, and provide more than 23 miles of continuous trail. (23 miles includes the existing Route 104 Trail in Webster.)

After construction funding is acquired, the necessary environmental review and permitting would be completed for each phase before construction commences. It is important to remember that each trail segment should function as a stand-alone trail until the entire trail is connected. For this reason, trailheads and connections to existing streets have been identified for each phase. Each trailhead would have designated parking for approximately 10 cars, and a kiosk with trail maps and information.

In addition, as trail development may take a number of years, a combination of Alternatives 1 and 2 could be used to provide an interconnected active transportation corridor. The active transportation package, featuring a shared roadway along Ridge Road, could have an on-street connection to completed portions of the trail. For example, while one section is being completed, another town might opt to complete the less expensive improvements to Ridge Road while they seek funding for the trail. This would provide an interim route while the trail is completed.

Implementation. An implementation section is included in the report that addresses potential funding sources, trail construction standards, trail user guidelines, maintenance and management procedures, and a summary of factors not addressed during the study. When constructed, the Route 104 Corridor Trail will provide an exceptional active transportation facility in a heavily auto-dependent environment. This, in turn, will provide a myriad of benefits both for trail users, and for each community in which the trail will be located.



KEY

- Phase Boundary
- Phases
- Recommended Trail Alignment
- Existing Trail
- NYS Route 104
- Trail Access Point. Access points are included for each phase of the project. These areas act as main access points onto the trail and would include parking and trail head signage.

PHASING DESCRIPTIONS

- PHASE 1: Pre-Construction Groundwork**
- Formalize access agreements
 - Identify trail management entity
 - Establish trail management structure including operation, maintenance and liability
 - Secure funding for construction
 - Implement phasing according to funding stream, including any required environmental review and permitting
- PHASE 2: Town of Ontario, 6.8 Miles**
 The second phase of trail development will be the construction of the trail in the Town of Ontario. The Town has already developed a plan for approximately 5.5 miles of trail, of which 3.6 miles are built or in development, and 1.9 miles are in the negotiation process. The other portions of trail in Ontario will be located in the Ontario Midland Railroad R.O.W. for a total of 6.8 miles.

- PHASE 3: Town of Webster, 1.4 Miles**
 The third phase of trail development will be the section located in the Town of Webster. Once the Ontario segment is complete, this portion is the next logical piece. This 1.4-mile section of trail will connect the existing 6.1-mile Route 104 Trail in Webster to the 6.8-mile section in Ontario.
- PHASE 4: Town of Williamson, 5.5 Miles**
 The fourth phase of trail development will be the section located in the Town of Williamson. This 5.5-mile segment would extend the trail from Webster through Ontario and Williamson. This section of trail will be primarily located in the Ontario Midland Railroad R.O.W., except between Tuckahoe Road and Lake Avenue, where the trail will follow an alternate route.
- PHASE 5: Town of Sodus, 3.3 Miles**
 The final phase of trail development would extend the trail into the Town of Sodus. This 3.3-mile section would connect Webster and Sodus. The trail would terminate near the intersection of Route 104 and Route 88 but would provide for future connection to the Sodus to Wolcott section of the Route 104 Trail.



PROJECT TITLE: **ROUTE 104 CORRIDOR TRAIL**

DRAWING TITLE: **RECOMMENDED TRAIL ALIGNMENT AND PHASING PLAN**

edr JOB NUMBER: **10034**

SCALE: **NOT TO SCALE**

DRAWN BY: **NMB**

DRAWING NUMBER: **FIGURE 17**

CHECKED BY: **EMS/TMR**

DATE: **06/07/2011**

