

# Genesee Riverway Trail North Completion Study

## Scope of Work

### A. Objective

The Genesee Riverway Trail (GRT) North Completion Study will explore the GRT corridor north of downtown Rochester and assess the feasibility of and options to complete a seamless trail that is accessible for all-ages/abilities for everyday transportation and recreation needs. The recommendation shall propose a system that is well-integrated and connected to the existing Genesee Riverway corridor including existing off-road trail connections, parks, adjacent neighborhoods and other attractions and destinations.. Particular attention will be paid to addressing trail gaps and improving access in the portion of the corridor directly north of downtown, which is home to a number of populations of concern. Proactive planning should ensure that the benefits of any new investments and initiatives reach people who already live and work in these neighborhoods. The study will also include an analysis of best practices in trail materials and operations for communities with similar climates and anticipated climate change impacts to Rochester.

### B. Background

The GRT is a key asset and anchor to the city, region, and state's trail network. Approximately twenty-five percent of the corridor is on-road, which is less than ideal for many potential users, and some off-road segments are inadequate for everyday transportation and/or not ADA accessible due to slopes, narrow widths, proximity to high-volume and high-speed traffic, and/or roadway crossings. This is particularly true for the area just north of downtown, which is also home to some of the most challenged neighborhoods in the city. It is also incomplete as the City's goal is to provide a seamless off-road trail experience on both sides of the river for the entire corridor, yet long stretches of the corridor only include trail access on one side of the river. This significantly limits access in the gorge section of the river, as the steep topography makes it more challenging for switching from one side of the river to the other.

Meanwhile the residential population downtown has been steadily growing and is nearing 10,000 residents. Significant new investments and initiatives to connect downtown with the neighborhoods to the north and to the unique urban landscape of High Falls and the Genesee River gorge are underway. Hundreds of millions of dollars of new investment is being planned for this area, all with a goal of better connecting people to the river, better integrating downtown with neighborhoods to the north, and creating a safer, more seamless multimodal transportation network and trail network that connects people across the city, as well as to the broader region and beyond.

The GRT has been the subject of several studies and plans over the years, all with the long-term goal of developing a continuous, safe, accessible, and connected trail extending the full length of the city's river corridor. Past studies include the GTC's

Genesee Riverway Trail Feasibility Study (2006), Urban Trail Linkages Study (2013), Regional Trails Initiative Phase III (2016), the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (2018), the ROC the Riverway Vision Plan (2018), and the *Rochester* 2034 Comprehensive Plan (2019). A number of recommendations from these various efforts have been implemented over the years, yet gaps remain. Although the aforementioned projects support the full completion of the trail corridor, none of them contain an in-depth trail feasibility study for all the various options that exist in the corridor. This project seeks to build on that past work in order to advance these ideas.

### **C. Tasks**

1. Form a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of residents and key community stakeholders including but not limited to:
  - a. City of Rochester Department of Environmental Services
  - b. City of Rochester Planning Office
  - c. City of Rochester Department of Neighborhood and Business Development
  - d. City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Human Services
  - e. Monroe County Department of Transportation
  - f. New York State Department of Transportation
  - g. Genesee Transportation Council
  - h. Reconnect Rochester
  - i. Center for Disability Rights (or Disabled community representatives)
  - j. Genesee River Alliance
  - k. Racial Equity focused organizations and people
  - l. Other active transportation representatives and community stakeholders
  - m. Applicable neighborhood organizations/associations
2. In collaboration with Genesee Transportation Council staff, develop an RFP to ultimately engage the services of a consultant or consultant team with expertise in urban trail planning, feasibility assessment, public engagement, facility cost estimation, and landscape architecture.
3. Review prior completed studies and recent initiatives for past and current recommendations to complete the Genesee Riverway Trail.
  - a. Document what has been implemented, what is being planned from current initiatives, what has not been implemented and why.
4. Engage residents, the broader community, interested parties, and key stakeholders for input and ideas about what is desired for a seamless, continuous, connected, accessible GRT.
5. Research and document current best practices in multi-modal off-road trail design, materials and operations for communities with similar climates and/or

likely impacts in the face of climate change and scarce municipal resources to inform implementation and ongoing operation of the GRT. Develop best practice recommendations to inform implementation and ongoing operation of the GRT.

6. Assess the corridor and existing GRT facilities, identifying gaps in full off-road connectivity along both banks of the river and documentation of existing trail sections with a focus on identifying areas that do not meet the best practice recommendations.
7. Develop a list of potential GRT completion facility options, a framework for assessing their key benefits and challenges, and an analysis of options identified.
8. Develop cost estimates (including maintenance of existing trail assets to provide a comprehensive cost estimate for the corridor) and concept visuals for a yet-to-be determined number of the options assessed.
9. Seek additional community engagement to share recommendations, options, assessments, cost estimates, visuals, and hear feedback.
10. Develop a list of prioritized recommendations for which options to pursue and how over the short-, medium-, and long-term.
11. Compile all information into an informative, highly visual, and easy to understand Final Report, including a web-based *Story Map* for recommendations.
  - a. Provide a step-by-step outline of the specific tasks necessary to conduct the project. The tasks should be sufficiently well defined for the GTC Planning Committee to:
    - i. Understand how the project will be conducted and;
    - ii. Monitor the progress of the project on a regular basis.

A mandatory task is forming a project steering/advisory committee. Please identify, to the greatest extent possible, all applicable stakeholders. If the project includes state transportation facilities, the New York State Department of Transportation must be listed as a stakeholder. Additionally, all other transportation infrastructure (e.g., road, bridge, bike or pedestrian facilities, and/or transit) owners must be listed as stakeholders. Project sponsors are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to participate on the committee. Efforts to identify and include stakeholders must be documented. If facility stakeholders are not part of the steering/advisory committee, they must be provided an opportunity to review and comment on draft recommendations that impact their facilities.

## D. Products

The following products are expected as part of this project:

1. Public Participation Plan
2. Existing Conditions Inventory and Needs Assessment
3. Best practice analysis and recommendations
4. Concept Alternatives
5. Draft Final Report – including detailed maps, cost estimates, and best practices
6. Final Report – including *Story Map*
7. Executive Summary

## E. Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan will include, at minimum, the following elements:

1. Project Steering Committee – This committee will meet each month and provide advisement throughout the project.
2. Multiple rounds of open houses / public meetings, pop-up events, , online presentations, and other forms of outreach will be conducted throughout the project. It is expected that City Planning and DES Staff at the City will participate in the majority of these outreach activities. Consulting staff will guide and organize the work, but on-ground consultant staff may not be necessary for all engagement activities. Consultant staff will be expected to be present for major engagement activities.
3. In the early phases of the project, engagement activities will be geared toward understanding the issues, informing people of the project, and getting people involved.
4. In later phases of the project, engagement activities will be geared toward refining the recommendations and outcomes of the planning process while ensuring the plan reflects the desires of city residents.

## F. Schedule

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Scope of work approved	May 2023
RFP released	June 2023
Consultant selected	August 2023
Contract finalized and executed	September 2023
Project Kickoff	October 2023
Project Completion	September 2024

## G. Project Budget

Sources of Funds		Uses of Funds	
	<u>FY 2023-24</u>		<u>FY 2023-24</u>
<u>Federal Funds</u>		<u>GTC</u>	
FHWA	\$100,000	Staff	\$0
FTA	0	Contractual	0
Subtotal	<u>\$100,000</u>	Subtotal	<u>\$0</u>
<u>Matching Funds</u>		<u>Other Agency</u>	
State (In-kind)	\$0	Staff	\$0
Local (In-kind)	\$20,000	Contractual	\$110,000
Local (Cash)	\$10,000	In-kind Exp.	\$20,000
Subtotal	<u>\$30,000</u>	Subtotal	<u>\$130,000</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u><u>\$130,000</u></u>	<u>Total</u>	<u><u>\$130,000</u></u>