

Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Trails Initiative Update

Scope of Work

A. Objective

To update the Regional Trails Initiative (RTI), Phases I (2002) II (2004) and III (2016); to amend and revise network recommendations to reflect current trails and trail gaps within the network. To expand trail project descriptions, identify next steps to progress trail projects, and add detail to future steps for each existing trail plan. To simplify trail project prioritization with a focus on inter-municipality trails & regional hubs.

B. Background

The study area includes the entire nine-county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region. The update will reflect the significant trail development that has occurred since 2016, the completion of GTC-funded trail feasibility studies, other efforts to advance trail development in the region, changes with respect to funding sources and design guidance, and pertinent lessons learned in the past 20+ years since the completion of the initial RTI.

The multi-use trail network is especially important to low-income residents in the region who often lack access to private automobiles. Improving the trail network will enhance safety for all populations throughout the region, by providing separation between motorized and non-motorized users. A robust trail network provides greater transportation mode optionality, which has the benefit of reducing roadway congestion and enhancing air quality. While the existing network already comprises an asset that contributes to the quality of life and attractiveness of the region, improvements to its extent and connectivity will provide increased benefits to residents and visitors throughout the region.

According to the *Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region 2045*, there are more than 280 miles of existing trails in the region. New trails have been constructed following the completion of the RTI Phase III in 2016, some of which may be unknown to the Genesee Transportation Council. As a result of these successes, the inventory of trails included in the 2016 RTI and the plan recommendations no longer reflect existing conditions, which limits its usefulness as a resource for communities.

An update to the RTI will allow for an evaluation of the existing trail network from the perspective of a gap analysis to prioritize missing links within the system. Despite the trail system growth, gaps do remain in the network, identified by the Phase III Regional Trails Initiative (2016) and various cycling master plans. These gaps present challenges to more complete regional access for cyclists. Increased expansion of the dedicated cycling and multi-use trail network is a desired LRTP system performance measure outcome directly related to Access and Equity, as well as Health and Safety.

In addition to responding to changes in existing conditions, the updated RTI will be informed by lessons learned through the completion of trail-focused feasibility studies and trail construction, such as the importance of community support in advancing trail development and the constraints imposed by the ownership status of prospective trail alignments. The updated RTI may result in a reduced number and length of recommended trails to those that can reasonably

expect to: receive community support for their development, close gaps in the existing trail network, and minimize necessary on-street segments.

C. Tasks

1. Convene a Steering Committee of representatives from the counties and municipalities of the region, the City of Rochester, GTC staff, the Greater Rochester Active Transportation Working Group, affected state agencies which may include, but not be limited to: New York State (NYS) Department of Transportation, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historical Preservation, and others, to guide development of the update to the RTI.
2. Retain a consultant via a published solicitation in the *New York State Contract Reporter* and *Rochester Business Journal* and associated Request for Proposals (RFP). A consultant selection committee comprised of members from the agencies listed in Task 1 (or subset thereof, dependent on members' availability) will select a preferred consultant to conduct Tasks 3 through 9, below.
3. Inventory and describe the study area's physical, environmental, and socioeconomic conditions as they relate to issues and opportunities relevant to the regional trails network. Conditions to be inventoried shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Extent of the existing trail network including mileage;
 - b. Extent of the trail network under construction, funded, or committed to construction including mileage;
 - c. Surface conditions (surface type and quality);
 - d. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities for each trail;
 - e. Trail groups and affiliated organizations in the region;
 - f. Status of proposed trails from previous RTIs;
 - g. Status of trails currently under development; and
 - h. Employment, educational, recreational, and other destinations.
4. Develop a prioritization rubric to assess the potential development of proposed trails and prioritize trail recommendations with respect to the conditions described in Task 3, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Gaps in trail connectivity and access;
 - b. Destinations not currently served;
 - c. Development feasibility factors such lands ownership, existing trail segment infrastructure, and community support; and
 - d. Populations not currently served by multi-use trails (with an emphasis on those with limited access and mobility options).
5. Develop detailed "Priority Trail Project Fact Sheets", like those found in the Phase 2 RTI published 2004, for the top priority trails, as determined by Steering Committee input and the prioritization rubric developed as part of Task 4.
6. Hold a public input session to solicit commentary on the results of Tasks 3 through 5, and to further develop the identification of priority trails as well as system needs, opportunities, and issues with respect to the regional multi-use trail system.

7. Prepare a draft report incorporating the results of Tasks 3 through 6, including priority recommendations.
8. Hold a second public input session to seek input and discuss the draft recommendations of Task 7.
9. Identify the follow-on activities necessary to advance the implementation of the final report recommendations, including the timing of and potential funding sources to conduct these activities.
10. Develop a final report and associated executive summary.

D. Products

1. *Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Trails Initiative Update* Final Report
2. Executive Summary
3. Steering Committee agendas and public meeting materials
4. GIS layers and associated databases
5. Priority Trail Project Fact Sheets & high-level Action Plan for priority proposed trails
6. Design Guidance Appendix

E. Public Participation Plan

Per the GTC Public Participation Policy public involvement will include a local Steering Committee, one or a series of public meetings early in the process to solicit public input on the opportunities and issues related to the project, and one or a series of public meetings to solicit public input on the project recommendations prior to finalizing the project.

F. Schedule

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| 1. Scope of work approved | February 2024 |
| 2. Consultant selection | June 2024 |
| 3. Project initiation meeting | August 2024 |
| 4. Develop a community engagement plan | September 2024 |
| 5. Conduct Existing conditions analysis | October - November 2024 |
| 6. Conduct Needs assessment | December 2024 - February 2025 |
| 7. Develop recommendations | March - April 2025 |
| 8. Develop implementation strategies | May 2025 |
| 9. Final report completed | July 2025 |
| 10. Financial closeout | December 2025 |

G. Project Budget

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

(The Local In-kind Match was reduced to maintain 5% of the overall program. GTC is expected to maintain their Local In-kind Match commitment of \$10,000 as noted in their UPWP application.)