

DRAFT

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Saranac River Trail Greenway

FEASIBILITY STUDY | SUMMER 2015

This document was prepared with funding provided by the New York State Department of State under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.



Department
of State



alta
PLANNING + DESIGN

Overview

Topics to be Covered:

1. What is the Saranac River Trail Greenway
2. How did we develop the vision and alternative alignments?
3. Potential Alignment
4. Next Steps



Community Support for the SRTG



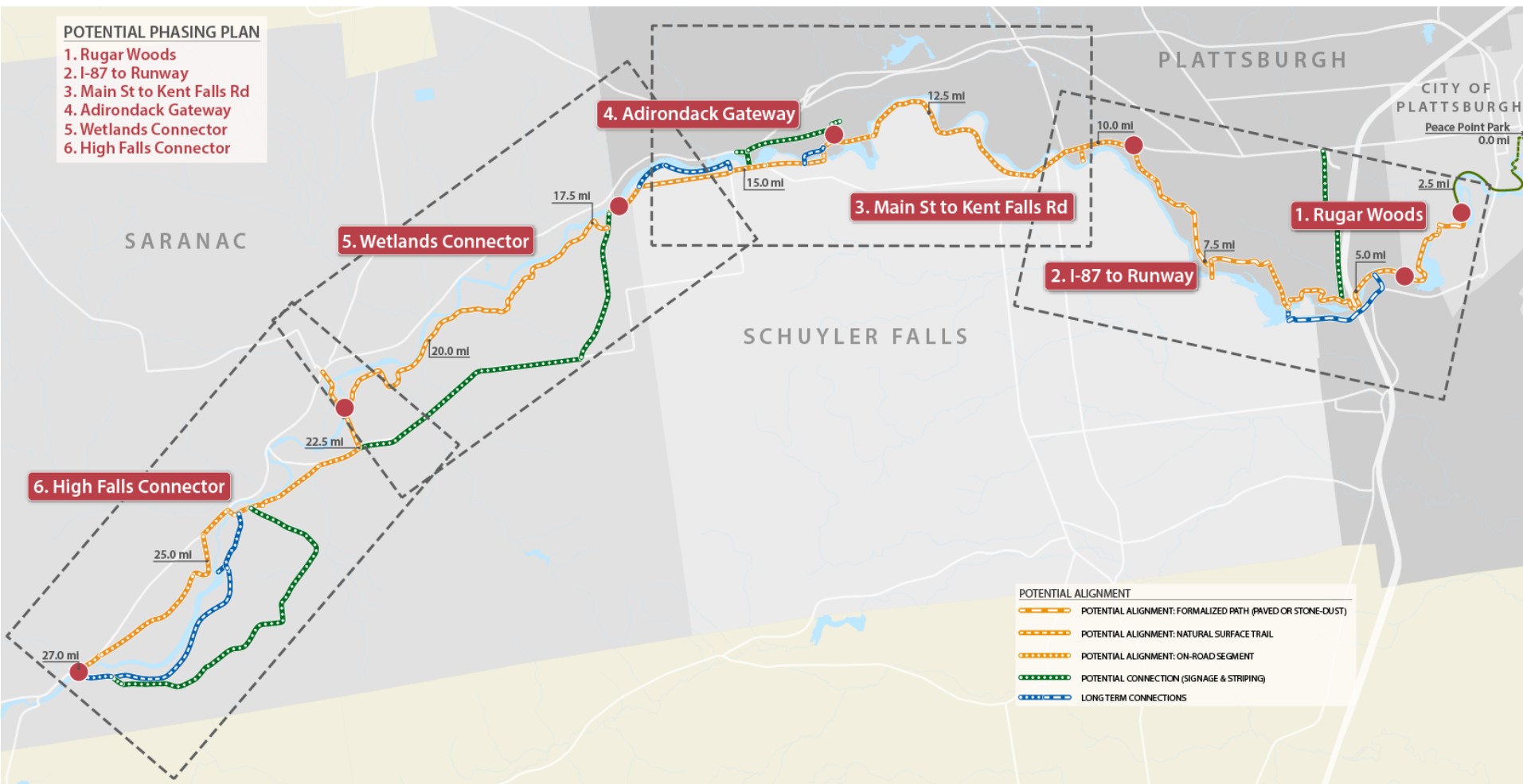
Planning Process

Steps that led to SRTG Feasibility Study:

- Essex and Clinton Counties Waterfront Plan
- Priority Project Funding through EPF LWRP grant to Rouses Point
- Other LWRP Plans:
 - Town of Plattsburgh Lake Champlain & Saranac River Waterfront Plan
 - City of Plattsburgh Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
 - Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy
- In all of these plans, the SRTG is indicated as a priority



The Saranac River Trail Greenway Potential Alignment



LEGEND

- Existing Trail
- On-Street Connections
- Proposed Trail
- Proposed SRTG Extension
- Proposed Connector Trail

Connecting to SRT



From Peace Point Park



To High Falls Gorge



Benefits of the SRTG



1,178,000 MORE BIKE TRIPS
PER YEAR



205,000 MORE WALK TRIPS
PER YEAR



\$62,000 IN HEALTH BENEFITS
PER YEAR



\$1,394,000 IN TRANSPORTATION
BENEFITS PER YEAR



\$36,000 IN ENVIRONMENTAL
BENEFITS PER YEAR

over

\$1.4 MILLION

IN TOTAL BENEFITS PER YEAR

When the SARANAC RIVER TRAIL GREENWAY IS COMPLETE,

CLINTON COUNTY
REGION WILL GAIN:

The Saranac River Trail Greenway will connect neighborhoods from the City and Town of Plattsburgh to Schuyler Falls and Saranac, providing residents and visitors a window into the Adirondack Coast and all it has to offer. Designed for active transportation and outdoor recreation, this path will extend a total of 26 miles, linking residents and visitors to nature, world class fishing, jobs, schools, shopping, restaurants, parks, and other attractions. With over 1.5 miles already built, the trail system is already bolstering the quality of life in the region.¹

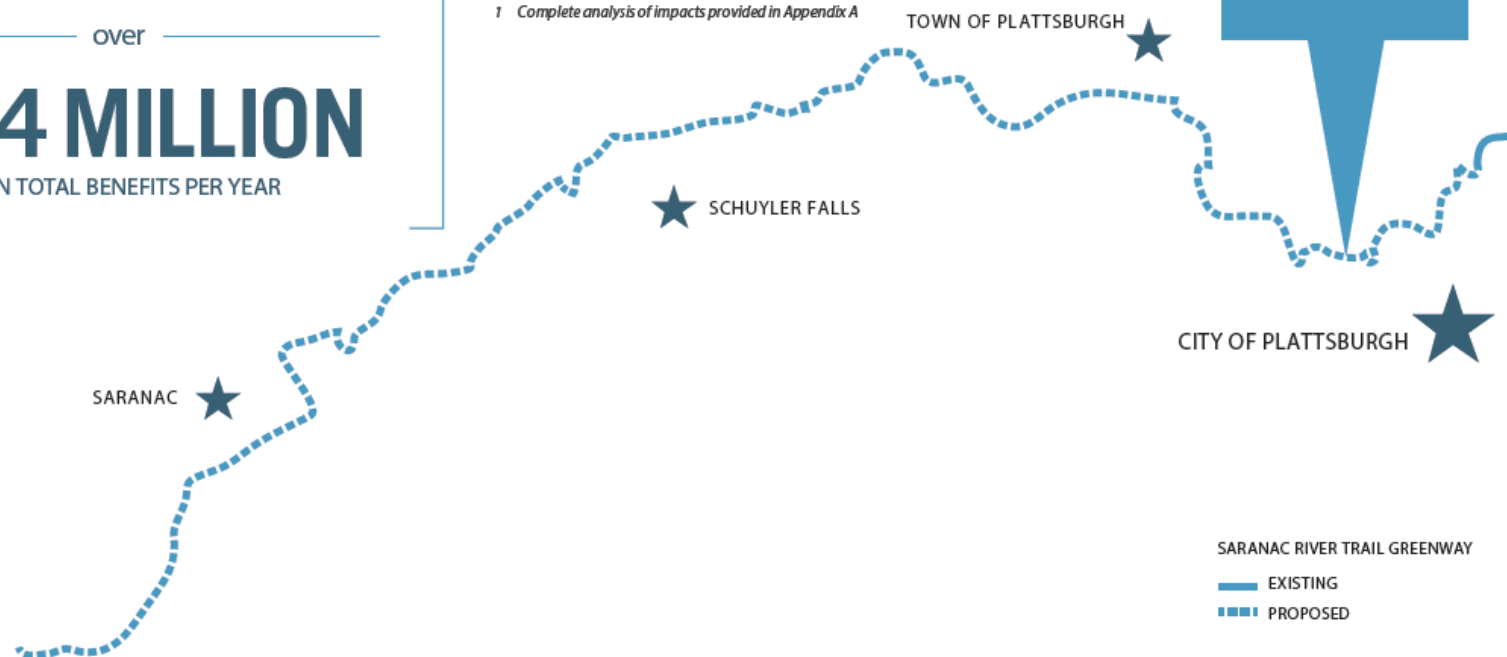
¹ Complete analysis of impacts provided in Appendix A

43,000

PEOPLE LIVE WITHIN A

**15 MINUTE
BIKE RIDE**

OF THE PROPOSED
GREENWAY.



Economic Benefits of the SRTG

When the
SRTG IS COMPLETE,

THE CLINTON COUNTY REGION WILL GAIN



TOURISM SPENDING



\$1,462,200

IN ESTIMATED
TOURISM SPENDING PER YEAR



PROPERTY VALUE

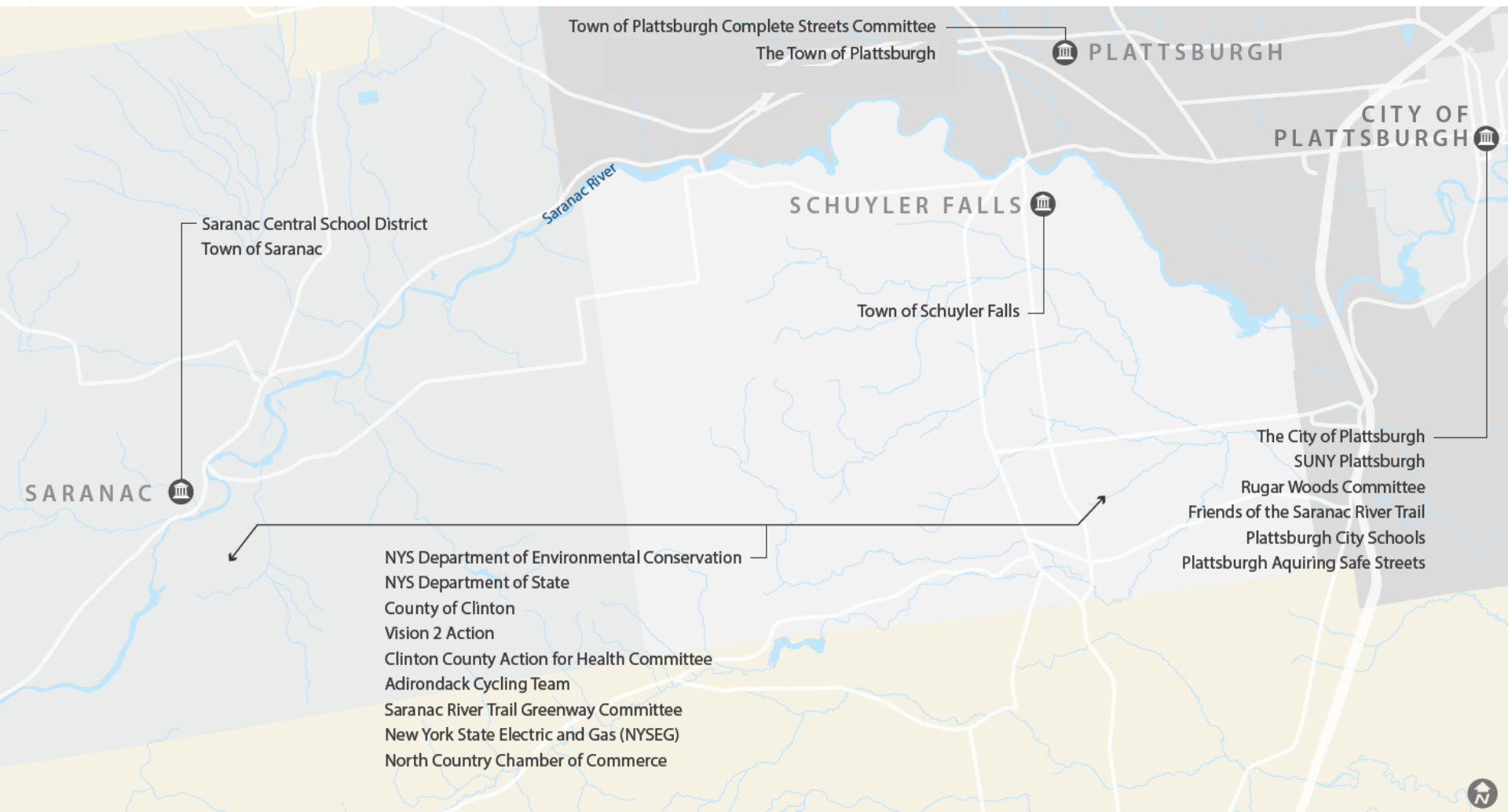


\$16,301,200

IN ESTIMATED PROPERTY VALUE
GROWTH



Community Partners



The SRTG is about ACCESS

	FISHING		WINTER RECREATION
	CANOEING		DAM
	KAYAKING/WHITEWATER		MOTOR VEHICLE BRIDGE
	PADDLE CRAFT PUT-IN		PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
	PORTAGE		CLOSED BRIDGE
	PARKING		UNIVERSITY
	PARK		SCHOOL
	MOUNTAIN BIKING		BEACH
	RUNNING		SENIOR HOUSING
	HIKING		TOWN HALL
	CAMPING		AIRPORT
	TRAIL HEAD		POCKET PARK OPPORTUNITY
	DISC GOLF		HISTORICAL MARKER
	FOOD AND WATER		
	LODGING		

Trail Typologies



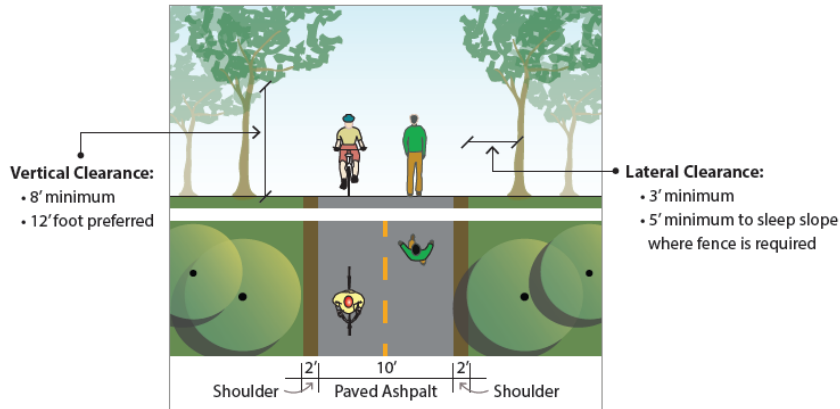
Off-Road Segments



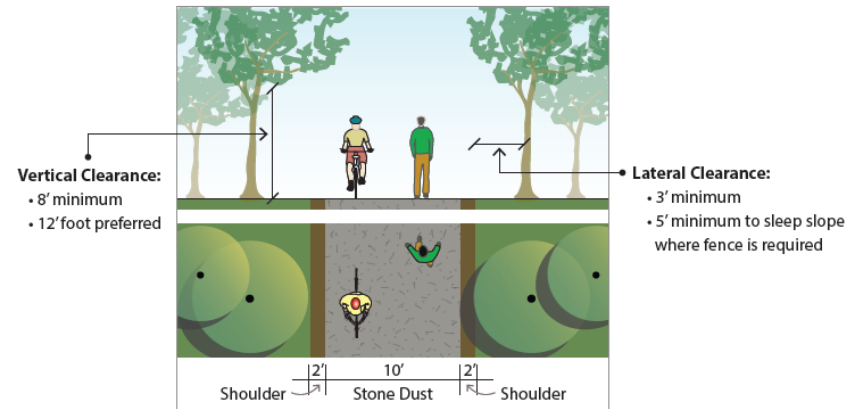
On-Road Segments

Trail Typology: Off-Road Segments

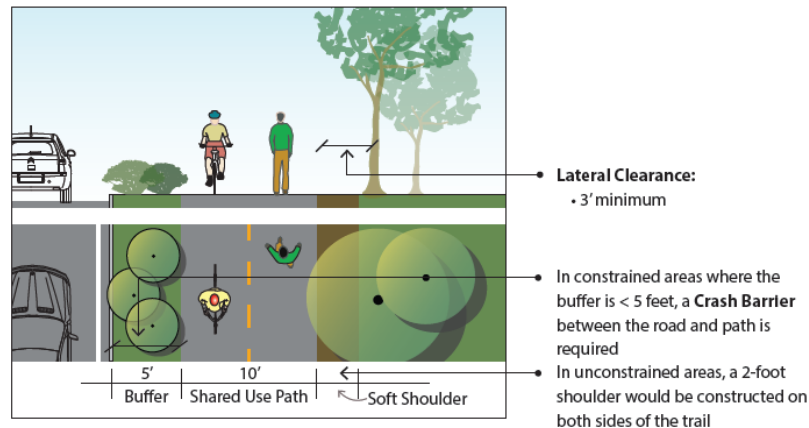
TRAIL TYPE 1: SHARED USE PATH



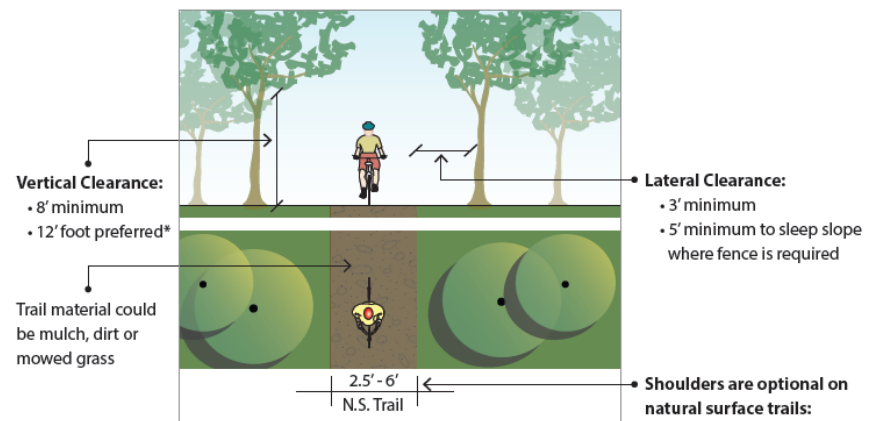
TRAIL TYPE 2: SHARED USE PATH - STONE DUST



TRAIL TYPE 3: SIDEPATH



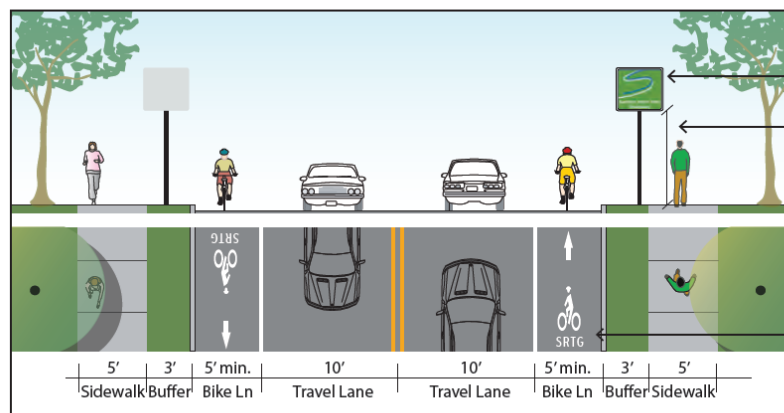
TRAIL TYPE 4: NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL



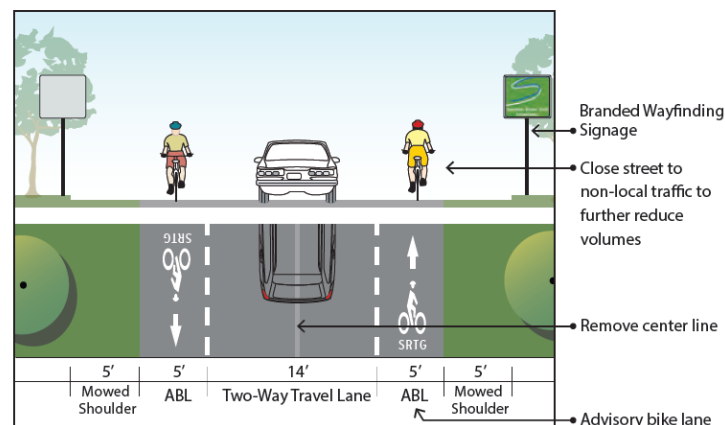
*Maintaining proper clearings requires frequent maintenance, maintaining wider clearances could save time and resources in the long run

Trail Typology: On-Road Segments

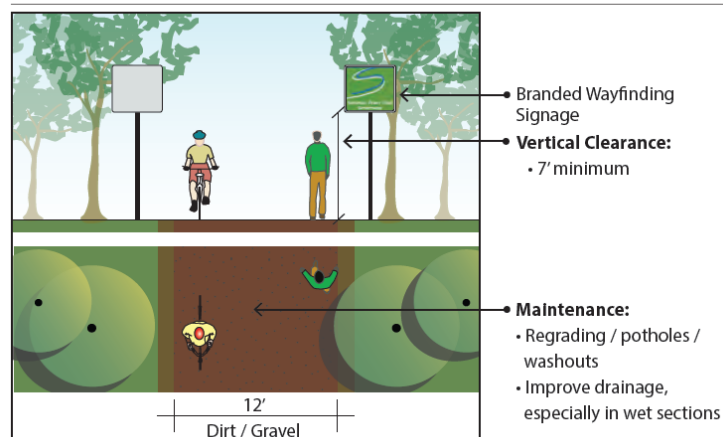
TRAIL TYPE 5: DOWNTOWN CONNECTOR TYPICAL



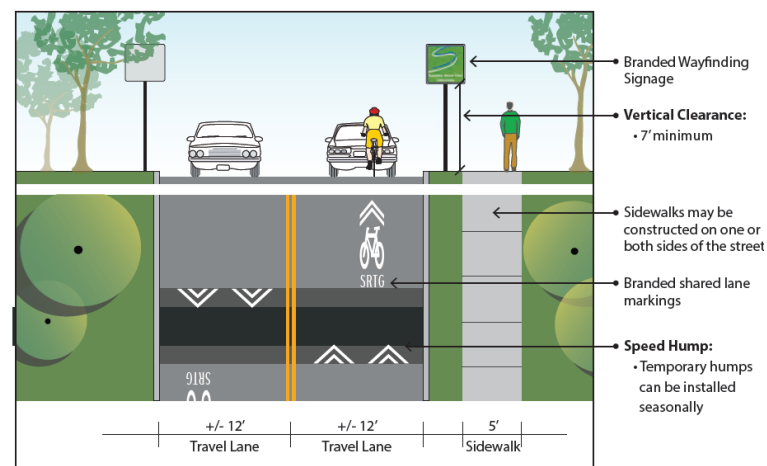
TRAIL TYPE 6: KENT FALLS CONNECTOR



TRAIL TYPE 7: UTILITY ACCESS ROAD



TRAIL TYPE 8: NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING



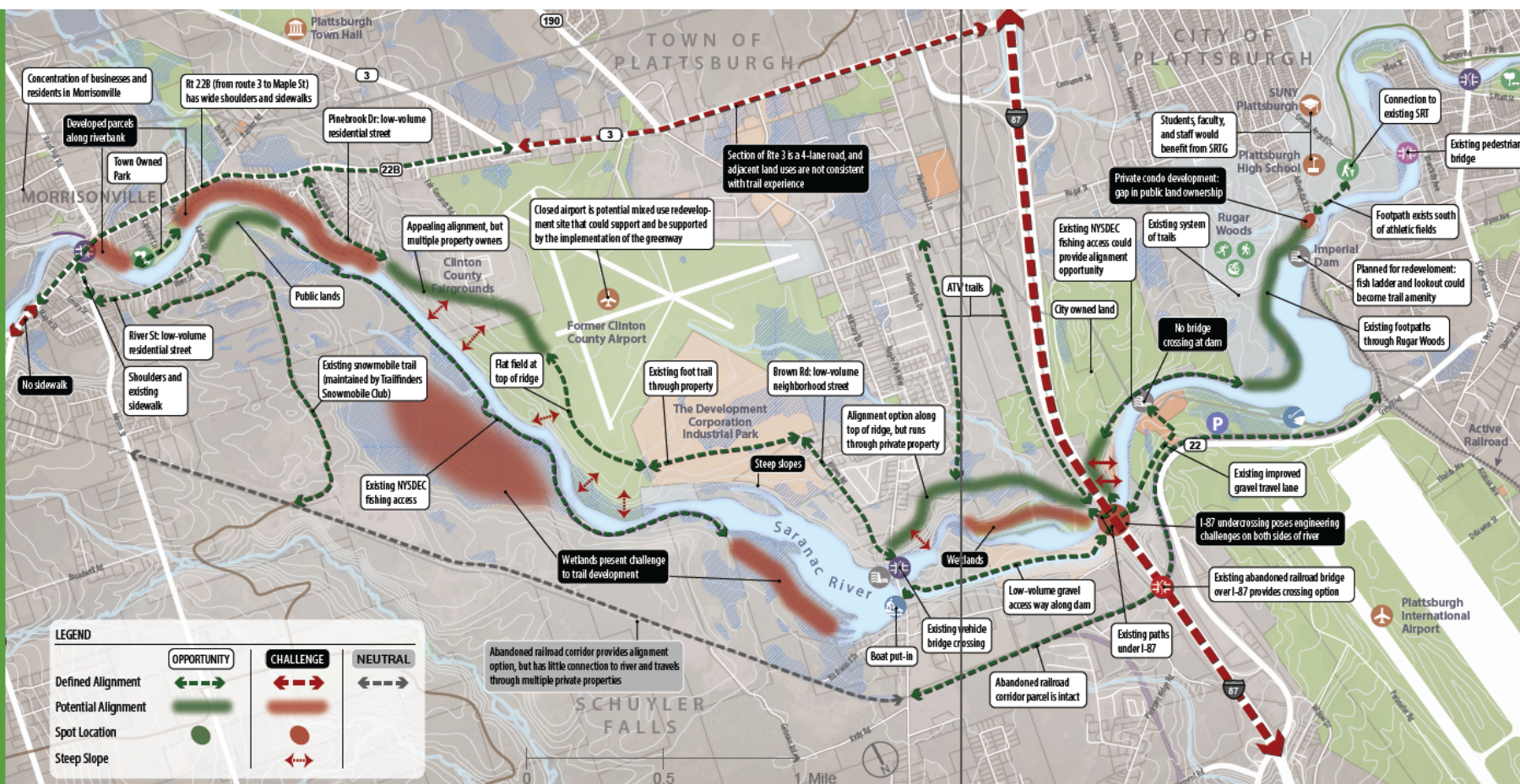
*Study should be conducted before installation of treatment to confirm that volumes and speeds are consistent with guidance and standards of local governing agencies for shared roadway treatments.

Developing the SRTG

1. Existing Conditions Analysis
2. Opportunities & Challenges Analysis
3. Alternative Alignment Analysis
4. Potential Alignment



Opportunities and Challenges Analysis



SRTG Opportunities for Alignments

Major Themes:

Opportunities

There are many opportunities to make connections to destinations and for trail alignments along the Saranac River Trail Greenway corridor. These opportunities were analyzed and grouped according to common themes. Descriptions of these major themes are provided below, and maps on subsequent pages display detailed information about the opportunities available for each section of the SRTG.



Existing Trails

Existing walking, hiking, snowmobiling, and ATV trails have been identified as attractive options for trail alignments. These trails exist on both public and private lands. Trails on private land may not be open for public access.



Fishing Easements

The New York State Dept of Environmental Conservation has secured easements along private property to provide fishing access to the public. Currently, these easements only allow fishing access. These easements could potentially be amended to allow other non-motorized uses, such as walking and biking, and therefore represent opportunities, but cooperation and negotiation with property owners would be necessary.



Utility & Rail Rights-Of-Way

Rights-of-way (ROW) along power lines, NYSEG Access Roads, and abandoned railroad corridors provide potential alignment opportunities along the Saranac River. While these lands do present a major opportunity, there are considerable technical, legal and bureaucratic obstacles to their use.



Point of Interest

Destinations along the river, including both man-made and natural points of interest, will serve as trip beginning and end-points for many users. Destinations include dam overlooks, restaurants, schools and offices, and campgrounds / lodging.



Existing Road/Bridge Infrastructure

Low-volume country roads that are amenable to non-motorized transportation, existing vehicular bridges that cross the Saranac River, and closed bridges that could be converted into bike and pedestrian crossings have been identified as significant opportunities for trail connections.



Private Parcel Opportunity

There are many private parcels along the banks of the Saranac River that are undeveloped. Trail alignments that include private lands represent long-term planning goals because of the need to negotiate acceptable easements with property owners.



Public Parcel Opportunity

There are trail alignment opportunities along the riverbanks through publicly owned, and largely undeveloped, parcels of land. Trail use must be compatible with long-term plans for the properties.

SRTG Challenges to Alignments

Major Themes:

Challenges

Challenges also exist, both natural and man-made, to the development of the Saranac River Trail Greenway. These challenges were analyzed and grouped according to common themes. Descriptions of these major themes are provided below, and maps on subsequent pages display detailed information about the challenges to developing the SRTG.



Infrastructural Barrier

Major barriers that limit access to the river include Interstate 87, and the dam penstock infrastructure for the generation of hydro-electric power.



Terrain

Many banks along stretches of the Saranac River are very steep, which limit the ability to construct trails in these areas.



Property Owners

There are several opportunities to route the SRTG through private properties, but trail alignments that include private lands represent long-term planning goals because of the need to negotiate acceptable easements with property owners. Alignments that avoid private property could be implemented more quickly.



River Crossings

There are existing bridges that cross the Saranac River, but which are closed and would need to be rehabilitated in order to be incorporated into the SRTG. Additionally, there are instances where a river crossing is desirable, but no such crossing exists.



Wetlands

Wetlands are present along several sections of the Saranac River. Portions of the SRTG could be routed through wetlands, but these alignments would be more expensive to construct, as they would require boardwalks and permits. Routing the greenway through wetlands does present an excellent educational opportunity.



Existing Road Infrastructure

Several roads parallel the Saranac River, but are less appealing alignment options due to high posted speed limits, minimal shoulders and sidewalks, and few connections to the River.

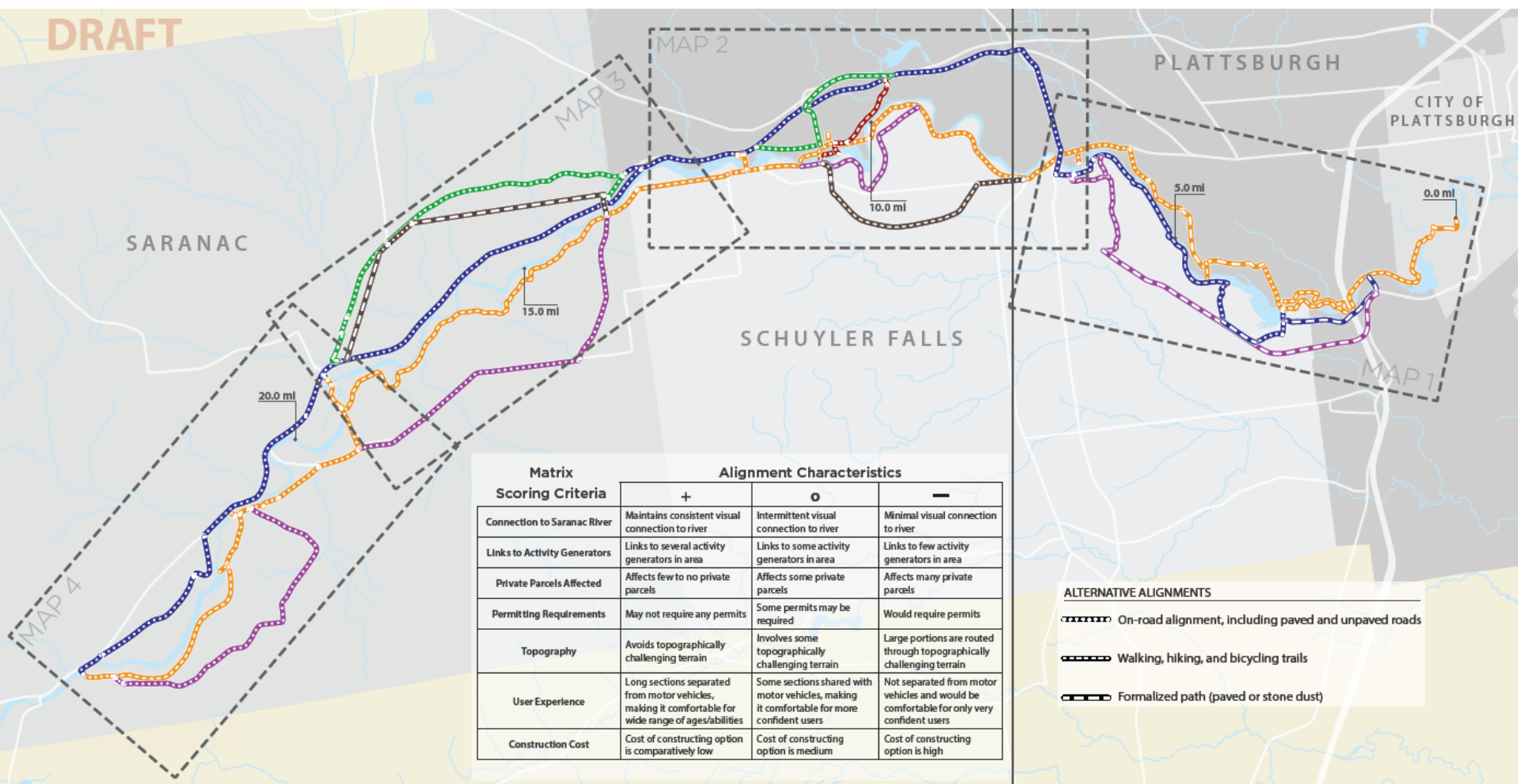


Developed Riverbanks

Developed parcels along the banks of the Saranac River are a barrier to alignment options.

Alignment Options

Multiple alignment options were developed for each section of the SRTG



Alignment Options

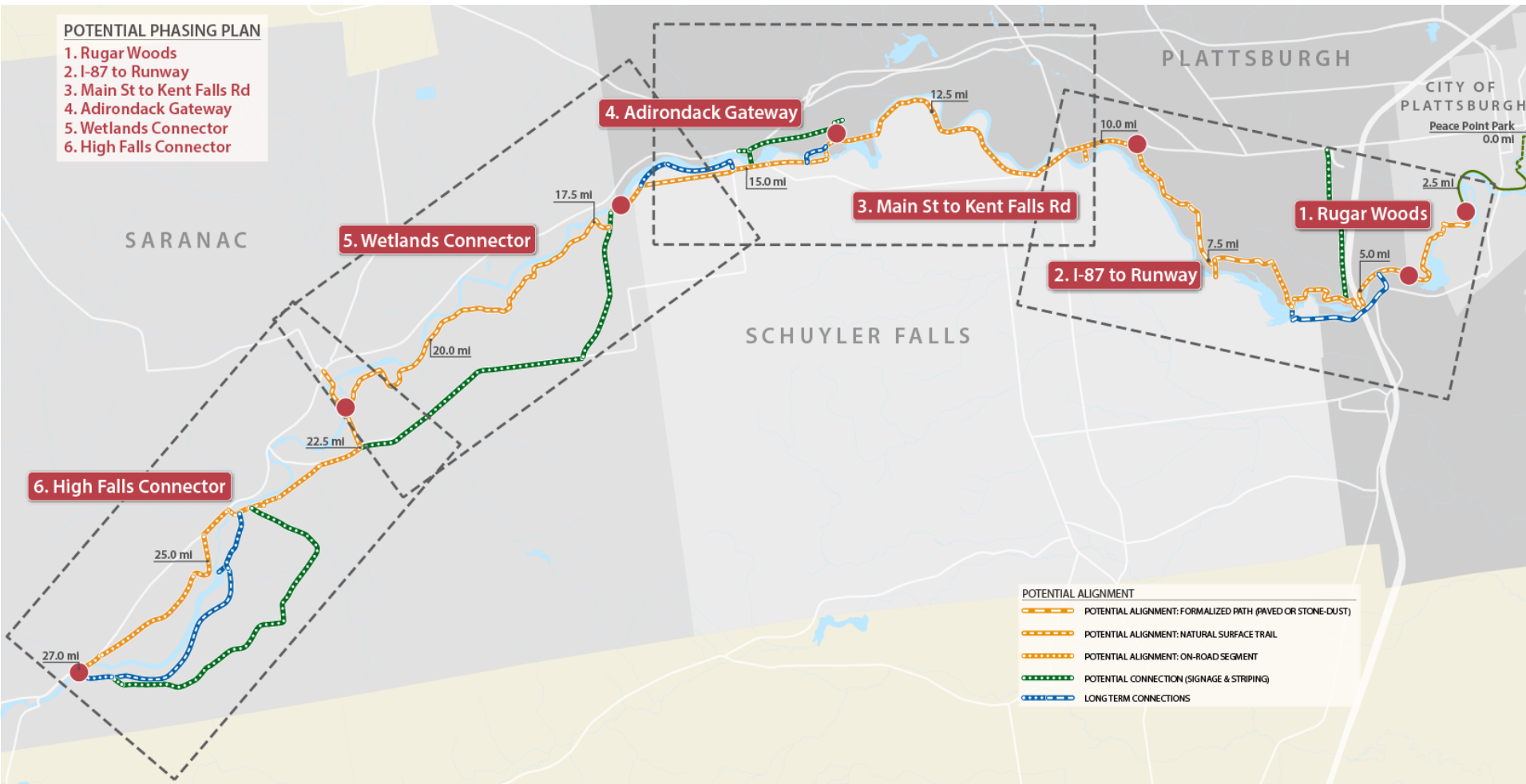
Multiple options for each of the four sections were evaluated:

Evaluation Criteria

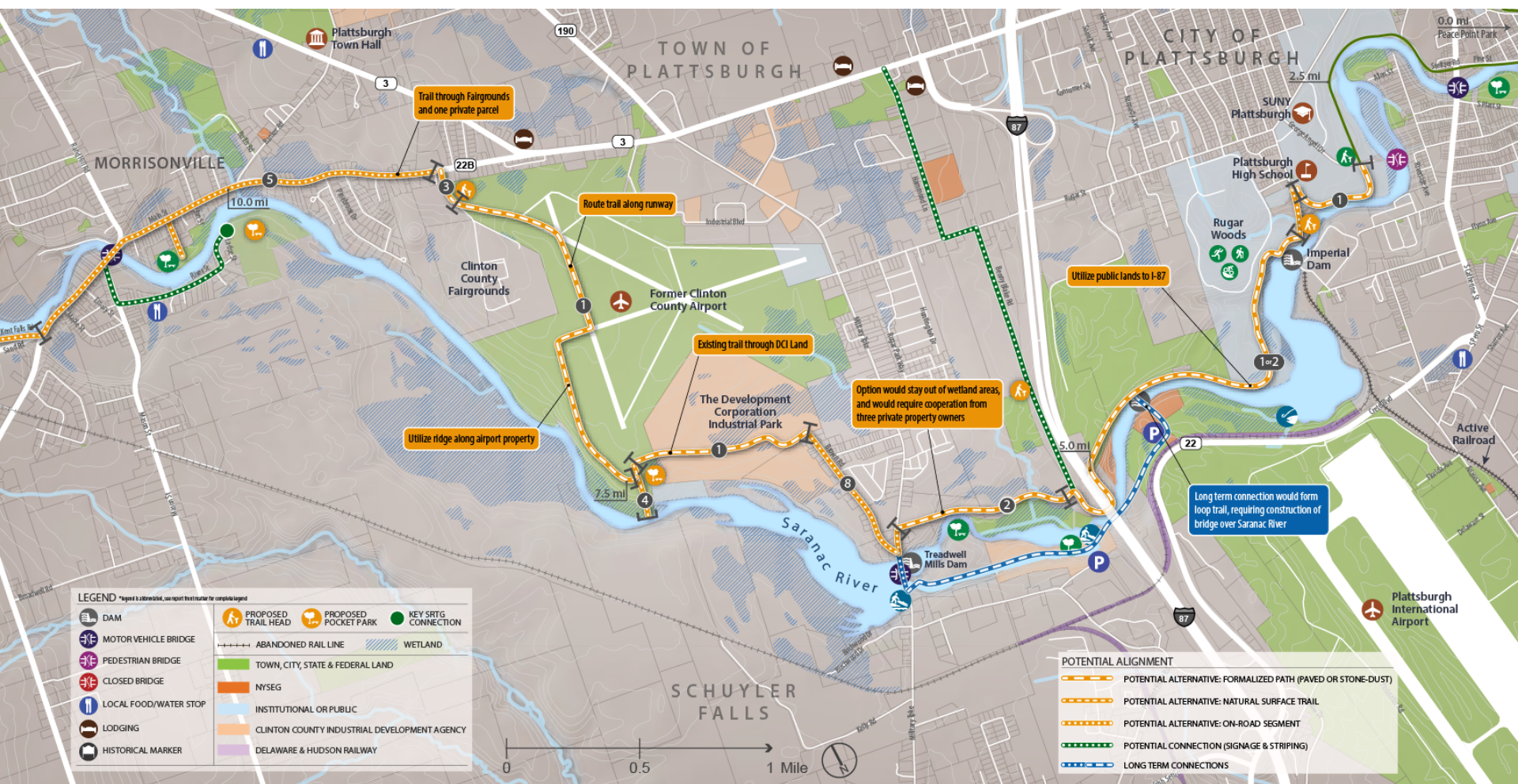
Matrix Scoring Criteria	Alignment Characteristics		
	+	o	—
Connection to Saranac River	Maintains consistent visual connection to river	Intermittent visual connection to river	Minimal visual connection to river
Links to Activity Generators	Links to several activity generators in area	Links to some activity generators in area	Links to few activity generators in area
Private Parcels Affected	Affects few to no private parcels	Affects some private parcels	Affects many private parcels
Permitting Requirements	May not require any permits	Some permits may be required	Would require permits
Topography	Avoids topographically challenging terrain	Involves some topographically challenging terrain	Large portions are routed through topographically challenging terrain
User Experience	Long sections separated from motor vehicles, making it comfortable for wide range of ages/abilities	Some sections shared with motor vehicles, making it comfortable for more confident users	Not separated from motor vehicles and would be comfortable for only very confident users
Construction Cost	Cost of constructing option is comparatively low	Cost of constructing option is medium	Cost of constructing option is high

Potential Alignment

The SRTG is envisioned to be implemented in phases from east to west



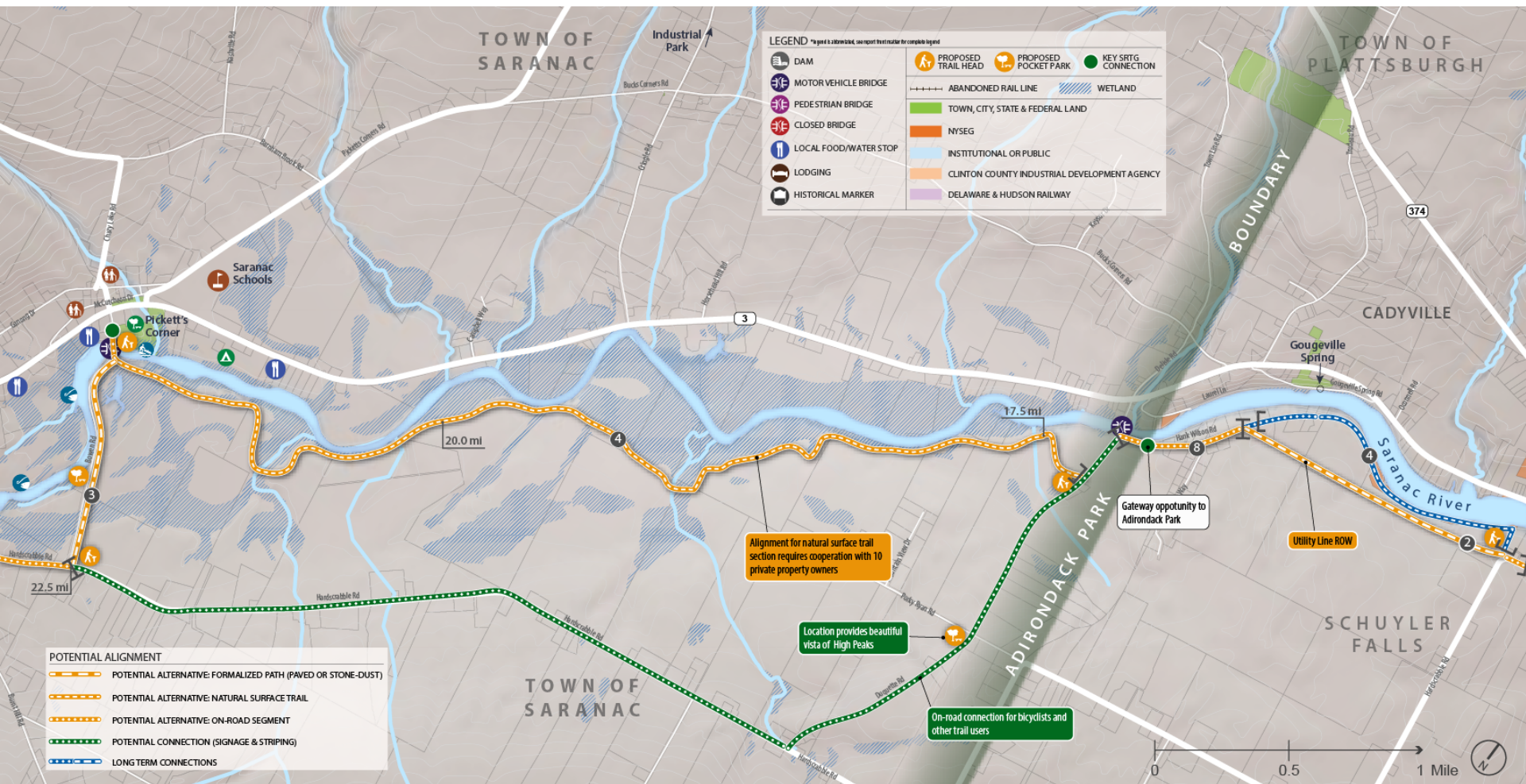
Potential Alignment - Downtown Connector



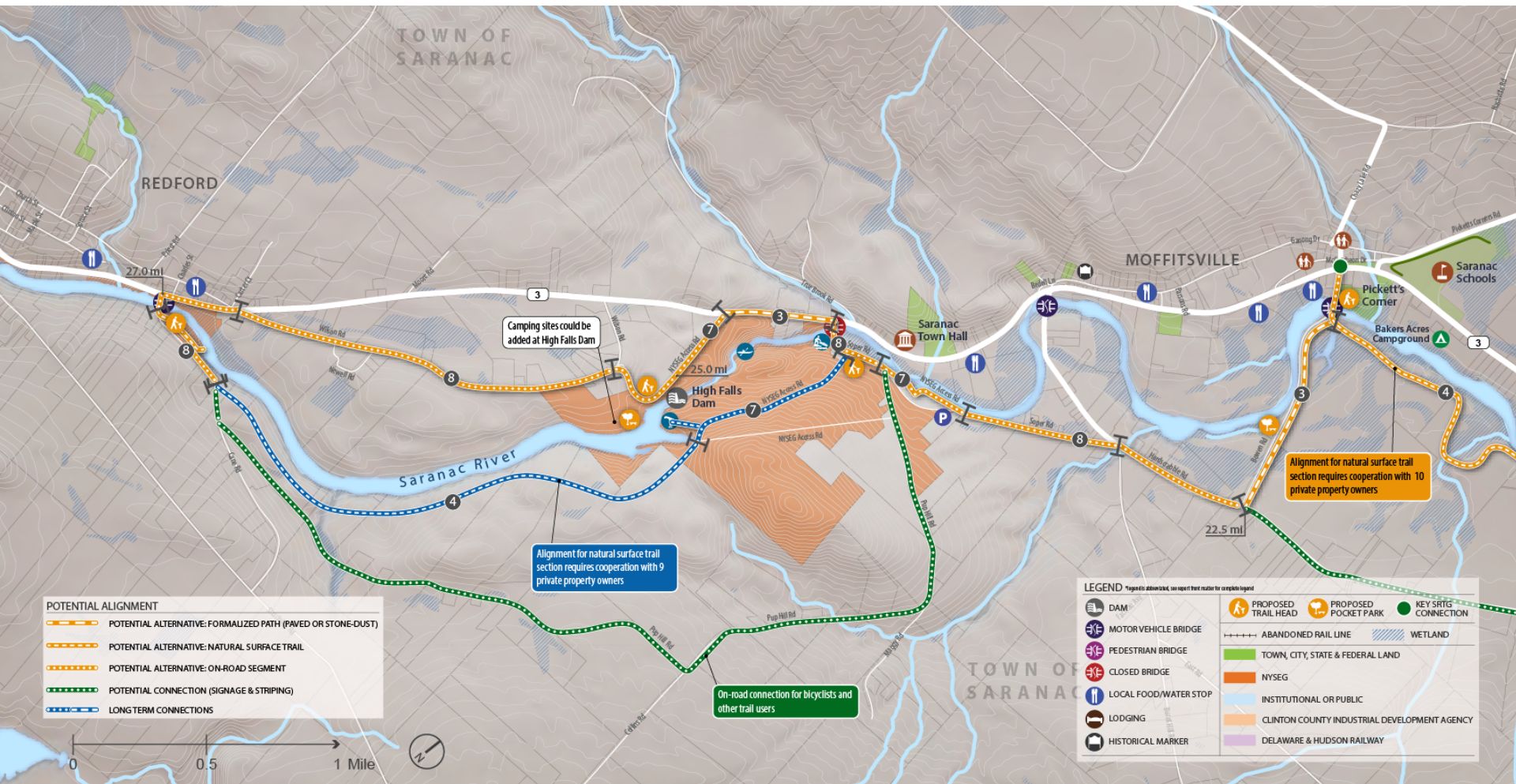
Potential Alignment - Hydro Power Alley



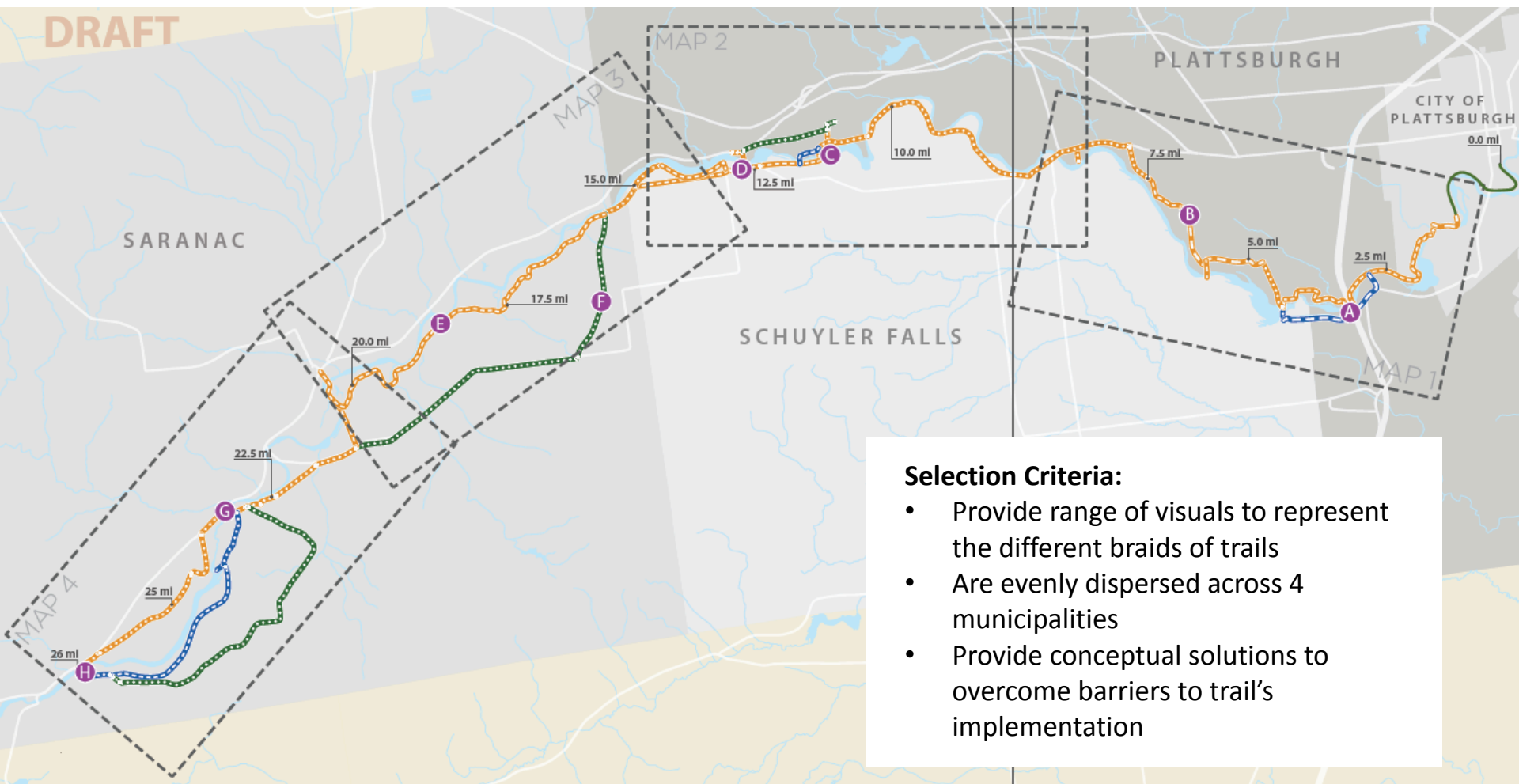
Potential Alignment - Adirondack Gateway



Potential Alignment - Waterfall Way



Priority Concept Locations



Visualizing the SRTG

EXISTING



Visualizing the SRTG



Visualizing the SRTG



Next Steps

- **Draft plan prepared and made available for public review**
- **Public comments incorporated and plan finalized**
- **Final plan presented to CC Legislature, Towns and City for consideration and possible adoption.**



Get Involved

- Saranac River Trail Greenway: Planning, development, and expansion of Saranac River Trail Greenway. *All meetings are open to the public.*
- City of Plattsburgh Waterfront Meeting on Oct. 28th

Thanks so much for coming!

It's your turn now – we really want to hear from you.

And thanks again for being part of this planning process as we work together to create our Saranac River Trail Greenway.



Saranac River Trail Greenway

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QUESTIONS?

This document was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under
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