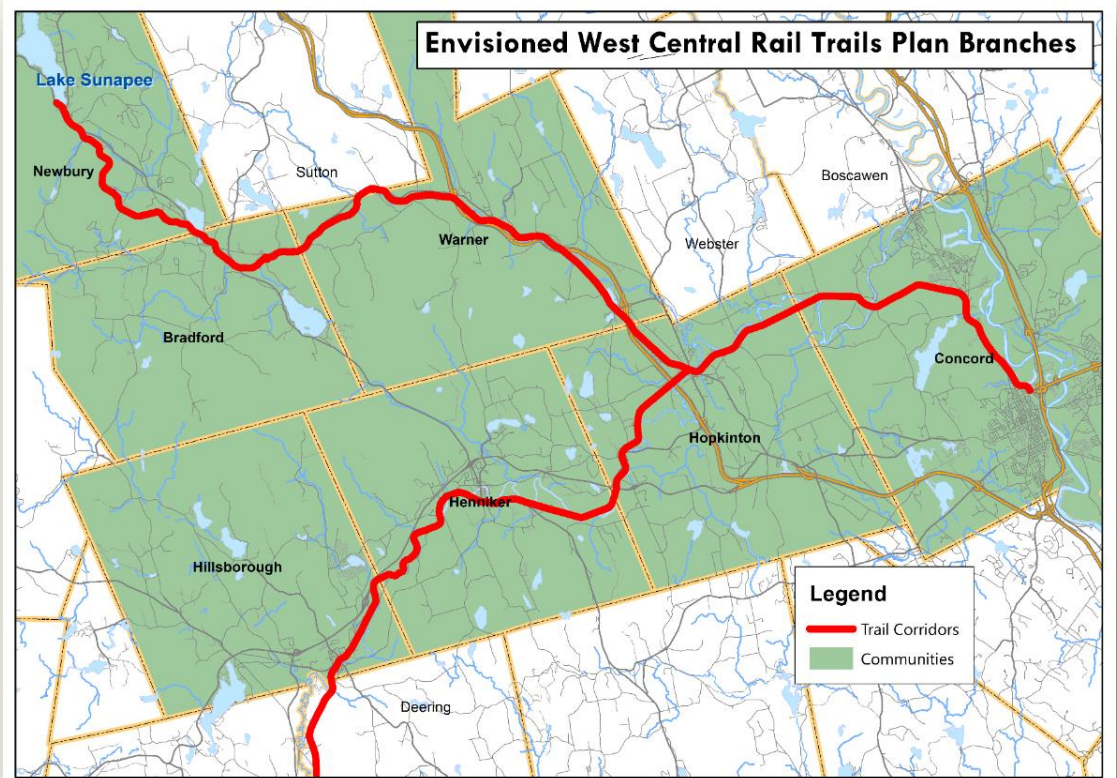


# WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN 2018

DRAFT

02-20-19

FOR PUBLIC  
COMMENT



Adopted

xx-xx-18

Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC)  
and its Transportation Advisory Committee



Describing a vision for a Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail and a Contoocook Valley Rail Trail, this **PLAN** highlights existing trail segments, planning efforts in Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Henniker, and Hillsborough and identifies potential future projects to communicate a vision for shared-use, bicycle and pedestrian public trails on these two former railroad corridors to connect communities and open lands in the West Central NH Region.

**DRAFT 08-30-18 for PUBLIC COMMENT**

**WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN 2018**

**Adopted xx-xx-18**

**Developed by:**

**Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission**

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**With assistance from the:**

**Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail**



[www.concordlakesunapeerailtrail.com](http://www.concordlakesunapeerailtrail.com)

**Funding provided by the:**

**NH Department of Transportation**



through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)  
for Bicycle and Pedestrian projects

[www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped](http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN**, also known as the Plan, documents a vision for a regional shared-use trail system along the former **Concord & Claremont Railroad** bed and the **Contoocook Valley Railroad** bed. This plan defines a regional trail as a trail that provides shared-use, bicycle and pedestrian transportation and recreation opportunities, and connects communities to each other and to open spaces. The vision attempts to provide opportunity to connect any existing rail trails and to create a regional shared-use trail network along the former railroad beds.

This **PLAN** was developed and assembled by the Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) after research and/or consultation with local community rail trail organizations, municipal groups, and snowmobile clubs. The **PLAN** consists of narrative descriptions of each known rail trail in Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Henniker and Hopkinton in the West Central NH Region and includes a series of maps. The maps display envisioned trails, existing trails or concept trails. Because this is a planning document, ideas for future linkages along the former **Concord & Claremont** and the **Contoocook Valley** railroad beds may often be posed for further consideration.

An implementation table is provided that examines the known rail trail projects underway, planned projects, and potential projects based upon the narrative and map review discussions.

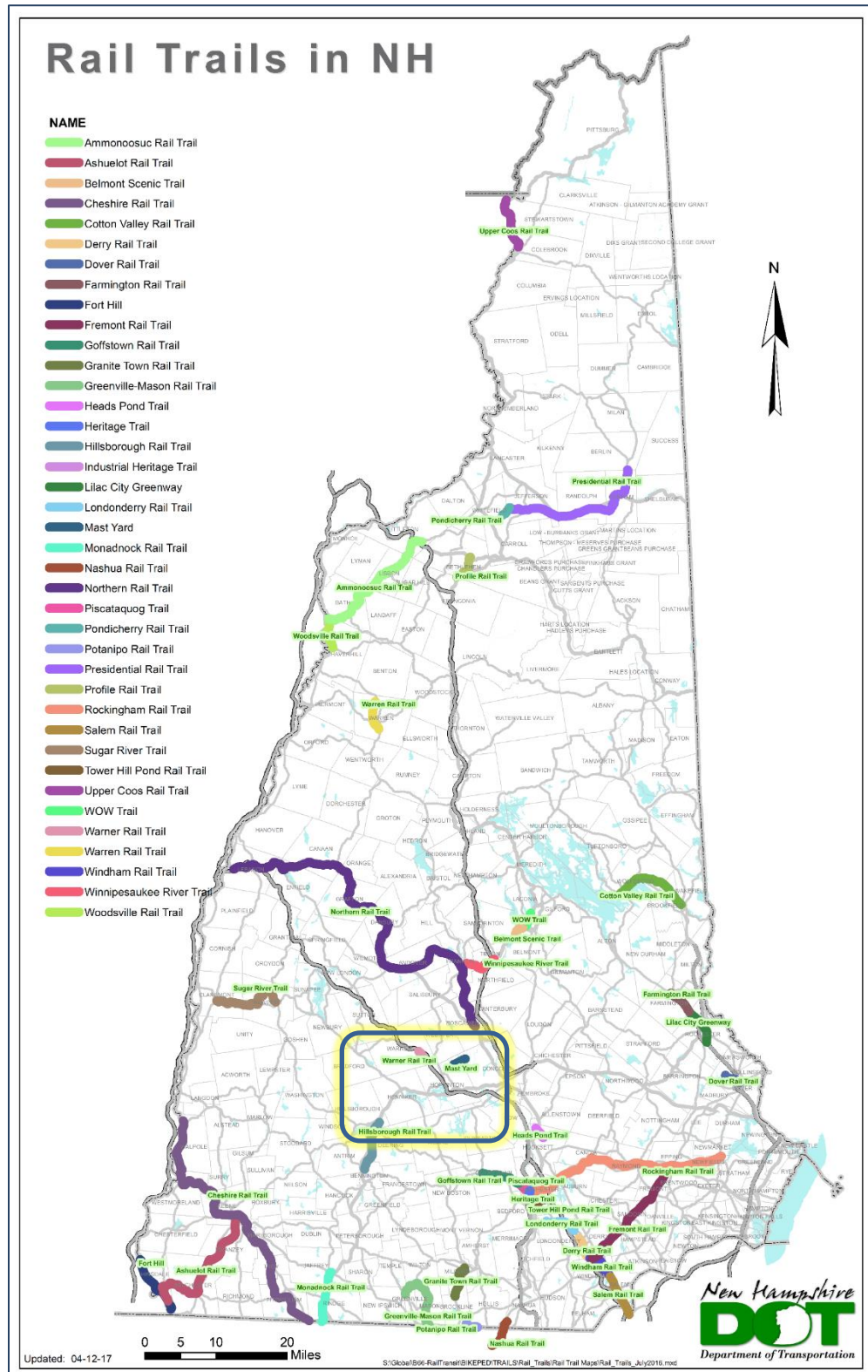
### THIS PLAN:

- Describes the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN'S** purpose, vision, mission, and goals
- Displays and describes a potential future regional rail trail network on two branches
- Provides information and generalized maps on existing and envisioned rail trails
- Identifies active trail groups in the West CNHRPC region with a known interest in rail trails
- Recommends methods for continued coordination between trail groups and communities
- Identifies future project recommendations to assist in implementation of the **PLAN** and to further the development of the West Central NH region network of rail trails with trails groups
- Roughly outlines funding opportunities for trails
- Recommends strategies for community involvement and support



Displayed in **Figure 1** is the NH Department of Transportation Rail Trails in NH map. The West Central NH Region is indicated with a box and displays the area of focus for the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN 2018**.

**Figure 1. Rail Trails in New Hampshire**



NH DOT Rail Trails in NH Map, April 2017

## 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

### Purpose of the Plan

The primary purpose of this **PLAN** is to document and formalize known trails and shared use path projects along two former railroad corridors in the Central NH planning region, the **Concord & Claremont** rail line and the **Contoocook Valley** rail line. These trails are referred to as “Rail Trails” in this **PLAN**. A vision of a complete rail trail system across the western section of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) planning region can link together communities and open spaces, providing miles of recreational and active transportation opportunities. The municipalities of Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Henniker and Hillsborough have their own individual trail development and open space preferences, and generally work independently. By describing the current efforts of trails groups to connect the former rail lines through these communities, this **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN** intends to foster a public vision for these trails and encourage making trail connections for pedestrians and bicyclists along these two former railroad lines.



*Historical Concord & Claremont and Contoocook Valley Railroads  
NH Township and Railroad by Dodge, 1854 accessed by CNHRPC June 2018*

In several of these towns, volunteers and community leaders are collaborating on the long work of assembling a continuous rail trail that connects their communities through the [Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail](#) (FCLSRT) organization. This grassroots community effort to construct a 34-mile long **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** should be consistent with local municipal master plan overall goals and is also consistent with CNHRPC regional plans. An organization comprised volunteers from Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Sutton and Newbury, the FCLSRT is currently working to construct trail segments within each CNHRPC member community. This **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN** intends to support the FCLSRT's efforts and raise awareness of the activities being undertaken to help encourage the development of this trail.

There is currently no group to lead the charge on a **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**, but this **PLAN** will endeavor to inspire common goals and benefits in such a recreational trail system that would connect to both the **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** and the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail**, a formal State rail trail.

Visual representation is often the first enabling factor for beginning community discussions. To this end, the **PLAN** will map the *existing* and *envisioned* bicycle and pedestrian rail trails along both the **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** and a potential future **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**.



## Background

Over the past several years, a number of communities in the CNHRPC region have expressed interest in trails that connect people to the places they want to go. These trails are unique in that this interest in shared-use path type trails that can offer a wider range of possible uses than common hiking trails.

The CNHRPC assisted with the coordination of communities in 2017 for the proposed **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** and began investigating the desire and potential for a similar trail along an abandoned railroad bed from Hopkinton to Hillsborough, coined as the potential **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**, which leads to the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** at the Hillsborough-Deering town line.

The envisioned **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** (CLSRT) is successfully underway and led by a grassroots volunteer effort and 501c3 non-profit organization, the Friends of the Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT). In 2015, the CLSRT Economic Impact Study was completed to discuss both the estimated costs of construction using state and local funding sources and the resulting economic benefits in the trails communities contributed by out-of-state visitors. Although a completed trail covering the entire 34 miles is a large undertaking, the approach is to start with low-cost areas that have the highest visibility and greatest public support. The strategy for completion is to advance individual

## ACRONYMS IN THIS PLAN

Many organizations, programs or other common names are referenced during discussions of rail trails within this document. Acronyms are frequently used to shorten the narrative. Following is a list of the most commonly referenced:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)  
 Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC)  
 Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT), a rail trail  
 ESRI (international supplier of geographic information system software, web GIS and geodatabase management applications)  
 Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT), non-profit organization  
 Federal Highway Association (FWHA)  
 Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT)  
 NH Bureau of Trails (NHBOT)  
 NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES)  
 NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNCR)  
 NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)  
 NH Snowmobile Association (NHSA)  
 New England College (NEC)  
 New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA)  
 Open Space Trail System Plan (OSTS)  
 Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF)  
 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)  
 US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)  
 US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Association (FWHA)



pieces of the trail that have independent utility in each community, and over time link the pieces together to create a continuous trail. This strategy is being implemented in other parts of the State with success. The trail would begin at Pierce Manse near downtown Concord, and pass through Hopkinton, Warner, a sliver of Sutton, into Bradford, and end at Lake Sunapee in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee region community of Newbury.

The second potential trail of focus, the **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**, is the southerly branch of the former railroad traveling from Contoocook Village in Hopkinton through Henniker and into Hillsborough. This branch connects to the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** in Deering, a rail trail managed by the [NH Bureau of Trails \(NHBOT\)](#) within the [NH State Parks Division](#) of the [NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources \(NHDNRC\)](#). Without a local organization spearheading on the ground landowner discussions and coordinating the securement of trail segments, this proposed rail trail has had limited progress to date.

## Project Working Group

This **PLAN** describes the efforts of volunteers from the Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT) organization to help forge the discussions on potential rail trail segments in the CNHRPC communities of Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton and Bradford as well as Newbury in the [Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region](#). The group has captained community conversations, engaged a multitude of landowners, and begin project construction on the ground for certain sections of the **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail**. As such, their work and findings are critical component to this **PLAN**. The rail trail concept is less developed along the **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail** through Hopkinton, Henniker and Hillsborough, where small working groups have been established to identify trail possibilities and begin discussing implementation.

CNHRPC has met with groups from Henniker and Hillsborough to ascertain interest in potential rail trail development. In Hillsborough, an informal group of Trails Enthusiasts has conducted site walks and a preliminary assessment of sections of the old rail corridor from Deering Center Road (NH 149) to Union Street. Further discussions with the Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts will be needed to ascertain solid interest and commitment. The Henniker Trails Committee is re-organizing in summer 2018 and will be focusing their efforts on mapping and making official their existing trails network. The group at this time is engaged on this significant project and is focusing on these trails; rail trail potential could be introduced in the future.

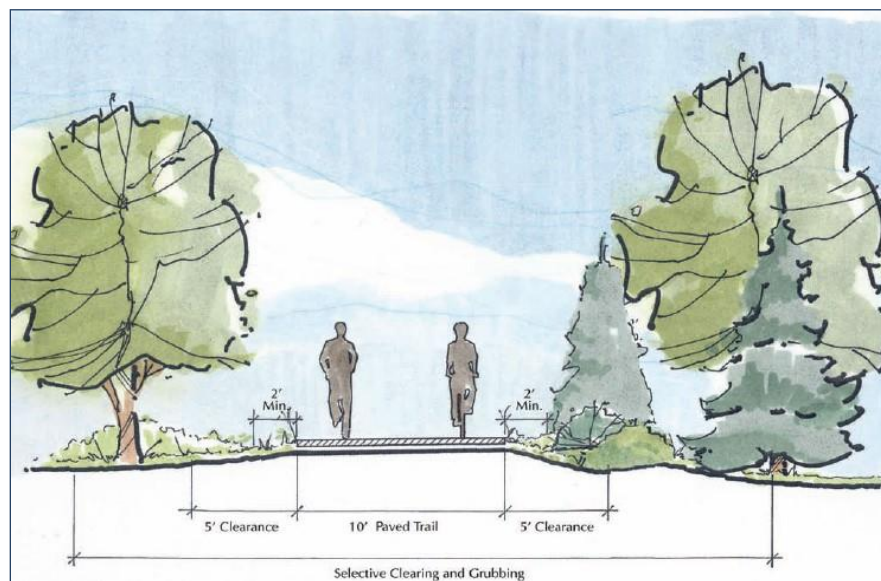
Moving forward, the CNHRPC intends to offer assistance to these communities and the FCLSRT for continuation of the West Central rail trail network.

## Definition of “Rail Trail”

This **PLAN'S** definition of a rail trail is multi-faceted due to the nature of New Hampshire's abandoned railroad corridors. One type of rail trail is constructed on the former railroad bed or within the former railroad corridor of the **Concord & Claremont** or **Contoocook Valley** railroad right of way. The rail trails may be located within privately owned property, no longer in use by railroad companies. These types of shared-use rail trails are separated from motor vehicle traffic and serve transportation, recreation, and health purposes for users.

A trail is considered regional in nature when it extends beyond town boundaries and connects communities to each other and the open spaces between them. Most existing and planned rail trails in the region are either constructed with compacted stone dust or are paved, and are typically intended to be universally accessible, constructed for ADA compliance. Trails of this character offer a unique experience and purpose because of their accessibility and shared, year-round uses of walking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and potentially other uses as deemed appropriate by landowners and the community. While Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) use may currently be allowed on some sections of the railroad grades in this study, the primary intent of this plan is for these trails to serve non-motorized users. These shared-use or rail trails are often constructed in a standardized fashion for bicycling and walking purposes.

In some instances, the old railroad bed is unusable because it has



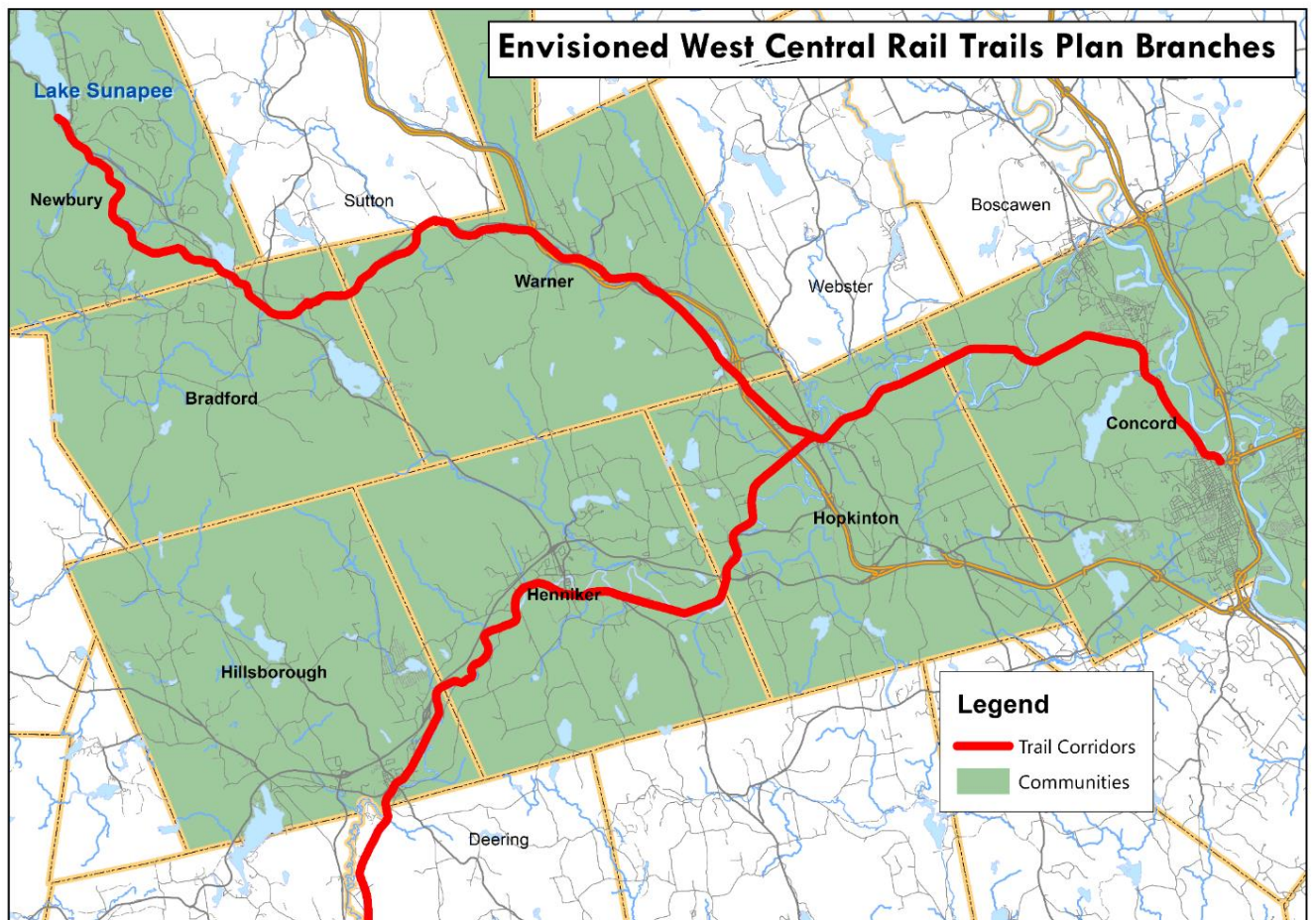
*Typical Non-Road Shared-Use Path or Rail Trail Cross Section from m-bike.org, accessed March 2018*

been removed or built upon. In these cases, the trail may be routed on low speed and low traffic streets.

### Study Area: West Central NH Rail Trails Network Vision Map

**Figure 2** displays the entire envisioned rail trails system within the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN**. The 34-mile long proposed **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** which is actively being pursued segment by segment spans from Concord to Hopkinton (Contoocook) to Lake Sunapee in Newbury outside of the CNHRPC region. The southwestern former railbed beginning in Hopkinton (Contoocook) and traveling through Henniker into Hillsborough to connect to the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** is the envisioned **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**.

**Figure 2. Envisioned West Central Rail Trails Plan Branches**



*Map produced by CNHRPC, 2018*

## Public Input

The basis for much of the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN** consists of input from the municipal Conservation Commissions, organized Trails Committees, informal trails enthusiast groups, and online research of existing rail trails located and potentially planned in each community. Substantial additional assistance and guidance for the **PLAN** was provided by the Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trails (FCLSRT) organization based upon their project work. Additional valuable insights were provided by area snowmobile clubs, many of which actively use portions of former railbed in the winter.

### Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts (2017 & 2018)

After soliciting interest from residents and town officials, CNHRPC organized meeting and a site walk in fall 2017 to ascertain possibilities for connecting downtown Hillsborough with the established State of NH **Hillsborough Recreational Trail**. Although the volunteers have not yet taken steps to formalize their group, CNHRPC helped them assemble again in spring 2018 to discuss overall vision and next steps. The initial site walk generated a report and an online map with associated photographs which are available to support the group's efforts. The formation of a Trails Committee is a recommendation of the 2018 Hillsborough Master Plan update.

### Henniker Trails Committee 2018

The Town of Henniker has an active Conservation Commission, many conservation and recreation-based groups and official Committees. In summer 2018, the Town re-organized its municipal **Trails Committee** which has a purpose of developing an existing, comprehensive trail system map to help promote the Town's economic and outdoor activities. The CNHRPC met with this group on several occasions with an offer to provide mapping assistance for their effort. The trails committee agreed on the value of incorporating parts of the former **Contoocook Valley** railbed into the Town's overall trail system and intends to pursue the initiative in the future. The committee's core purpose of developing a trail system map must take first priority.

### Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT) 2017-2018

CNHRPC assisted this organization with coordinating like-minded trails enthusiasts in the Region's communities, and provided help with mapping and grant applications. With a 34-mile rail trail goal,



projects are prioritized to ensure each community – Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, Bradford and Newbury- has a highly visible, low-cost rail trail segment constructed. FCLSRT Board members, representing these communities, provided much of the information for this PLAN that relates to the Concord - Lake Sunapee segment of the former **Concord & Claremont** railroad and provided review and comment to ensure accuracy and appropriate trails branding.

### **CNHRPC Full Commission Meeting June 2018**

CNHRPC staff presented the concept of the WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN at its annual Full Commission meeting with member communities in June 2018. A joint presentation was conducted as “The Tale of Three Rail Trails,” by Craig Tufts of the CNHRPC, Trustee of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (presentation of the Northern Rail Trail); Greg Bakos, Trustee of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, and Tim Blagden, President of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail. Local Board representatives from 16 Central NH Region communities were present and engaged the speakers with multiple, positive questions about projects. The PLAN was summarized in a later segment of the meeting and was well received.

### **Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) 2017-2018+**

Since a CNHRPC staff member is a voluntary Trustee of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT), the group is being updated on the PLAN’S purpose, content, maps and activities at MRGT Board meetings and during Board members discussions. Opportunities for potential collaboration are being raised and will be incorporated into the final WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN.

### **West Central NH Snowmobile Clubs 2018**

Organized snowmobile clubs are already be maintaining winter trails on portions of the **Concord & Claremont** and **Contoocook Valley** former railroad bed network. With landowner agreements to utilize sections of private land for winter use, snowmobilers maintain trails, build bridges, take care of problematic trail users, listen to landowner concerns, fundraise, and have large membership bases to draw from. The New Hampshire Snowmobile Association is the state’s independent association of incorporated clubs. In the Central NH Region, six known clubs are thought to be active in the railroad corridor vicinity within Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Henniker and Hillsborough. CNHRPC has reached out to these clubs to inform the groups about the WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN and its purposes, to request locations of maintained snowmobile trails along railroad beds, and to ascertain opportunities for collaboration on year-round trail projects. The area’s snowmobile clubs include:



[Townline Trail Dusters Snowmobile Club](#) ▷ Concord, Penacook, Boscawen

[Contoocook Snowmads Snowmobile Club](#) ▷ Contoocook, Hopkinton, Warner, Henniker

[Kearsarge Trail Snails](#) ▷ Warner

[Lake Sunapee Snowmobile Club](#) ▷ Bradford

[Night Riders Snowmobile Club](#) ▷ Hillsborough

[Henniker Trail Travelers](#) ▷ Henniker

## 2. RAIL TRAIL SEGMENTS BY CNHRPC COMMUNITY

### Overview

The vision of a continuous trail connecting **Concord to Bradford-Newbury** and **Contoocook Valley** utilizing the existing rail trail corridor is plausible. Many segments of the former railbed have been used for years as snowmobile trails, there are some planned projects with landowner agreements secured, some projects are under construction, while others segments have been completed and are now being used as shared-use trails. There are also a number of potential projects on public lands. Known existing rail trail segments and potential future rail trail segments are described and mapped in this **PLAN**.

Each local rail trail segment is a component of a larger West Central NH trails network. For a community and its residents, their neighborhood trails are often considered local trails of independent utility. Communities choose the name of their trail, such as **Stevens Rail Trail** in Hopkinton or the **Warner Rail Trail** in Warner, giving the trail its local identity. This **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL PLAN** identifies these existing trails by name and also considers them sections of the envisioned **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** or **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**. The **PLAN** attempts to bring a wider vision to the region, indicating possible locations where the local trail segments could be connected to a larger system.

### TRAIL DEVELOPMENT STAGES

There are multiple stages of rail trail development over many years of effort discussed within this **PLAN**. This **PLAN** often refers to this progression of trail development.

A potential trail segment is one that is only at the visioning level and does not yet have funding determined, nor does it yet have the landowner or community support needed to move forward.



**VISION**

A proposed or envisioned trail segment is one that a Trails Group is beginning to actively pursue behind the scenes with funding endeavors and landowner agreements. This stage is where a trail idea prospers or breaks down.



**LEGWORK**

A planned trail is ready for the public to assist with fundraising, mapping, promotion. A planned trail is far enough along to consider forthcoming success.



**BUILD**

An existing trail is one that is constructed and known by the community, as they are referred to being built prior to the development of the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN**.

**ENJOY**

For ease of explanation within this **PLAN** and for its mapping purposes, the potential or proposed rail trails listed here have been preliminarily named to begin the discussions on their potential futures.

## Standardized Maps of the Plan

A comprehensive set of 11"x17" *existing, envisioned, or concept* trails maps have been developed to accompany the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN**, providing a visual representation of the narratives provided within this document. The maps are also shown as small images within the section descriptions to ensure an understanding of approximate existing trail, vision trail, and concept trail locations. The asterisked maps are important to the **PLAN** but do not follow the standardization of aerial photography base and developed by the CNHRPC specifically for this **PLAN**.

*\*maps are not standardized*

**Figure 1. Rail Trails in NH \***

**Figure 2. Envisioned West Central Rail Trails Plan Branches\***

**Figure 3. Locus Map of Trail Segments**

**Figure 4. Trail Segments Identified as being Used and Maintained by a local Snowmobile Club\***

## Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT)

**Figure 5. Concord: City of Concord Mast Yard State Forest Trails Map 1** (Trails Map) \*

**Figure 6. Concord: Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment** (Vision Map)

**Figure 7. Concord: Pierce Manse to Smokestack Center Segment** (Vision Map)

**Figure 8. Concord/Hopkinton: Mast Yard State Forest Trails** (Trails Map)

**Figure 9. Hopkinton: Rails to Trails Conservancy- Stevens Rail Trail** (Trails Map) \*

**Figure 10. Hopkinton/Contoocook: Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment with Stevens Rail Trail** (Vision Map)

**Figure 11. Warner: Warner Rail Trail (Bagley Field Segment)** (Trails Map)

**Figure 12. Warner: Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** (Trails Map)

**Figure 13. Warner: Northern Bagley Extension** (Vision Map)

**Figure 14. Warner: Exit 8 Project** (Vision Map)

**Figure 15. Warner: Evans to Waterloo Road Segment** (Vision Map) \*

**Figure 16. Warner: Chemical Lane to Exit 9 Segment** (Vision Map) \*

**Figure 17. Bradford: Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension** (Trails Map)

## Contoocook Valley Rail Trail

**Figure 18.** Hopkinton/Henniker: **USACE- Hopkinton Lake Snowmobile Trails** (Trails Map) \*

**Figure 19.** Hopkinton/ Contoocook: **Historic Railroad Alignments in Contoocook Village** (Vision Map)

**Figure 20.** Hopkinton/Contoocook: **Intervale Road to Hopkinton Dam Segment** (Vision Map)

**Figure 21.** Hopkinton/Henniker: **Flood Control Area** (Vision Map)

**Figure 22.** Henniker: **Downtown Henniker Historic Railroad Alignment** (Vision Map)

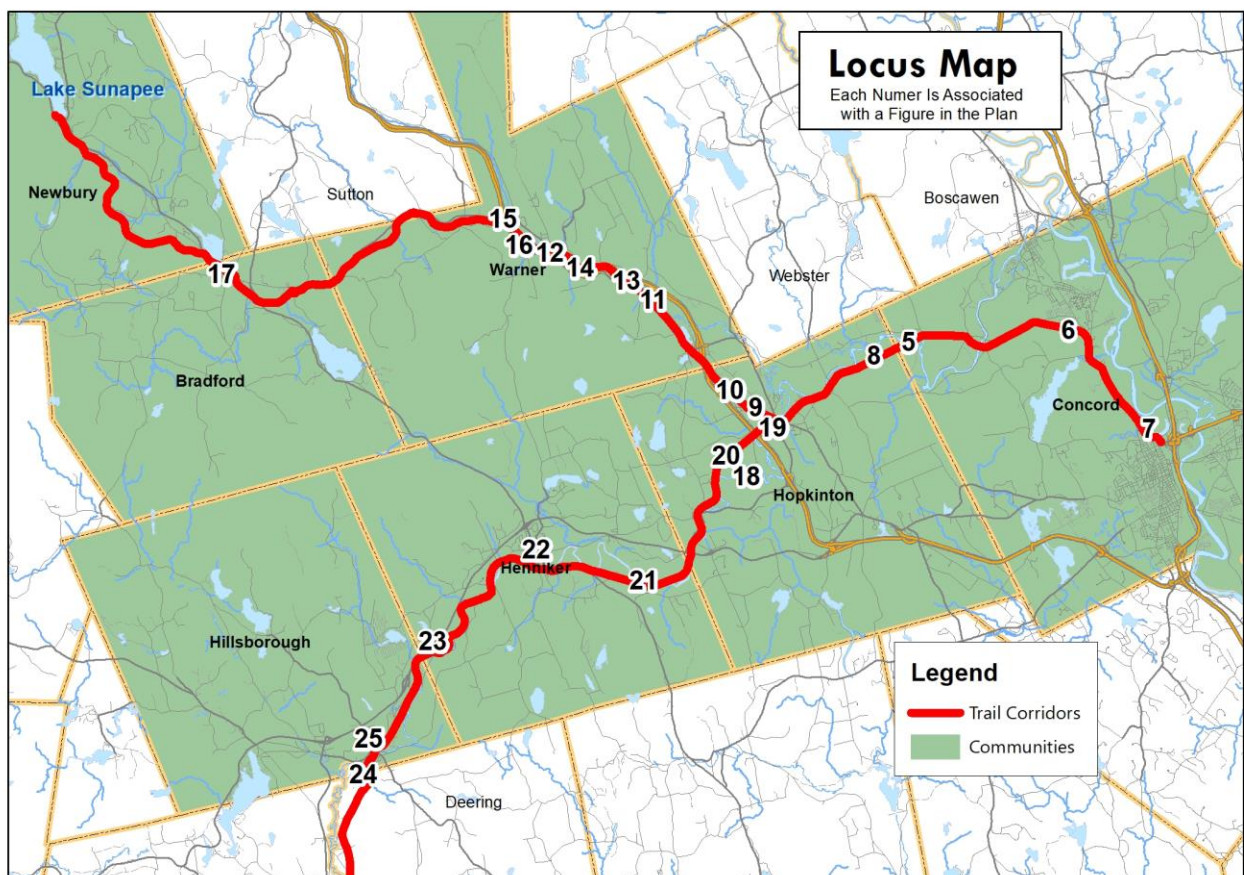
**Figure 23.** Henniker: **Browns Way Class VI Road** (Vision Map)

**Figure 24.** Hillsborough: **Hillsborough Recreational Trail Ext./ Brownfields Redevt** (Concept Map)

**Figure 25.** Hillsborough: **Downtown Trail Possibilities** (Concept Map)

Figures 5-25 map local trail projects along the rail bed corridors. **Figure 4** displays their locations across the region.

**Figure 4: Locus Map**



*Map produced by CNHRPC, 2018*

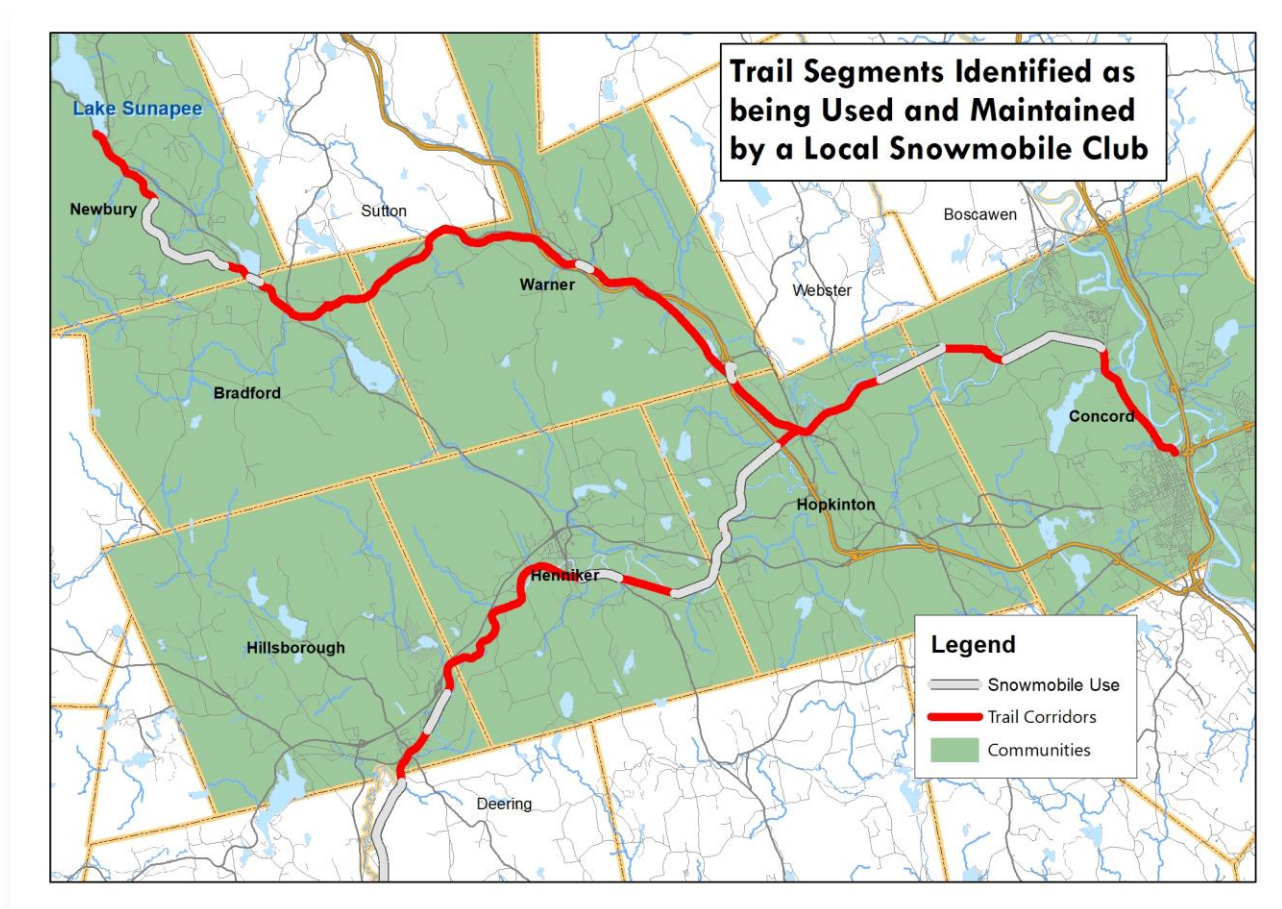
## Railroad Beds Utilized as Seasonal Snowmobile Trails

Before the concept of the Concord to Lake Sunapee Rail Trail came about, snowmobile clubs organized themselves and established seasonal trail networks all over the state. Most of this trail usage is on privately owned property with agreements, both verbal and formalized, to utilize land for this purpose. Snowmobile riders have used and maintained rail trails in several locations over the WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN area. The New Hampshire Snowmobile Association (NHSA) is comprised of independently incorporated snowmobile clubs. More information on these clubs is provided on pages 8-9.

Some existing snowmobile trail segments along railroad beds may be cooperatively converted into year round trail segments for bicycle and pedestrian use. The FCLSRT is trying to establish multi-use trails within these same corridors and to date, has succeeded in coordinating with the Kearsarge Trail Snails on the Warner end of the **Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment** and on the **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** as well as partnering with the Lake Sunapee Snowmobile Club on the **Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension** in Bradford. Collaboration projects like these can be very successful and are beneficial for establishing year-round rail trail use. The following map roughly depicts the sections of the study area rail bed that are currently being used and maintained by local snowmobile clubs.

Club perspective on the future potential trail projects along the Concord & Claremont and Contoocook Valley railroad lines are an important component to this community trail building effort. Continued outreach, communication, and collaboration between snowmobile clubs and non-motorized trail enthusiasts is encouraged.



**Figure 4. Trail Segments Identified as being used by Local Snowmobile Clubs**

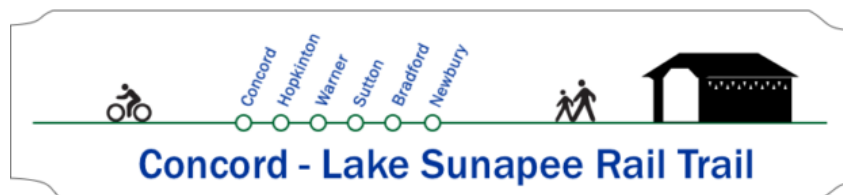
*Map produced by CNHRPC, 2018*

## Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail

The Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail is an envisioned off-street rail trail for pedestrians and bicycles connecting downtown Concord to Lake Sunapee in Newbury. Discussed previously, the most actively established Trails Group in the West Central NH Region is the [Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail](#) organization. Offering representation and expertise from Newbury, Bradford, Sutton, Warner, Hopkinton, and Concord, the FCLSRT has an initial strategy of constructing at least one highly visible, low cost rail trail project within each community on its path within the West Central CNHRPC Region. As of 2018, the regional rail trails network is just beginning to take shape, with the patchwork of local rail trail segments gradually being connected.

### FRIENDS OF THE CONCORD - LAKE SUNAPEE RAIL TRAILS (FCLSRT)

The [Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail \(FCLSRT\)](#) is the driving force behind most of the current rail trail activity in the West Central NH region, the focus of this Plan's study area. They get well-earned credit for many of the several constructed rail trail projects and proposed projects in this area. The group is organized and run by an active Board of Directors with representatives from Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton and Newbury to determine priorities, and their membership helps the group work within these communities. Their goal is to build a scenic, family friendly 34-mile bicycle and walking trail from Concord to Lake Sunapee using as much of the historic **Concord & Claremont** railroad as possible. The future trail is viewed as a "linear park" that takes people to larger conservation blocks along the way.



Several successful projects have come to fruition under FCLSRT vision, and future projects for the next several years have already begun to take root. A 2015 Economic Impact Study by the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNCR) was conducted for the FCLSRT which estimated the entire cost to build the 34-mile rail trail and compared this cost to the positive economic gain from tourism. With the construction cost at just over \$4m, 80% of its funding is

projected to come sources from outside the Merrimack and Sullivan Counties in which the CLSRT communities are located. Once built, over 100,000 people are estimated to use the trail annually. About 21,000 of these users are non-local visitors, each of whom spend an average of \$88 daily (2014 estimates) which includes foot traffic to downtown areas. With out-of-town visitors staying for a half (½) day, the net non-local visitor spending in **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** communities is projected to be over \$900,000 annually. With this additional tourism, about 20 new full time jobs are created. The Economic Impact Study concludes with case studies indicating positive impacts on property values as the result of the rail trails.

**Before the end of summer 2018, these two FCLSRT rail trail projects will be completed:**

- **Contoocook (Hopkinton/Warner):** Two (2) miles of rail trail construction from Spring Street in Contoocook Village to NH 103 in the Davisville section of Warner near Warner Road (Exit 7) connecting to the **Stevens Rail Trail**, to construct the **Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment**.
- **Bradford:** Construct 0.75 mile trail from the Appleseed Restaurant to Main Street which includes a 70' bridge over the Lake Todd causeway to extend the existing Tilly Wheeler Trail to form the **Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension**.

**Future FCLSRT Projects**

With about 30 miles of rail trail to secure, there are many possible projects on the horizon for the FCLSRT. The FCLSRT has identified several projects to work on in 2019 to further the goal of the **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail**. Sections of former rail in multiple communities have been identified as viable projects based on discussions and use agreements provided by landowners. Although grant funding is not yet available for most of these projects, the FCLSRT will be applying for grants and continuing discussions with local governments and landowners, and will fundraise for many projects underway. CNHRPC may be able to provide planning support to some of these projects.

A FCLSRT 2019 summer RTP project will be Concord's **Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment**. This 2.5 mile trail in West Concord follows the former railbed approximately parallel to Bog Road. The eastern end is comprised of neighborhoods while the western end is rural, ending at Carter Hill Road. The FCLSRT is applying for creative funding from multiple sources to bring this highly visible rail trail to Concord. The City and [NH Department of Environmental Services \(NHDES\)](#) permitting processes need to be navigated.

Because visualization and promotion of the entire corridor is essential to the success of the FCLSRT's mission, they intend to apply for, perhaps in 2020, the NHBOT RTP Type G Education grant but with a unique twist. The FCLSRT has qualified for ESRI's non-profit partner program and the group wants to create an [ESRI Story Map](#) of the corridor. ESRI Story Maps will let FCLSRT create geolocated stories organized by themes/subjects along the railroad corridor to enhance user experience.

Stories are waiting to be told along the former railroad, including the locations and descriptions of historical mills and factories, railroad history and surrounding historical sites. Present day stories can include farmers market and eat local information, conservation information, wildlife habitat points of interest, flora and fauna examples, and more. The local Conservation Commissions, Historical Societies and a few local non-profits like Museums have collected these stories and many have an existing relationship with FCLSRT. A Story Map would be engaging to people seeking to walk or bike the trail segments, with the goal of encouraging further participation and willingness to connect the entire former rail line from **Concord & Claremont**. The interactive map would work on smartphones as people recreate on the trails.

## CONCORD

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In Concord, an extensive trails system is available for residents, workers and visitors alike for year-round, non-motorized trail use. Managed by the [Concord Conservation Commission's Trails Committee](#), the public trails are mapped with points of interest and historical notes that help provide

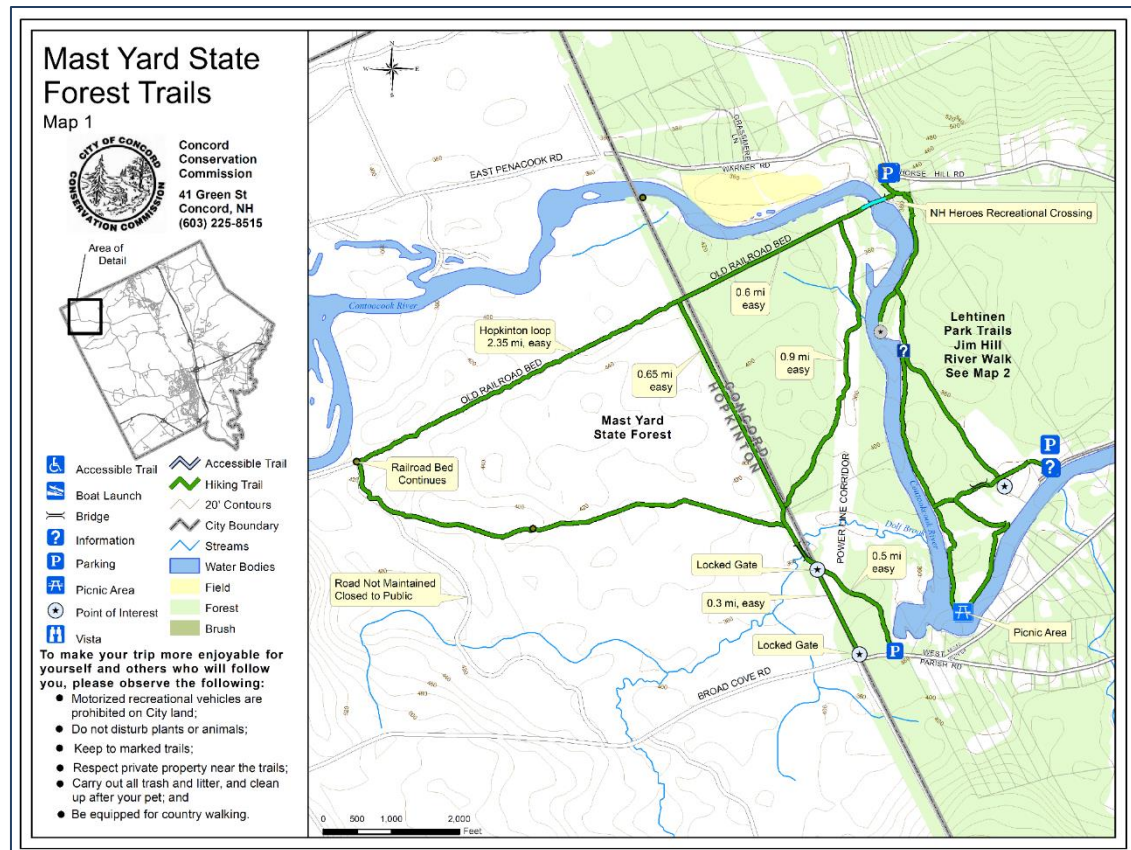


an interpretive experience. The City's entire trails system encompasses dozens of conservation land parcels with individual trails. City goals include protection of the City's open space, forests, water resources and wildlife habitat while connecting the trails to one another for public recreation. As shown by the badge above, the local branding for trail segments improved by the CLSRT in Concord is simply the **Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail**.

One section of the City's trails network runs along the railroad grade in the [Mast Yard State Forest](#) over the Contoocook River, connecting from Hopkinton. Both communities use this map from the series of [City Trails System Maps](#) for hiking and bicycling. While this section of the trail is great for walking and snowmobiling, there are sections where the surface is soft and difficult to bicycle on. FCLSRT plans to someday improve the trail surface as part in order to encourage a wider range of uses consistent with the greater **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** vision. The existing **Mast Yard Forest Trails**, located within Concord and Hopkinton, are displayed in **Figure 5**.



Figure 5. Concord: City of Concord- Mast Yard State Forest Trails Map 1



*Trails Map by City of Concord, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*

A section of the former railbed travels from northwest Concord at Mast Yard to Fisherville Road, then south along US 3 to the City proper. A network of snowmobile trails travels through the rural sections of the City and is maintained by the [Townline Trail Dusters Snowmobile Club](#), the organization responsible for Hero's Bridge over the Contoocook River.

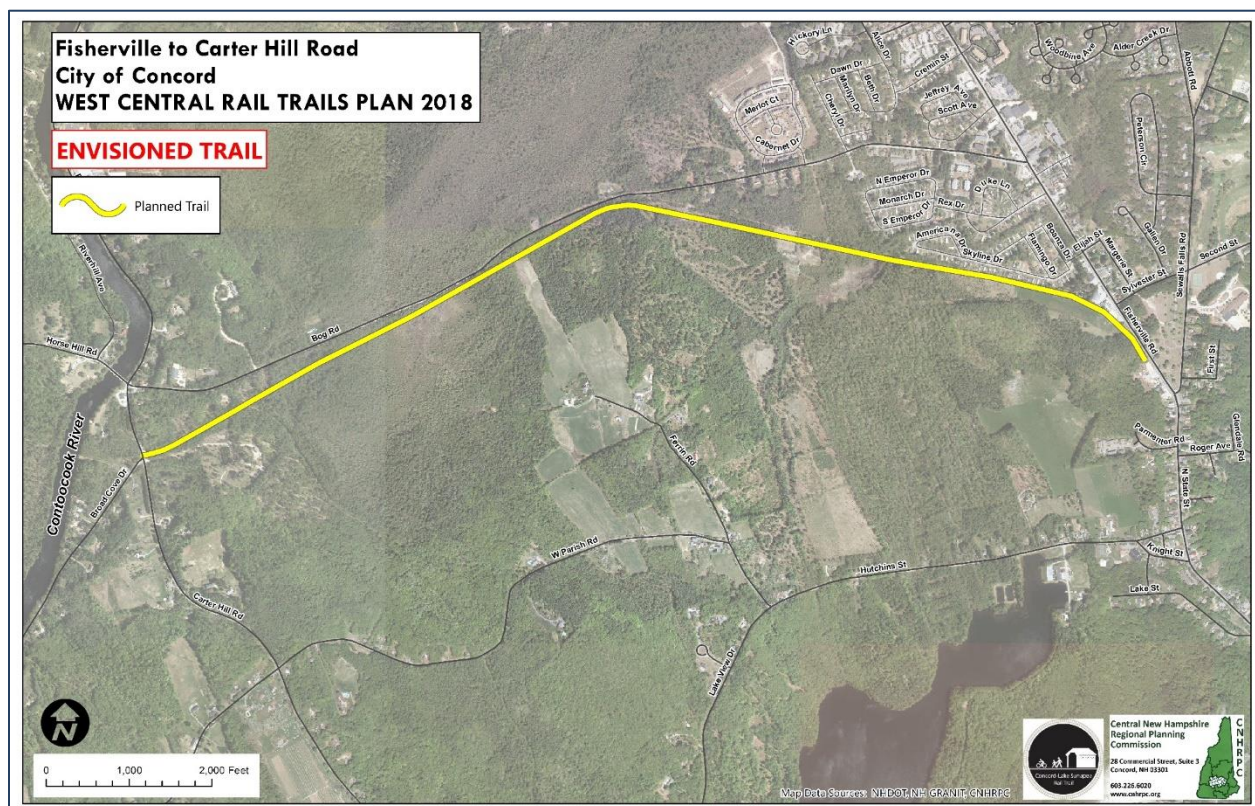
### FCLSRT POSITION ON SNOWMOBILE USE

FCLSRT easements with landowners are silent on the topic of snowmobile use. The group asks each landowner if they want to allow snowmobiling. If the landowner does want to allow snowmobiling and if there is a way to get snowmobiles on and off the property then the FCLSRT will work to support that use. When land owners do not want to allow snowmobiling on their property, FCLSRT will leave gates up in the winter and post usage signs stating what modes are allowed.

### Future Concord Projects

The FCLSRT is working on a significant project on the horizon for possible funding by the 2019 RTP grant round. The proposed **Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment** section is 2.5 miles long and will bring a shared-use, year round recreational trail to West Concord connecting to the Fisherville Road neighborhoods in West Concord. The FCLSRT has the private easements signed for this segment and has entered into a license agreement with the [City of Concord](#) for use of City land along the proposed trail. The next steps include substantial public outreach in the abutting neighborhoods. These relationships are moving forward positively and the application for the RTP grant is ready to be written. The success of this project will announce large-scale credibility of FCLSRT endeavors to those in Concord who are unfamiliar with the organization. The envisioned **Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment** is displayed in **Figure 6**.

**Figure 6. Concord: Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment (Vision Map)**

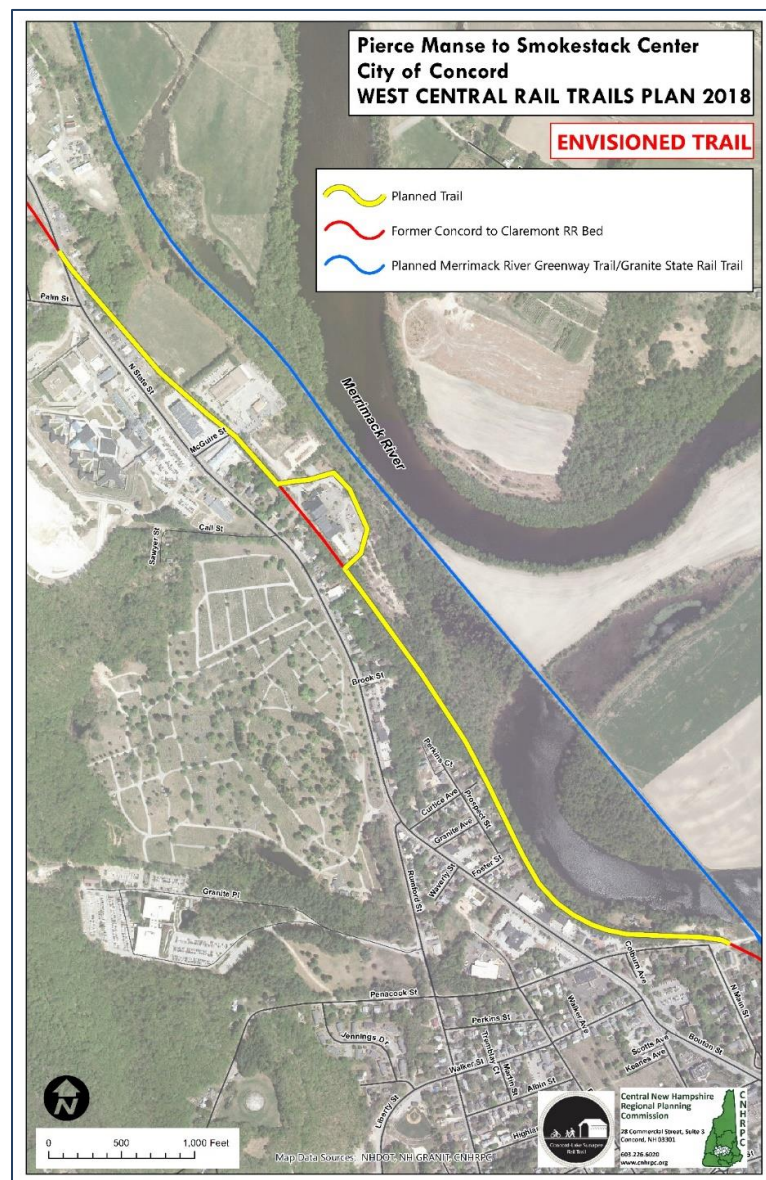


*Vision Map by CNHRPC with FCLSRT Input, 2018*



The first, eastern-most segment of the proposed **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** follows the **Concord & Claremont** railbed beginning at Pierce Manse in downtown Concord at Horseshoe Pond. From Pierce Manse, the next parcel is owned by PanAm Railways and the final parcel on this segment is owned by Smokestack Center. This 1.25 mile **Pierce Manse to Smokestack Center Segment** travels north from Pierce Manse parallel to US 3 to the Smokestack Center, a private commercial property. Discussions with all three of the landowners are underway. This potential project's envisioned rail trails map is provided in **Figure 7**.

**Figure 7. Concord: Pierce Manse to Smokestack Center Segment (Vision Map)**



*Vision Map by CNHRPC with FCLSRT Input, 2018*



*Photo of Smokestack Center Railbed and Merrimack River (MRGT)  
Planned Trail, accessed online June 2016*

## PANAM RAILWAYS IN CONCORD

In addition to owning several small parcels along the **Concord & Claremont** line, PanAm owns a 6.63 mile corridor leading from downtown Concord to the terminus of the [Northern Rail Trail](#) in Boscawen. This [railroad stretch has been abandoned](#), presenting a rare opportunity for purchase.

Another local rail trails organization, the [Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail \(FMRGT\)](#), is pursuing options here for this lower elevation rail bed. The MRGT would like to make this connection from Horseshoe Pond to the existing Northern Rail Trail in Boscawen. This potential segment closely follows the Merrimack River and would bring the 50+ mile **Northern Rail Trail** into downtown Concord.

The Northern Rail Trail and Concord and Claremont have distinct trail advantages for users, with the CLSRT more appealing to pedestrians in an urban environment and the Northern more appealing to bicyclists in a rural setting. Both groups are supportive of each other's efforts and should consider working together to build both corridors. These two prospective trails meet at the eastern terminus of the CLSRT near Pierce Manse, creating a focal point for two trail systems of regional scale.

## HOPKINTON (CONTOOCOOK)



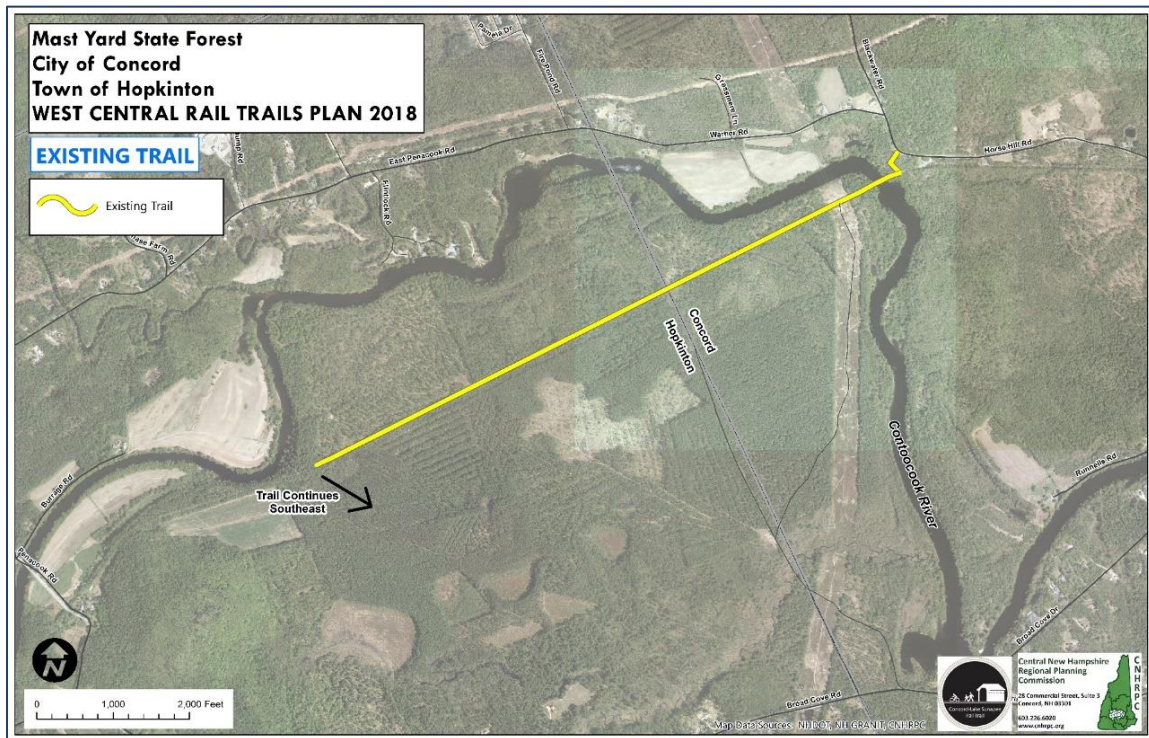
## Stevens Rail Trail

The [Hopkinton Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission](#) owns 24 properties totaling over 1,300 acres and has secured easements on other parcels. Trails have been constructed on over a dozen of these municipal locations. In addition to the Town resources, trails are located on privately held conservation lands, State forests such as Mast Yard State Forest and the federal recreation area, Elm Brook Park overseen by the US Army Corps of Engineers. On the town trails, unless otherwise noted, the hiking trails are available for non-motorized use including walking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and mountain biking via [online hiking maps](#) and the [2010 Recreation Guidebook](#). Many Class VI roads are available for horses and some OHRV usage. The [Hopkinton Village Greenway](#) surrounds a section of US 4/202 at Briar Hill Road and contains the Kimball Pond Recreation Area and boat launch. A collection of Town parcels and easements are joined together by trails, trail heads and parking locations that comprise the Greenway.

From Concord, the **Mast Yard State Forest Trails** run through Hopkinton along the former railroad bed, then veers southeast back towards Concord (see **Concord's Mast Yard Trails Map Figure 3**). The existing former rail bed is open to bicyclists and pedestrians as displayed in **Figure 8**.



Figure 8. Concord/Hopkinton: Mast Yard State Forest Trails (Trails Map)

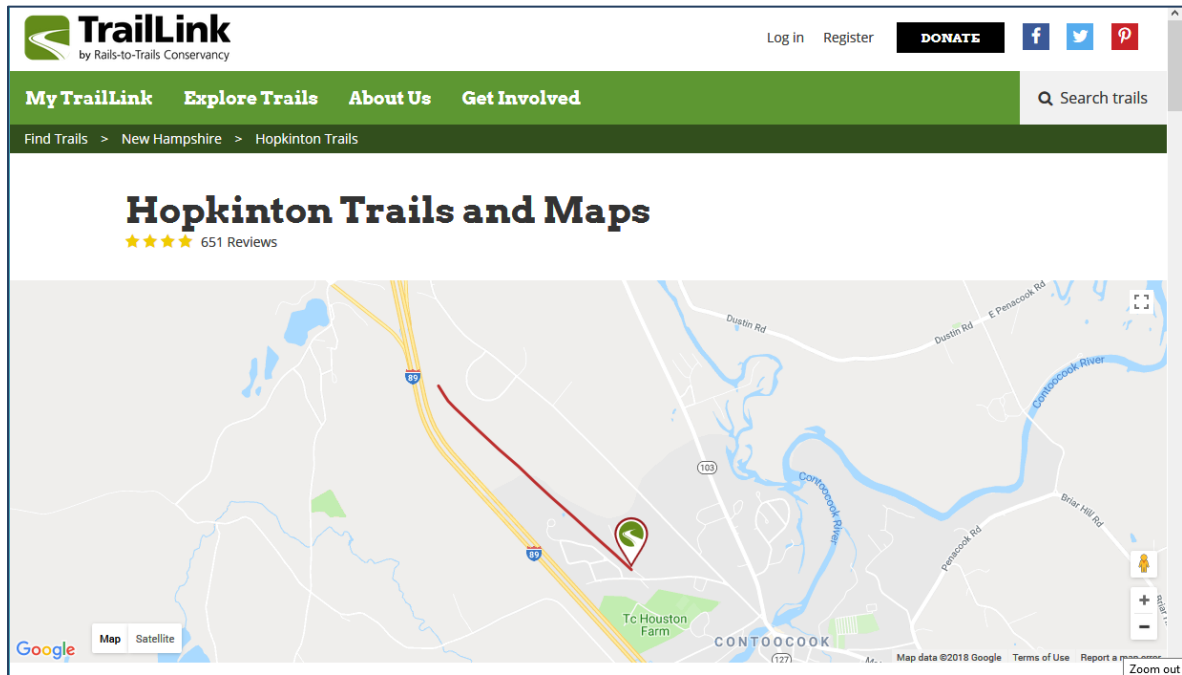


*Existing Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

In Contoocook Village, the Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission and the local [Contoocook Snowmads Snowmobile Club](#) manage the former railroad bed, now multi-purpose **Stevens Rail Trail**, for about 1.25 miles. Beginning at the Krzyzaniak Lane parking area, the trail ends at the Warner town line. An alternate parking area is at Houston Fields behind the Library, following gravel roads and paths to Spring Street, for a longer jaunt. The **Stevens Rail Trail** is [described](#) on the Hopkinton Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission website.

This trail is convenient to Contoocook Village residents and runs near other trails. Closer to the Warner town line end of the rail trail, the area is wet because of drainage issues and leads to the shoulder of I-89, currently requiring an out-and- back trip. In the winter, the trail is used and maintained by local snowmobilers. The Town does not have an online map (see **Figure 9**) available of the **Stevens Rail Trail**, although it is well described.

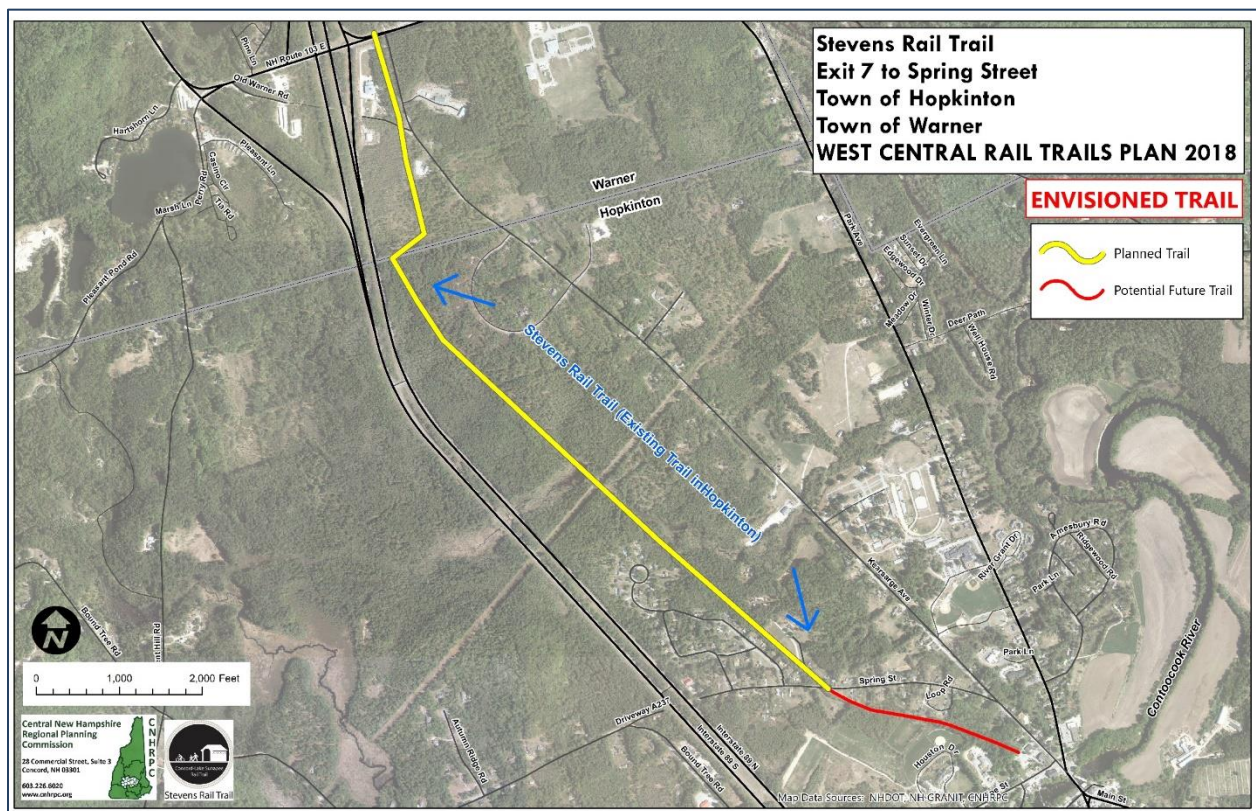
Figure 9. Hopkinton: Rails to Trails Conservancy- Stevens Rail Trail (Trails Map)



*Image Accessed on TrailLink.com of Rails to Trails Conservancy, June 2018*

Extending from the **Stevens Rail Trail**, FCLSRT approached private landowners and business owners in Warner supporting a nearby snowmobile trail for permission to construct a shared-use rail trail to Exit 7. During construction in 2018, the trail will be slightly moved to reduce the impact on the wetlands, re-graded to be more rail-trail like, and resurfaced about for 2 miles of rail trail from Spring Street to Warner Road at NH 103. This new, wide compacted stone dust shared-use **Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment** (in **Figure 10**) will lengthen the **Stevens Rail Trail** and will be available for year-round use once completed.

**Figure 10. Hopkinton/Contoocook: Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment with Stevens Rail Trail (Vision Map)**



*Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

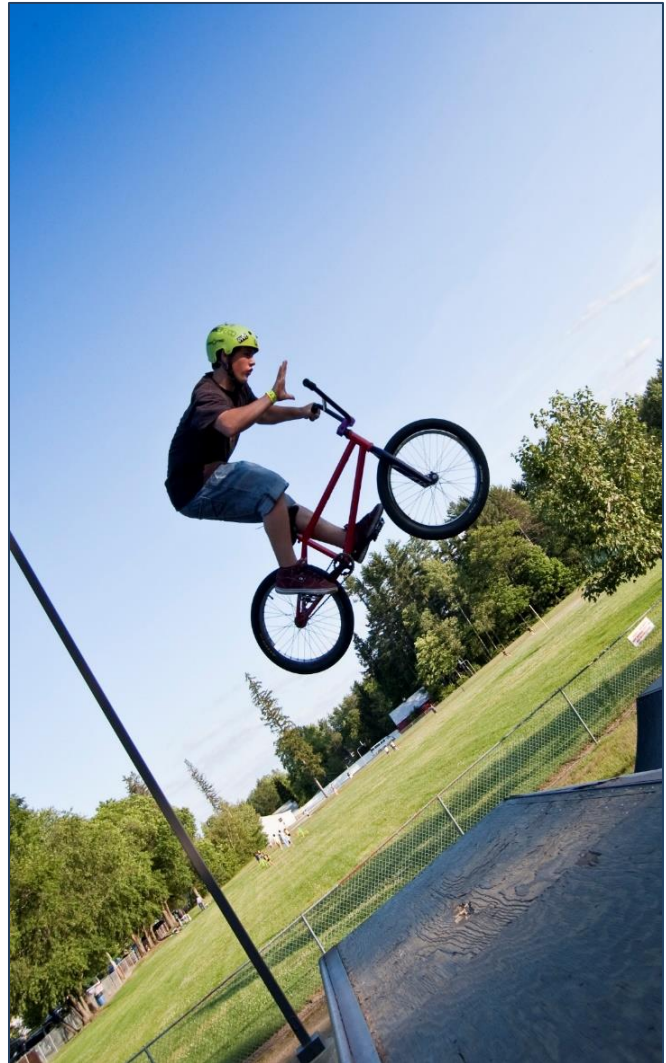
The former **Concord & Claremont** railroad ran along what is now known as the historic **Hopkinton Mast Yard State Forest** through Hopkinton and Concord. Access to the trail is from the Broad Cove Road trailhead in Concord. About four miles in length, the straight rail trail travels over the Contoocook River on the NH Heroes Recreational Bridge, a pedestrian and snowmobile bridge. The west side of the trail travels south in a loop. See the prior **Figure 3** for the City of Concord's **Mast Yard State Forest Trails** Map from their publicly available trails map collection.



### Future Hopkinton Projects

Hopkinton has many miles of former rail running through the community. In Contoocook Village, the former corridor shadowed the Contoocook River into Concord. There are opportunities for linkages to connect to the Mast Yard State Forest, connecting Briar Hill Road with Contoocook Village and the historic Contoocook Railroad Bridge and Depot maintained by the [Contoocook Riverway Association](#). The Depot is the terminus of the **Contoocook Valley** railroad, the location where both potential rail trails examined in this Plan connect. Additional projects will be examined in the Hopkinton section of this other potential rail trail.

The FCSLRT is seeking an easement on the Town of Hopkinton-owned parcel in the Mast Yard State Forest to enable surface improvement from that parcel to Hero's Bridge, a possible 2020 project. This surface improvement will correct deteriorating conditions and provide pedestrians, bicyclists and snowmobilers with safe access across the bridge.



*Hopkinton Skate Park on Park Avenue in Contoocook,  
Photo by CNHRPC 2010*

WARNER

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## Warner Rail Trail

Wadleigh State Parks.

Many [Warner Conservation Commission](#) reports and inventories have been completed, some of which include trails. There is no shortage of trails in Warner for any type of trails user. The local snowmobile club is the [Kearsarge Trail Snails](#) who oversees the winter use of certain trails for snowmobiling. The State of NH maintains trails within Rollins State Park on the south slope of Mount Kearsarge. The Rollins State Park trails comprise a section of the 75-mile loop trail of the [Sunapee-Ragged Kearsarge Greenway](#), which connects the Sunapee, Winslow, Rollins and

Through the efforts of the [Warner Parks and Recreation Department](#) and the FCLSRT, the first 0.5 mile section of the **Warner Rail Trail** became operational in 2014. The trail was made possible by extensive community efforts and funding sources, including an Active Transportation Grant administered through HEAL-NH, private donations, a donation from the Nancy Sibley Wilkins Trust, support from Warner Parks and Recreation, and hundreds of hours of volunteer work. The former rail line required significant brush clearing, grade restoration, compacted stone dust, and gates. A ceremony was held celebrating the official opening of the [Warner Rail Trail](#) in September 2014, which is a popular shared-use trail with residents and visitors.



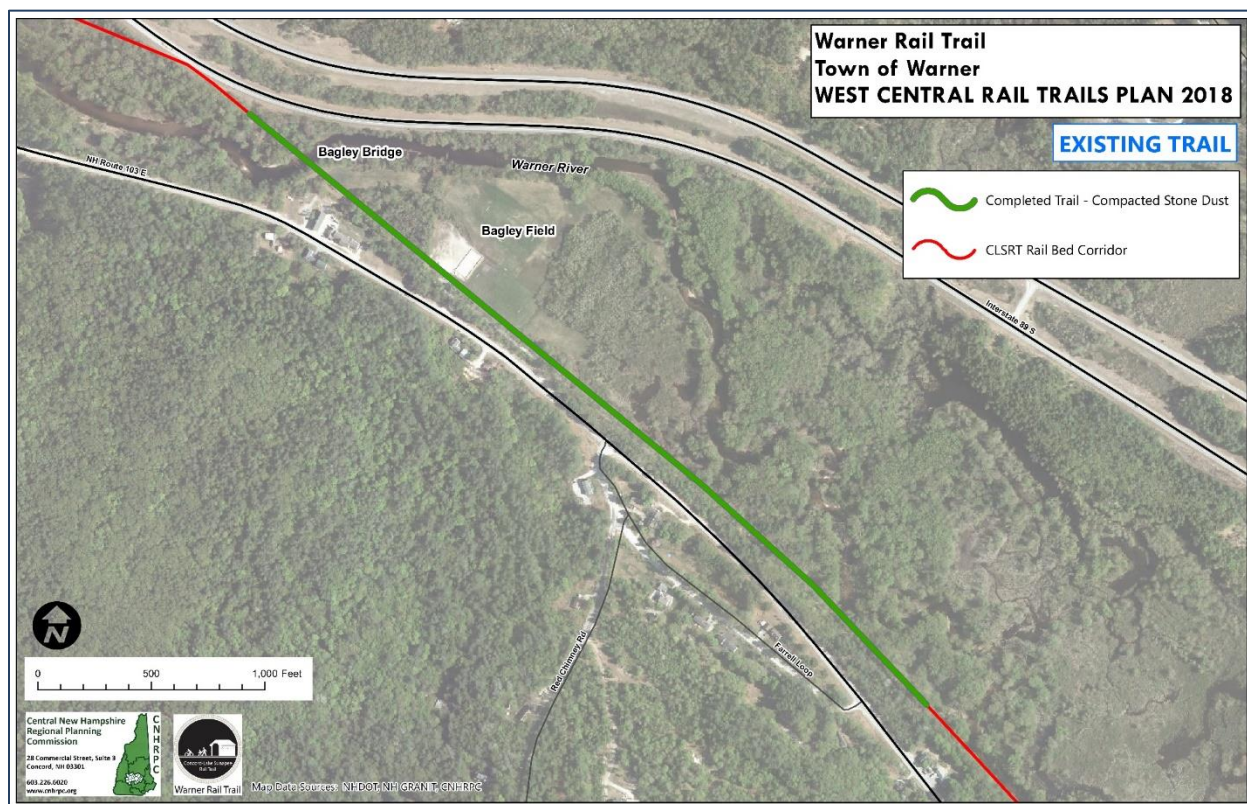




*Photos of Warner Rail Trail and Terminus, accessed on Warner Rail Trail Website June 2018*

Building upon this successful project, the same unified collaboration enabled the 0.3 mile compacted stone dust rail bed trail extension in 2017 onto a newly re-decked bridge over the Warner River. Together, the projects created the easy, flat, shared-use 0.8 mile **Warner Rail Trail** located on NH 103 between I-89 Exits 7 & 8 alongside the Warner River. The trail is wide enough to accommodate different trail users, travels over a solid re-decked bridge, and offers beautiful views of the Warner River and wildlife habitat. The trail is a dead end “lollipop” with only one public access point at this time. The Warner Rail Trail is displayed in **Figure 11**.

Figure 11. Warner: Warner Rail Trail (Bagley Field Segment) (Trails Map)



*Existing Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

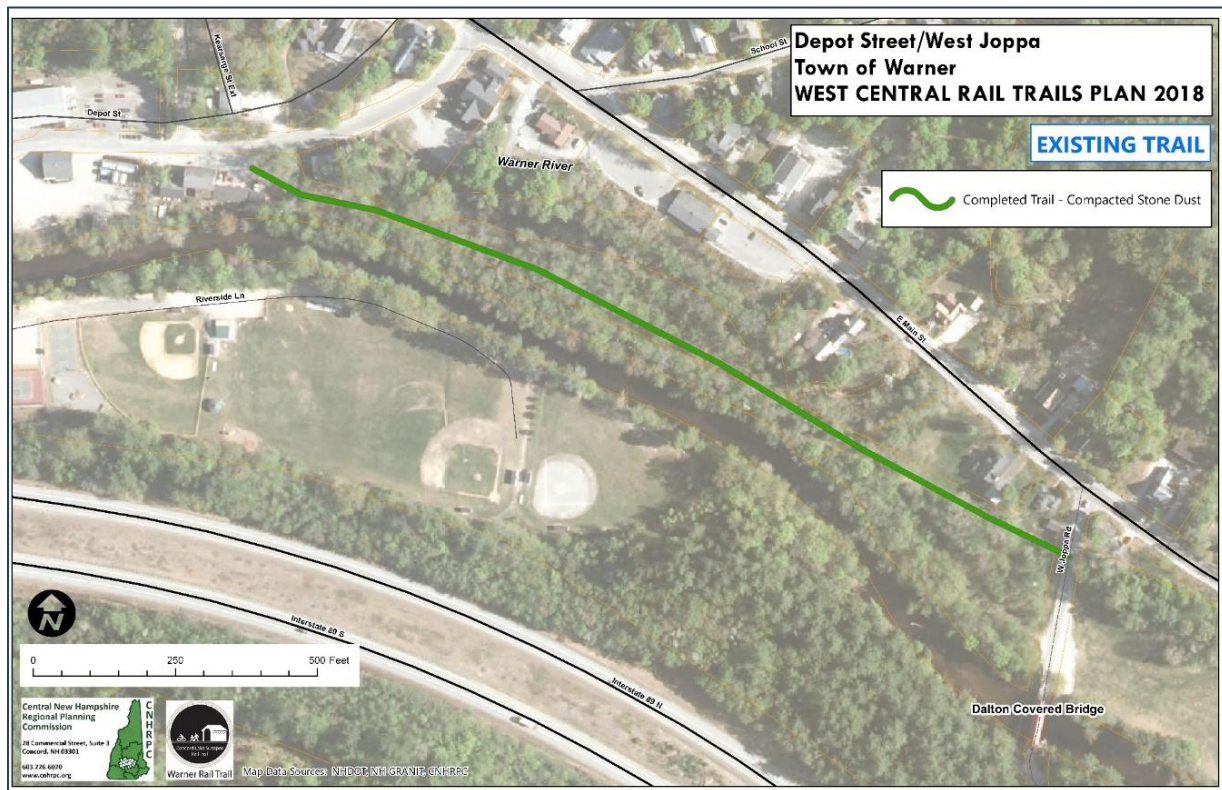
Several trail segments currently comprise the **Warner Rail Trail** or are envisioned as future trails. They are sometimes referenced individually within this **PLAN**:

- ⇒ **Bagley Field Segment** (existing)
- ⇒ **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** (existing)
- ⇒ **Northern Bagley Extension** (envisioned)
- ⇒ **Evans to Waterloo Road Segment** (envisioned)
- ⇒ **Exit 8 Project** (envisioned)



About 2 miles northwest of Bagley Field, a separate 0.3 mile section of rail trail was constructed in 2017 between Depot Street and West Joppa Road, ending near the Dalton Covered Bridge that crosses the Warner River. The accessibility to the **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** is greater to downtown Warner and the trail is nearly parallel to the River. The Warner Library is in the process of arranging the creation of a Story Trail with an Eagle Scout to display picture books for young readers to enjoy while walking. This new segment is displayed in **Figure 12**.

**Figure 12. Warner: Depot Street/West Joppa Segment (Trails Map)**



*Existing Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

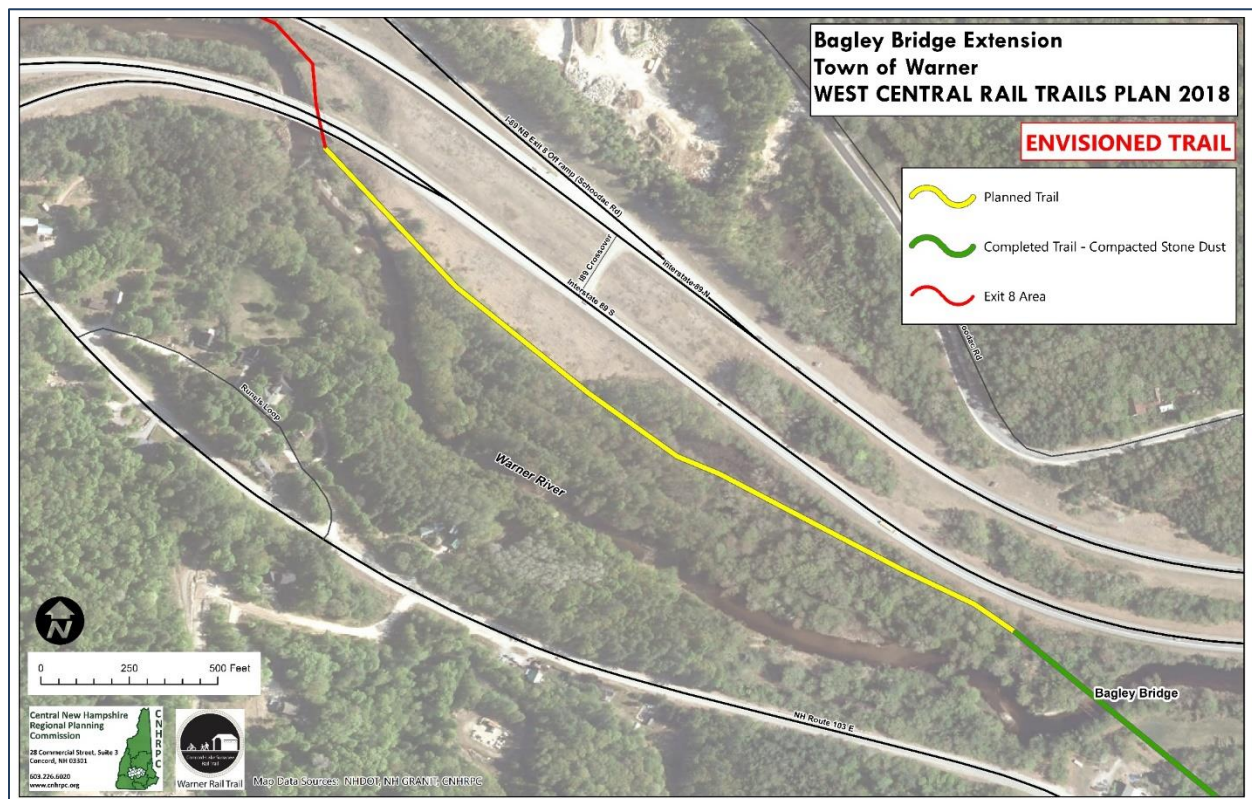
### Future Warner Projects

A shared goal of the Warner Parks and Recreation Department, Conservation Commission and the FCSLRT is to connect the **Warner Rail Trail's Bagley Field Segment** and the **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** in downtown Warner to one another. From Depot Street and Chemical Lane, it is desirable to develop a rail trail north to I-89 Exit 9. From the **Bagley Field Segment**, a connection along the old railbed could be pursued to Exit 7 in Davisville, to the **Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment** extension of the **Stevens Rail Trail** in Hopkinton. The **Exit 8 Project** of the **Warner Rail Trail** and the **Evans to Waterloo Road Segment** at Exit 9 are projects on the horizon.

To connect the 1.75 mile stretch between the **Bagley Field Segment** with the **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** will be especially difficult because of a necessary I-89 crossing. A 9-acre riverfront parcel is being sold to the Conservation Commission by the State of New Hampshire at the Town's request. This parcel contains a portion of the proposed trail, has railroad grade in the boundary, but then the railbed falls out of the parcel boundary into the I-89 limited access highway right of way.

The FCLSRT sought options with the [NH Department of Transportation \(NHDOT\)](#) and [US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#), inquiring whether an easement of 2,100 feet could be purchased or a lot line could be adjusted and the resulting triangle of land sold to FCLSRT. The NHDOT has indicated willingness to modify the right of way boundary by selling the property and this is presently in process for review. By late summer 2018, it is anticipated the Warner Conservation Commission will own the 9 acres and either the Town or FCLSRT would own the sliver of land. That would enable the **Northern Bagley Extension** from Bagley Field Bridge to the Exit 8 I-89 southbound ramp as displayed in **Figure 13**.

**Figure 13. Warner: Northern Bagley Extension (Vision Map)**



*Vision Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

### Exit 8

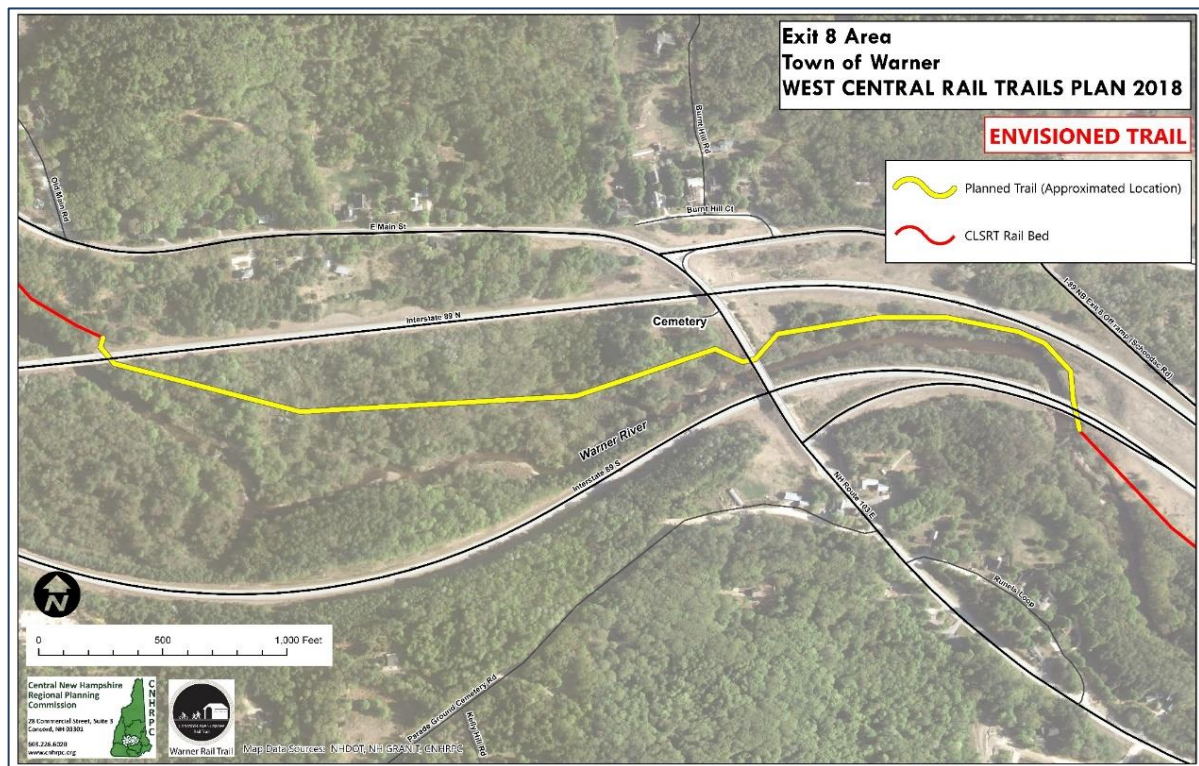
It will be necessary to cross the interstate to enable connection of the **Bagley Field Segment** and a potential future **Northern Bagley Extension** to access other rail trail segments in the Warner Village area. While the NHDOT prefers a transverse crossing of highways as a general rule, a site walk on a proposed route through the interstate was undertaken in 2013 with Warner Trails Enthusiasts, FWHA, NHDOT, Warner Conservation Commission, and others to review potential alternatives.

The walk was conducted from the **Bagley Field Segment** to the referenced 9-acre parcel. The route began by hiking underneath the I-89 southbound bridge and into in the median between the Warner River and northbound lanes. The group continued the site walk in the median until reaching the northbound lanes bridge over the Warner River. At that point, the proposed trail would be located under these interstate lanes and exit onto the railroad grade on a parcel where FCLSRT has obtained an easement and space for parking.

For the **Exit 8 Project** to be successful, a 0.75 mile trail would need to be constructed in the I-89 median. This project may be eligible for TAP funding after the 2019 grant round and may require two phases to complete. The potential impact to the Warner River and the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNCR) Natural Heritage concerns would need to be addressed. The project may be a good tie-in with the NHDES promotion programs for electric vehicle charging stations. The **Exit 8 Project** area is depicted in **Figure 14**.



Figure 14. Exit 8 Project (Vision Map)

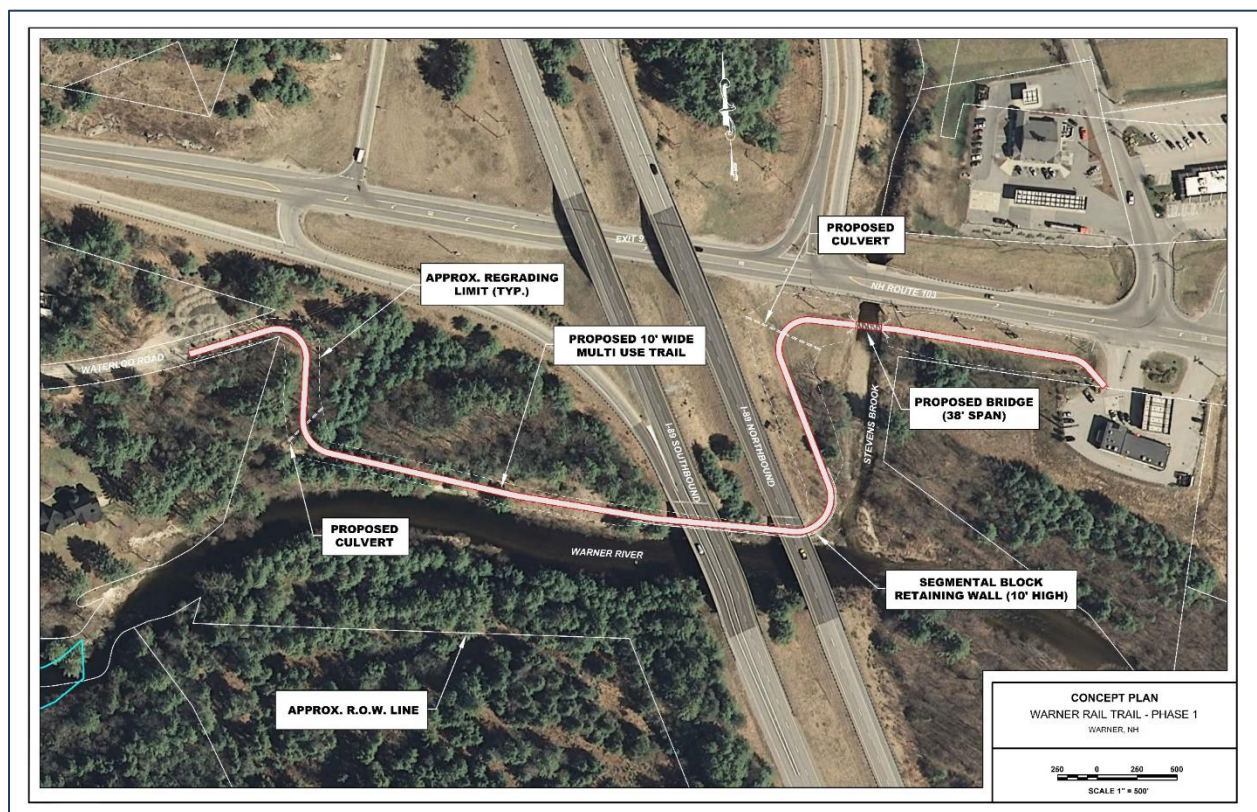


*Vision Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

**Exit 9**

An interesting opportunity is available where an existing bridge in northern New Hampshire meant for destruction could be repurposed in Warner to provide bicycle and pedestrian access over Stevens Brook at Exit 9. The bridge could be incorporated into a section of trail running from Evans Expressmart west over Stevens Brook, after which it would turn south and run parallel to I-89 toward the Warner River. The CNHRPC could be of assistance on multiple levels, from review for transportation safety, pre-engineering, cost estimates and helping the project move through the state and municipal requirements. Engineering ideas were sketched in 2018 for the **Evans to Waterloo Road Segment**. This project may be eligible for the September 2018 TAP round and is displayed in **Figure 15**.

**Figure 15. Warner: Evans to Waterloo Road Segment (Vision Map)**

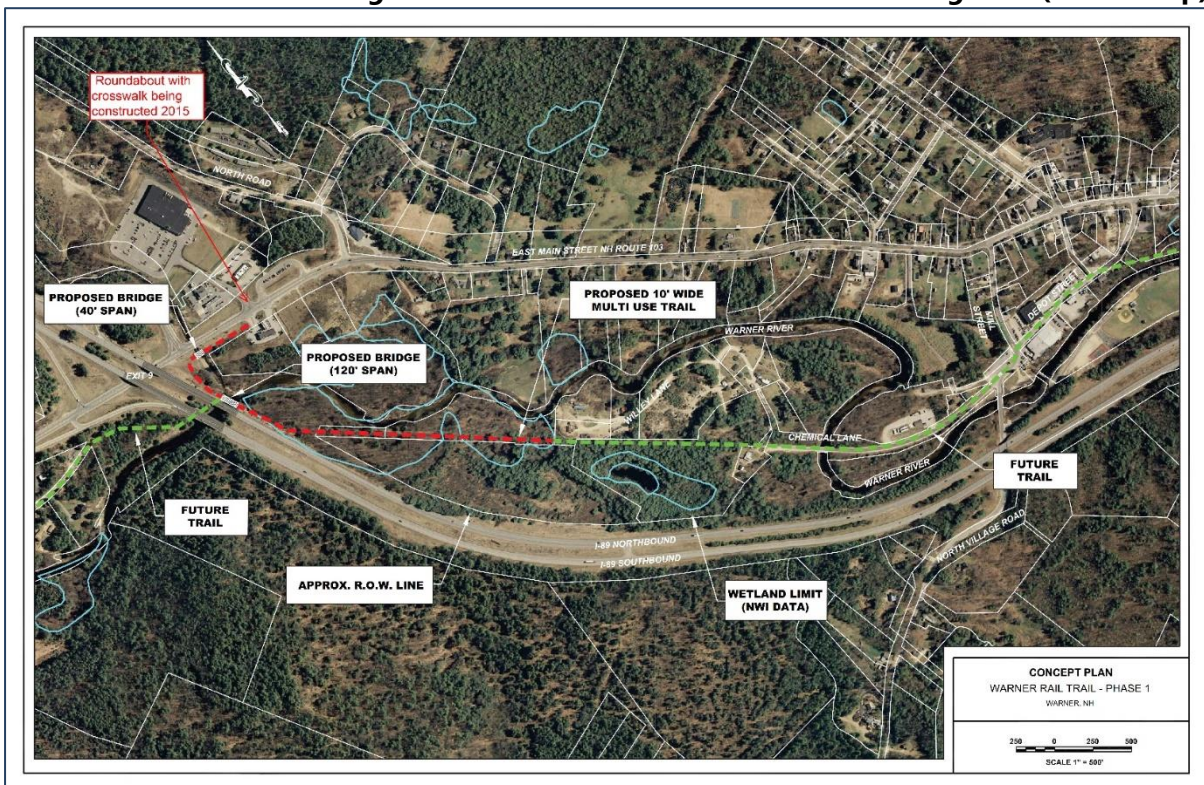


*Vision Map by FCLSRT Engineers, 2018*



Another potential shared-use rail trail connection, the **Chemical Lane to Exit 9 Segment**, sought TAP funding in 2014 but was not selected for funding. This proposed segment also included the portion of the above project on the east side of I-89. This project starts at Evans Expressmart, crosses Stevens Brook and runs south towards the Warner River. At the River, this project needs another bridge to get across the River, staying on the east side of the Interstate. The trail segment then runs south a short distance where it encounters the old rail grade. From this point, the trail would run along the grade until it reaches either Wiley Lane, or with the benefit of another easement, it could continue on the grade directly to Chemical Lane. FCLSRT currently has one easement in place and plans to use the short road segment on Chemical Lane and Depot Street to connect to the existing **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment**. The **Chemical Lane to Exit 9 Segment** trail project enables pedestrians and bicyclists to successfully navigate to Warner Village without using NH 103. Displayed in **Figure 16** is the proposed project.

**Figure 16. Warner: Chemical Lane to Exit 9 Segment (Vision Map)**



*Vision Map from TAP Application Submitted by Town of Warner, May 2014*



## Tilley Wheeler Trail

### BRADFORD

The Bradford Conservation Commission oversees the public lands and the trails in the community. In 2014, the Town published a Trails and Public Lands Map that illustrated short lengths of unconnected trails along Class VI roads in the more rural sections of the Town and included narrative descriptions of the locations. The Town has an existing well-maintained boardwalk system within the Bradford Bog. The Town developed the *Bradford Open Space Trail System Plan 2000 (OSTS)* with the CNHRPC which mapped the existing trail system, public lands, and proposed trail system at that time.

Since 2014, the Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT) group has worked with landowners, the NHDES and NHDOT, the [Lower Lake Todd Association](#), the [Lake Sunapee Snowmobile Club](#), the [Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford](#) and the [Town of Bradford](#) to plan an extension of the **Tilley Wheeler Trail**. The project will construct 0.75 miles of trail along the former railroad corridor in Bradford from the Appleseed Restaurant to Main Street which includes a 70' bridge over the Lake Todd causeway. This new bridge runs parallel to the NH 103 bridge over Lake Todd as NHDOT would not grant space for a bi-directional shared-use path on the existing bridge. The new, compacted stone dust **Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension**



*Scenic Lake Todd in Bradford and Newbury*

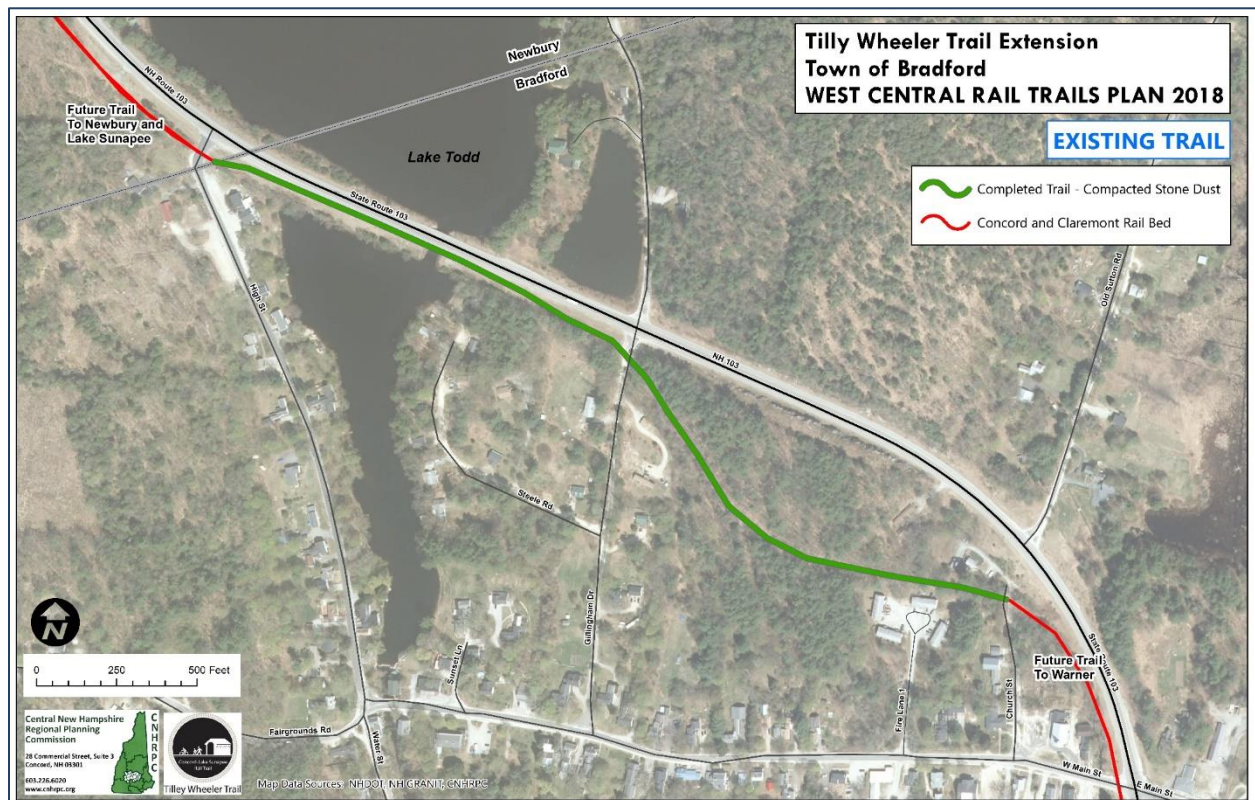
trail will make several nice walking loops possible connecting to West Main Street and High Street.

The project is slated to be completed in 2018 from an [NH Bureau of Trails \(NHBOT\) Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) grant and future rail trail extensions are possible. While the FCLSRT was undertaking these efforts along with project partners Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford and the Lake Sunapee Snowmobile Club, some resistance was initially encountered regarding noise over Lake



Todd from winter snowmobiles, but by working closely with landowners and partners, these challenges were resolved by holding meetings and discussions with landowners which allayed concerns. **Figure 17** displays the **Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension** scheduled for 2018 completion.

**Figure 17. Bradford: Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension (Trails Map)**



*Existing Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

Several of the recommendations from the *2000 OSTs Plan* included promoting the [Tilly] Wheeler Trail along the former railroad corridor as a Town trail and establishing connections to other previous railbed locations. Much of the old railroad through Bradford was paved over to create NH 103 and other sections required the crossing of the Warner River. Continuation opportunities in Bradford could enable connection from the southern end of the Tilly Wheeler trail to another 1.3 miles along the former railbed which curves along and under NH 103 at NH 114.

### Future Bradford Projects

Several potential projects could be on the horizon to further the rail trail through Town. The Bradford snowmobile trail hits intersection of Route 103 and Main Street and a cut in the guardrail is available



for them to cross at this location with NHDOT permission. However, there is no pedestrian and bicycle crossing at this location. The Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford and the FCLSRT walked the location with NHDOT officials who stated this location is not a suitable or safe pedestrian or bicycling crossing. Options are needed for a pedestrian ADA-compliant push button actuator walk signal at Main Street to build a trail at this location. CNHRPC may be able to assist with the pre-engineering details, identifying what would be involved, provide signal options for counting pedestrians and bicyclists, cost estimates, etc.



*Future Signalization Project at Unsafe Guard Rail Gap on Main Street and NH 103 from Phase 1 Tap Application, 2014*

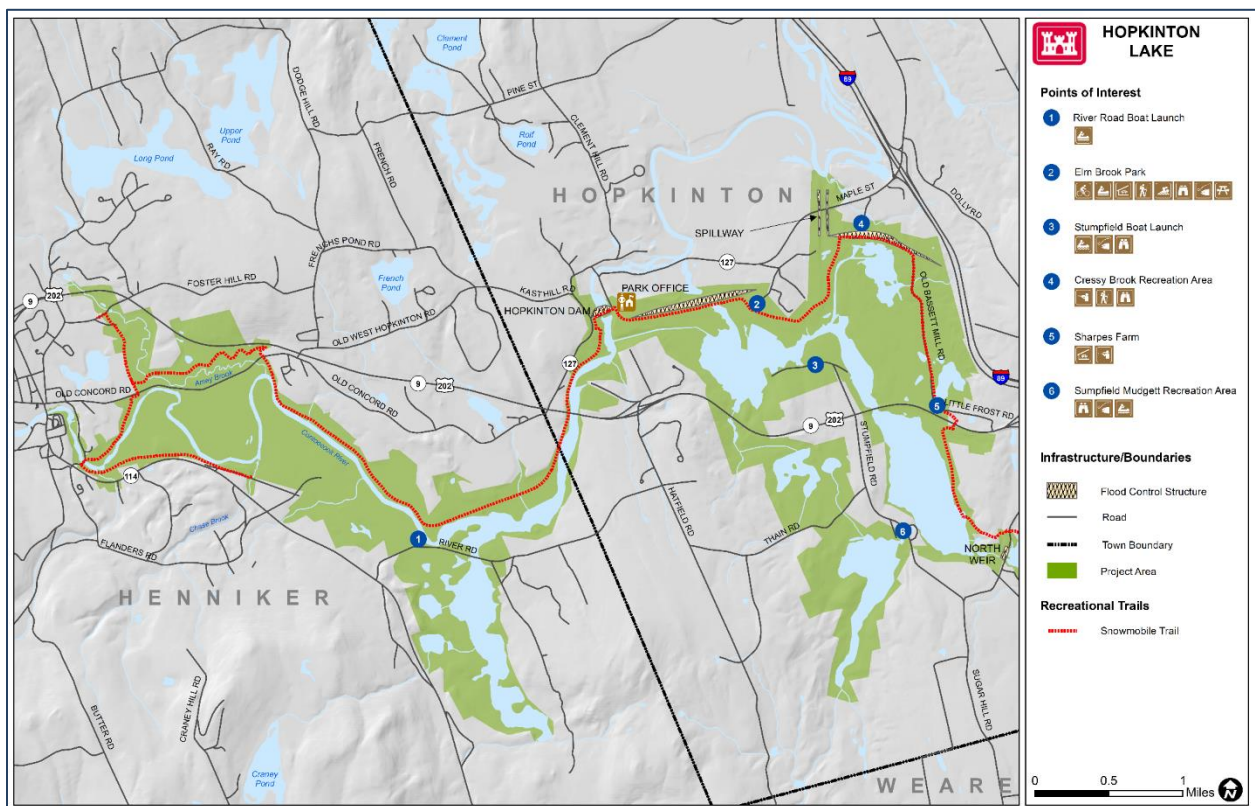
Continuing about 1/2 mile south at the NH 103 & 114 intersection, there is no pedestrian crossing here at this location. This intersection is the only suitable location in Bradford to continue a pedestrian and bicycle trail. A pedestrian ADA-compliant push button actuator walk signal is desirable and necessary for an official trail. The CNHRPC may be approached to provide similar pre-engineering assistance for this project.

The CNHRPC could assist the FCLSRT by developing an Alternative Trails Location Map to consider where different future trail segments could be located, with the goal of connecting to the Warner segments.

## Contoocook Valley Rail Trail

As mentioned previously, there is currently no trails group formed to lead the potential **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**. The former **Contoocook Valley** railroad bed begins in Contoocook at Main Street, travels under I-89 in a southwesterly direction, and follows the meanders of the Contoocook River until the former railbed's intersection with NH 127. Here begins the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Hopkinton-Everett Reservoir's Hopkinton Dam and its existing snowmobile trail system, some of which follows along the former railroad corridor from the Hopkinton Dam into Henniker as displayed in **Figure 18**.

**Figure 18. Hopkinton/Henniker: USACE- Hopkinton Lake Snowmobile Trails (Trails Map)**



Existing Trails [USACE Hopkinton Lake Map](#) accessed by CNHRPC, June 2018

Bicycling is allowed on all USACE Hopkinton-Everett trails and many are separately designated Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle or snowmobile trails, such as the map above. Much of the rail trail south of Hopkinton Dam is used informally by mountain bikers and hikers during the warm seasons.

Coinciding with a few existing trails along the way, the railroad continues to parallel the River, making one crossing in Henniker to travel alongside NH 114 until passing through the New England College property. The former railroad makes another crossing of the Contoocook River and traveling roughly between NH 9 and the River into Hillsborough. In a few locations, existing roads were built upon the former railroad bed, such as Henniker's **Browns Way**, a municipal Class VI road used for recreational and travel purposes. The former **Contoocook Valley** continues southwesterly into Downtown Hillsborough, making another River crossing and connecting to the existing **Hillsborough Recreation Trail** in Deering, the State-owned rail trail.

With this **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN**, CNHRPC hopes to inspire communities to consider formalizing the old railroad beds as Town trails. Particularly for this **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**, more regional outreach is needed.



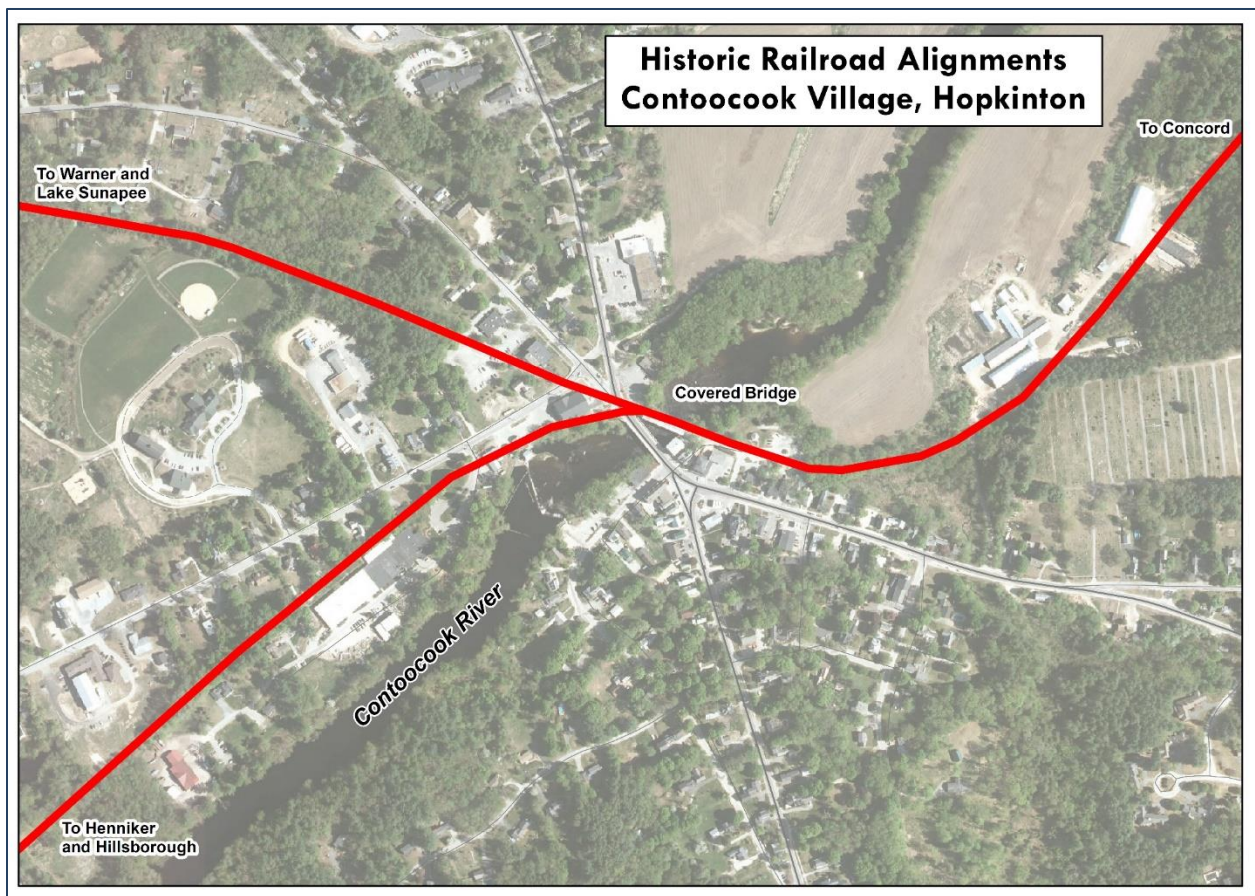
*Historic Contoocook Railroad Bridge and Depot, Photo by CNHRPC 2011*



## HOPKINTON (CONTOOCCOOK)

The former **Contoocook Valley** and **Concord & Claremont** railroad lines converge at the Contoocook Depot and Contoocook Covered Bridge, collectively one of the Town's greatest historical treasures maintained by the [Contoocook Riverway Association](#). This Bridge is the terminus of a short **Contoocook Covered Bridge** rail trail to Pine Street, enabling Village pedestrian and bicyclist access to an historic, urban recreational trail. The **Stevens Rail Trail** is also part of the former **Concord & Claremont** rail system. The historic railroad alignments in Contoocook Village are illustrated in **Figure 19**.

**Figure 19. Hopkinton/Contoocook: Historic Railroad Alignments in Contoocook Village (Vision Map)**



*Image from Google Maps, accessed by CNHRPC June 2018*

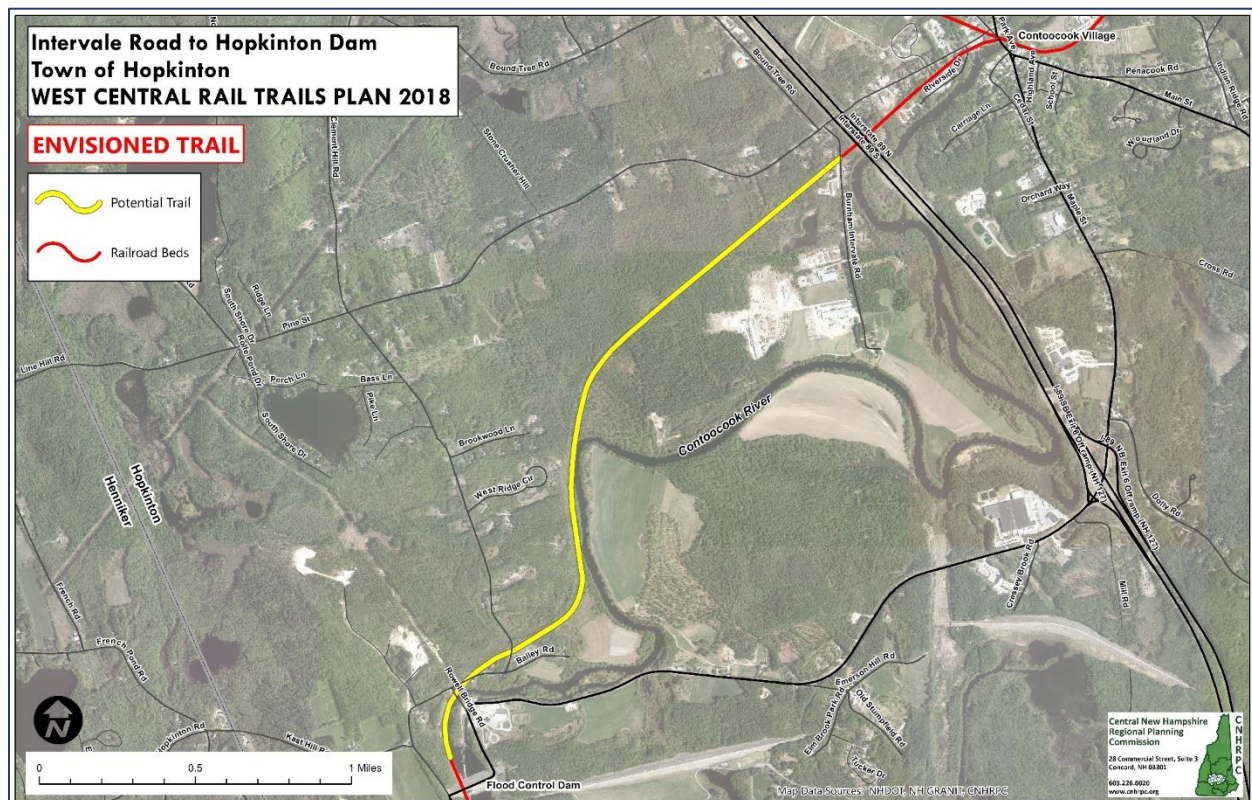


### Future Hopkinton Projects

To date, Hopkinton has focused most of its efforts on municipal trail systems on conservation lands. In the vicinity of the existing Hopkinton Village Greenway and the **Stevens Rail Trail** lies the historic Contoocook Depot from where future rail trail segments could stem. The former **Contoocook Valley** rail corridor begins between Pine Street and the Contoocook River and crosses I-89, reaching a long swath of forest for several miles before reaching the USACE Hopkinton Dam. This approximately 3-mile long segment has very few landowners and most of its length is an active snowmobile trail managed by the [Contoocook Snowmads Snowmobile Club](#).

Should a local trails enthusiasts group become interested, this envisioned rail trail could be pursued for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Beginning at Intervale Road just west of I-89 traveling southwest to the USACE Hopkinton Dam, a potential **Intervale Road to Hopkinton Dam Segment** as shown in **Figure 20**. It could connect Contoocook Village to the Hopkinton Dam.

**Figure 20. Hopkinton/Contoocook: Intervale Road to Hopkinton Dam Segment (Vision Map)**



*Vision Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

## HENNIKER

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Henniker has vast open spaces with scenic fields, forests, and hillsides with plenty of potential for high quality trails. Multiple trail systems have been mapped for non-motorized use, including the area of Azalea Park, New England College land, and various trails and class VI roads across town. The Henniker Rotary Club maintains a Henniker and Hillsborough Outdoor Guide which serves as an excellent resource for locals and visitors to find trails that are open to the public. The Economic Development Committee in town has considered trails to be part of an economic development strategy that builds on the community's strengths.

The Town of Henniker reestablished their [Henniker Trails Committee](#) in 2018. The charge for the committee upon its initial inception in 2013 was to expand and promote trails as an asset to the community. A more recent emphasis of the committee is to ensure trail building and trail systems are done with proper coordination and permission from property owners. The committee has representation from a range of trail users including ATVs, snowmobiles, mountain biking, hiking, as well as a Conservation Commission representative and at-large seats. This committee appears well suited to evaluating and advance any rail trail potential in the Town of Henniker.



*Azalea Park & Trails Kiosk in Henniker on Contoocook River, Photo by CNHRPC 2012*

Other trail organizations in Henniker include the [Henniker Trail Travelers](#), which have established relationships with landowners across Town to enable a system of Snowmobile Trails. The Town established a municipal [Henniker OHRV Committee](#) in 2017 as a way to ensure resident ATV concerns are addressed and to help support the purpose of the Town's OHRV ordinance. A local OHRV group, the Contoocook Valley ATV Riders, also helps facilitate an ATV trail system in Henniker and neighboring communities and promotes respectful and legal ATV riding. The ATV trails are not mapped, and requests for ATV maps are directed to the State of NH OHRV Trail System. The snowmobile clubs, OHRV committee, and local ATV clubs should all be party to any rail trail discussions in Henniker. The trails committee has an OHRV club member.

The [New England College \(NEC\)](#) seems a great group to integrate with any trail planning or building activities as a rail trail could benefit the institution and be used by its students. The [US Army Corps of Engineers \(USACE\)](#) would need to be central to any discussions for trails through their property and the Hopkinton Everett Reservoir. The Trails Committee is working to build relationships with both of these entities.

The CNHRPC has offered assistance in any rail trail planning, and the FCLSRT has offered to share their experiences and expertise in rail trail development if asked.

### **Future Henniker Projects**

At present there are no plans to make any changes or improvements to the Contoocook Valley Railroad bed in Henniker. The rail bed in Henniker is owned by a number of public and private owners. Parts of the corridor are used as snowmobile trails, some sections are used informally as trails, and a few pieces of the rail bed are overgrown and forgotten. Brown's Way, a class VI road that also is an access road to homes, a business, and camps, is on top of the rail bed and appears to be the only piece of rail bed in Henniker that is officially available for four season trail use. Any future plans for trail work along the rail bed would likely be facilitated through the Town's Trail Committee.

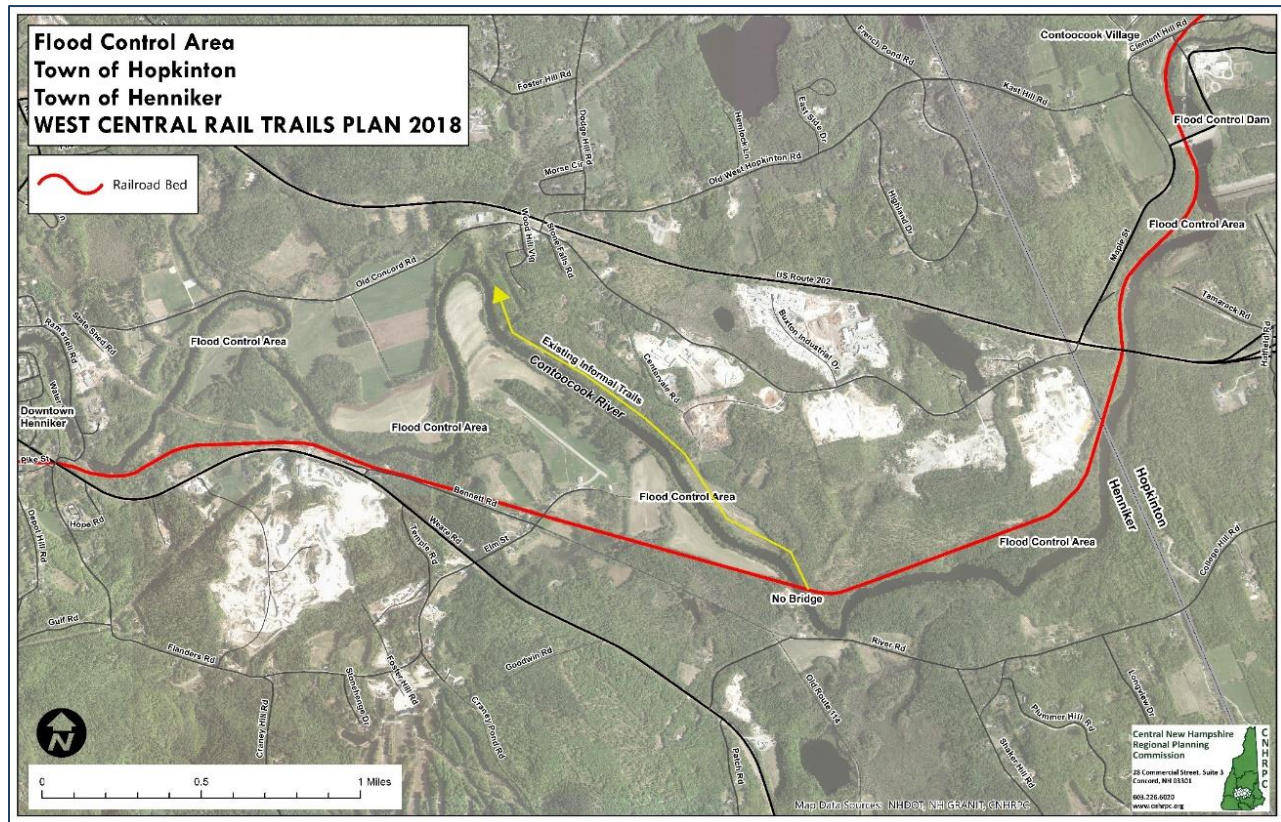
Future rail trail possibilities in the eastern half of Henniker are displayed in **Figure 21**, illustrating the former **Contoocook Valley** railroad bed within the USACE **Flood Control Area**. From the USACE Hopkinton Dam in Hopkinton, the railroad bed follows the north bank of the Contoocook River into Henniker. It crosses under US 202/NH 9 under a bridge over the Contoocook where the [Henniker Trail Travelers](#) snowmobile club have built a bridge squeezed between the highway bridge and the River. The rail bed continues along the north bank of the river until it crosses to the south side at a bend in the river near River Road and Bennet Road. The railroad bridge was removed many years ago. It continues between NH 114 and the Contoocook River until crossing NH114 near Ramsdell Rd, and reaching the railroad depot off Depot Hill Rd near downtown Henniker and NEC.

This entire rail bed here is currently being used as a trail in some capacity. Approximately .8 miles is being used by snowmobiles, and some of the route is used with permission from USACE, including a popular Pedaling for Payson's charity ride that uses part of the rail bed.

It should be noted that the USACE **Flood Control Area** is subject to inundation during flooding, and adding materials to improve the trail would probably not be permissible.



Figure 21. Hopkinton/Henniker: Flood Control Area (Vision Map)



*Vision Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

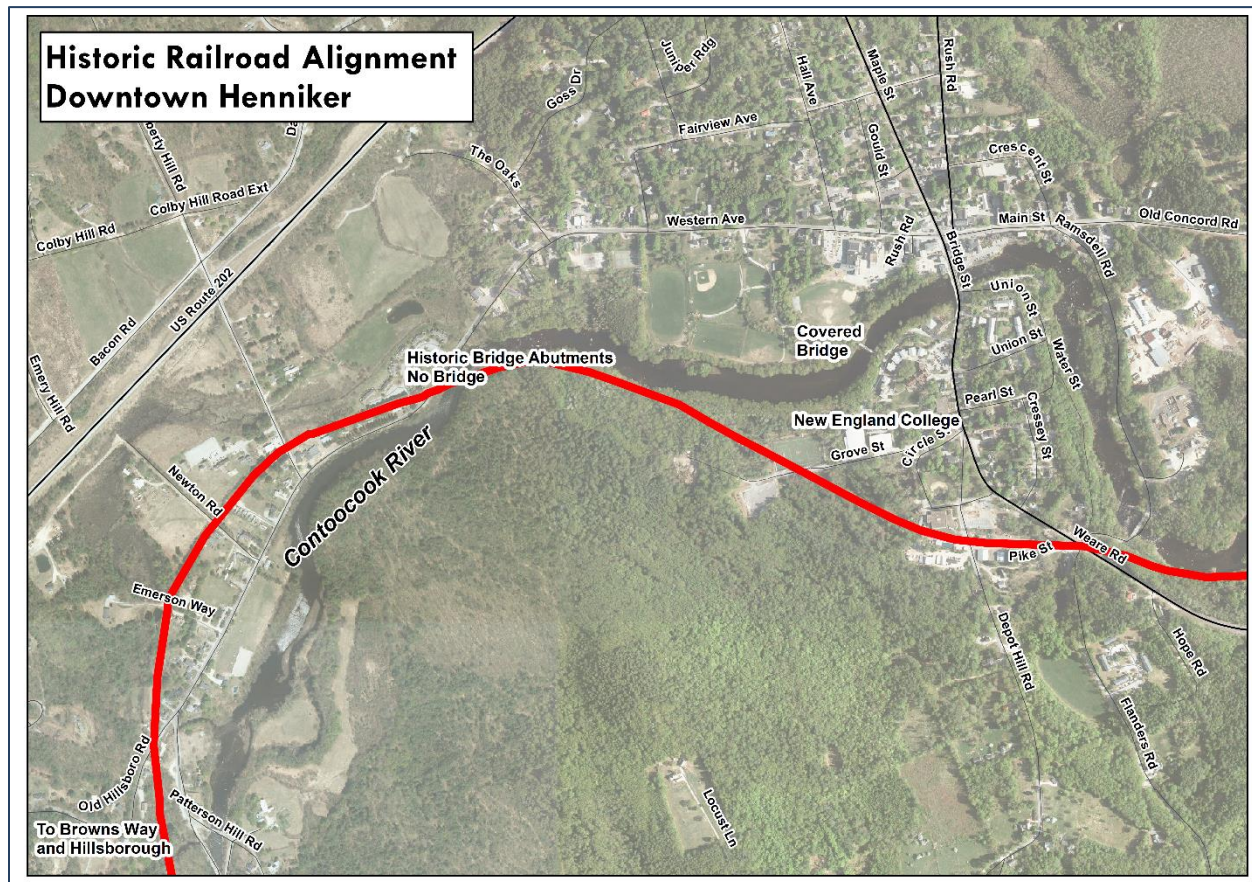
With permission from USAC, it is likely possible to formalize a four season trail through this corridor, however the missing bridge where it crosses the Contoocook will probably preclude a complete connection of this stretch of rail bed. In some cases a pre-fabricated bridge may be worth the investment, but at this location which is subject to inundation, a bridge structure of such a scale appears unlikely. A more feasible route for a through-town connection would be to use the western half of the rail bed on the north side of the river, then follow an existing trail (in yellow on Figure 21) to Old Concord Road. From there, the route would need to either use Old Concord Road or seek alternative ways to connect a trail back into downtown Henniker.

The historic **Contoocook Valley Railroad** passed the southern end of downtown Henniker, with a historic train depot off Depot Hill Rd. **Figure 22** shows the **Downtown Henniker Historic Railroad Alignment** where the rail bed crosses NH 114 near Ramsdell Road, travels along Pike Street at the railroad depot, and crosses Depot Hill Rd. From there it crosses New England College property back towards the Contoocook River, before crossing the Contoocook River to Western Ave. The railroad's



bridge abutments remain there today, allowing for the possibility of a pre-fabricated pedestrian bridge spanning the Contoocook River to be placed on the existing abutments. After crossing the River, the former railroad corridor swoops in a gentle curve on private property behind Western Ave homes and businesses and crosses Liberty Hill Road, Newton Road, Emerson Road and Old Hillsboro Road and back to the bank of the Contoocook River.

**Figure 22. Henniker: Downtown Henniker Historic Railroad Alignment (Vision Map)**



*Vision Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

Many neighborhoods could be accessed by a trail along this route, providing an off-street transportation route for bicyclists and pedestrians. A trail located in the heart of a downtown neighborhood with good accessibility to residents, businesses, and visitors could be a strong economic benefit to the town. It would add to the existing trail and recreation opportunities in the area, create a walking loop for downtown residents and visitors, and also serve as a non-motorized transportation corridor. Students and others may appreciate the ability to walk or bike to NEC instead of traveling on Henniker's roads. NEC itself has an extensive trail system and may be willing to become a partner to assist with rail trail efforts. NEC sponsors a [VeoRide Bike Share](#) program that

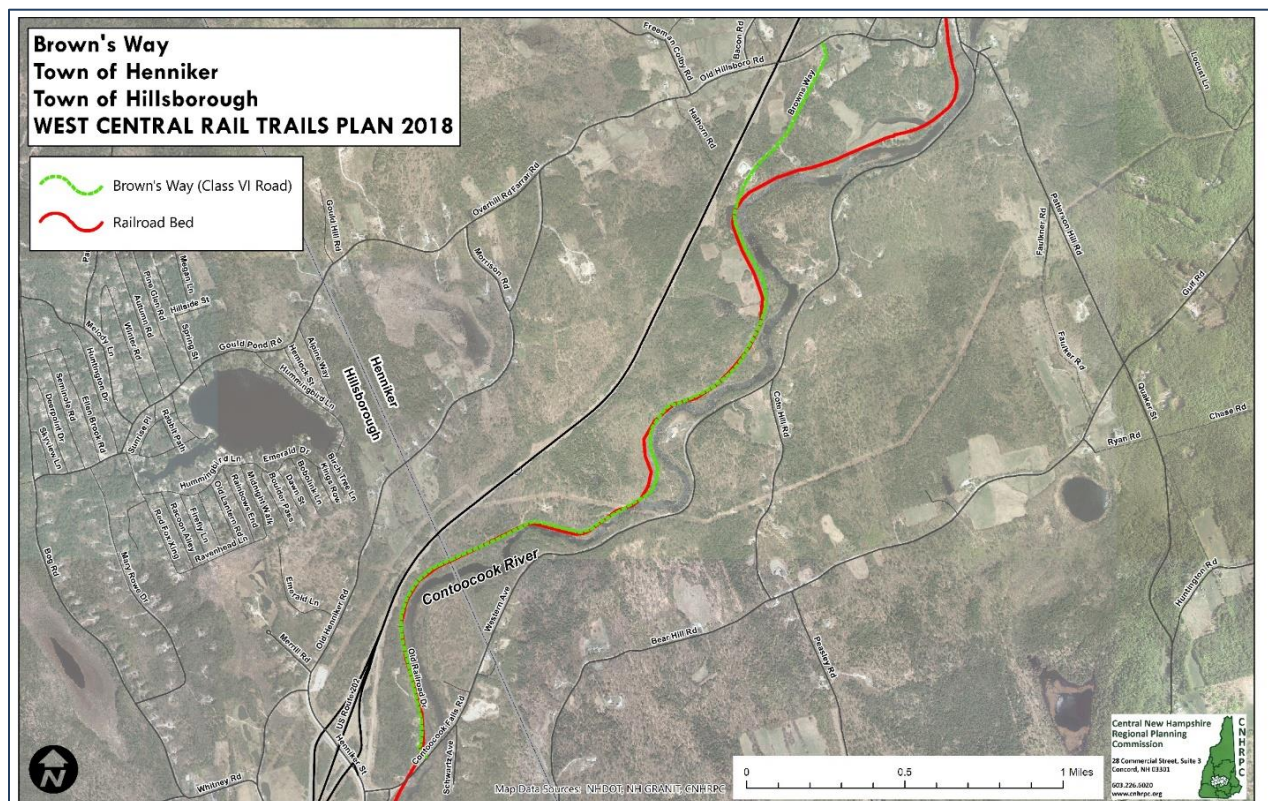


enables students to get around campus fast, \$0.50 for 15 minutes of use, suggesting some possible demand for the rail trail.

After crossing Old Hillsborough Road just past its intersection with Western Ave, the rail bed follows the north bank of the Contoocook River on Private property for about a mile, and meets up with Browns Way.

The 2.4 miles of **Browns Way** in Henniker is a unique road in that it is a class VI road that is the access for residences and a local business along it, and its south-western 1.7 miles is comprised of the old railroad bed. Being a class VI roadway, it is a public way that is not maintained by the town. Most class VI roadways resemble trails and are not passible for cars, however on Brown's way, the residents and business on the road maintain it for their own access. Brown's Way is a popular recreational route and well-used multi-use trail with scenic value along a rocky, fast flowing stretch of the Contoocook River. Because this route serves as a driveway access to homes and a business that maintain it, extra sensitivities to their concerns should be heeded in any trail planning or development along Browns Way. **Figure 23** is a map of **Browns Way** and the accompanying historic railroad bed alignment.

**Figure 23. Henniker: Browns Way Class VI Road (Vision Map)**



## HILLSBOROUGH

The Town of Hillsborough abounds with trails. Fox State Forest contains over 25 miles of trails for hikers, cross-country skiers, snowshoers, hunters and mountain bikers. Snowmobile corridors stitch across the community. Class VI unmaintained Town roads, scenic roads and discontinued roads connect walkers and bicyclists to conservation lands. Hillsborough has a short section of former railroad corridor. The Contoocook Riverwalk, an interpretive walking and bicycling natural trail near the Town's recreational Grimes Field, loops within one of the meanders of the Contoocook River. The local snowmobile group is the [Night Riders Snowmobile Club](#) which maintains snowmobile trails and relationships with landowners around Town for their winter riding purposes.

Hillsborough was one of the many Central NH Region communities to have developed an *Open Space Trail System Plan 2000 (OSTS)* with CNHRPC. These trails and more are inventoried within the Plan. Many opportunities were identified for future conservation and trails development pursuit, including investigating the feasibility for a recreational trail along the former railroad bed entering Hillsborough from Henniker and seeking landowner permission for public use of former rail segments. The 2018 Hillsborough Master Plan Update identifies the formation of the Hillsborough Trails Committee as an important short-term implementation activity.

On the opposite end of Town from the Riverwalk to the southwest, is the 7.8 mile State of New Hampshire owned **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** which terminates just shy of the Hillsborough town line in Deering. Beginning at Longwoods Road near River Road, the wide, flat cinder dust trail travels south through Deering and ends in Bennington on Bible Hill Road by the Monadnock Paper Plant. The rail trail crosses old railroad

### OBJECTIVE 4

Create a transportation system that safely supports all users including a pedestrian and bicycle system that allows for safe, efficient and reliable foot and bike traffic.

- Conduct an annual review of crash locations by the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Town Road Agent and associated staff/committees to determine enhancements that could be made to improve safety.
- Investigate the use of innovative methods to increase safety, such as raised crosswalks, striped or colored crosswalks, increased signage, traffic calming methods and clear and defined walking paths.
- Maintain and enhance the existing sidewalk system and implement specific sidewalk projects including sidewalks along West Main and Henniker Streets as well as around selected Hillsborough villages and historic sites.
- Support the establishment of the Hillsborough Trails committee to investigate and implement opportunities such as the extension and development of the Hillsborough Rail Trail, the Riverwalk and additional connections to Manahan Park, Grimes Field, and Kemp Park.
- The Town of Hillsborough should participate in regional efforts to enhance the regional and statewide bicycle networks.

*Transportation Chapter Objectives of the 2018 Master Plan*

trestles, and passes historic mill sites along the Contoocook River on a decent base left behind from the former railroad. Hikers, bicycles, horses, snowshoers, Nordic skiers, snowmobilers, mushing teams, ATVs and trail bikers are permitted. Because of the summertime motorized uses (ATVs) the trail surface varies from reasonably hard packed to quite soft. The soft surface of parts of the trail are unfavorable for bicycling. The trail closes temporarily during mud season, usually between April and May annually. Parking is located next to the [Deering Fish and Game Club](#), somewhat in the middle of the trail and is not available at either of the trailheads.

The 2018 Master Plan's implementation has not yet begun. Although there is not yet a municipal Trails Committee, in 2017 the CNHRPC solicited interest in a potential rail trail connection and convened exploratory meetings, vision sessions, and a site walk among the small group of local Trails Enthusiasts that fall. The walk area included Preston Street where Grimes Field is located, along the Tooky Mills Trail to Grimes Field, along River Street, down School Street to West Mill Street over the Contoocook River and past brownfields sites along the River currently under evaluation. Finally, the group headed southwest along West Mill Street down to Longwoods Road in Deering, then south along the **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** to the powerlines.





*Photos of Site Walk Photos of Downtown Hillsborough Former Rail Corridor by CNHRPC, October 2017*

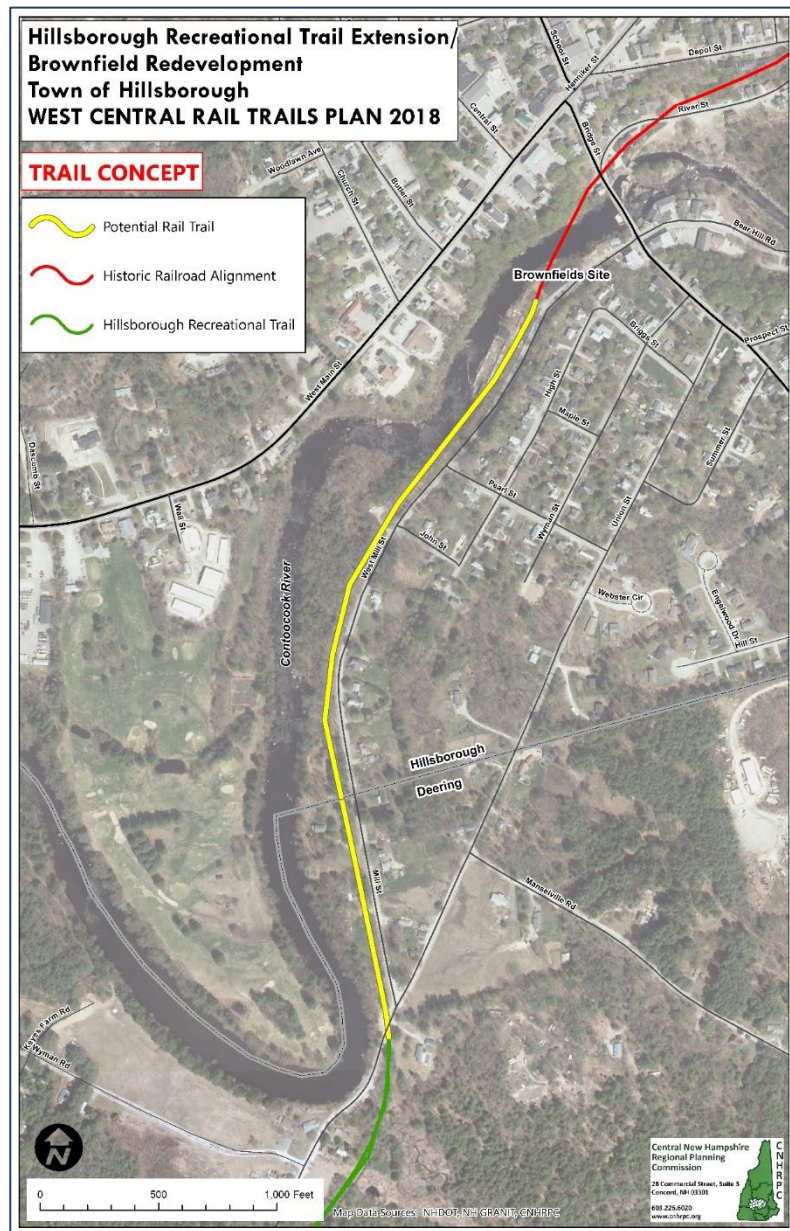
### Future Hillsborough Projects

The formation of the Hillsborough Trails Committee seems to be a priority to the community and may be one of the first 2018 Master Plan implementation activities. The Trails Committee partnering with the informal Trails Enthusiasts group could begin formulating a plan for moving forward. Steps should include talking with landowners to attempt to connect, parcel by parcel, to the **Hillsborough Recreational Trail**. There are a number of locations where the former railroad bed in downtown Hillsborough could be developed into an official **Downtown Trail** segment linking the area and Town properties after consultations with landowners and the [Night Riders Snowmobile Club](#).



**Figure 24. Hillsborough:  
Hillsborough Recreational Trail  
Extension/ Brownfields  
Redevelopment (Concept Map)**

The Trails Enthusiasts group discussed the potential for a formalized rail trail along this corridor similar to what is envisioned for the **Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail**. It was noted that ATV use is currently present on the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail**, and also along the railroad bed on private property east of Henniker Street. The group felt the trail surface and experience along the sections of trail with ATV use precludes these sections of trail from becoming a significant bicycle and pedestrian route. It was also concluded that areas currently open to ATV use are likely to remain that way. The southern leg is conceptually mapped in **Figure 24** to enable a visionary approach to potential next steps.



*Concept Map by CNHRPC, June 2018*

For the purposes of this **PLAN**, this potential rail trail extension in Hillsborough will be referred to as the **Downtown Trail**. The Trail's primary uses would be for pedestrians and bicyclists, although it is probable that areas currently open to OHRV use would continue to have OHRV use. Extending the existing **Hillsborough Recreational Trail** northward to the Woods Woolen Mill brownfields site may be an excellent first step for a **Downtown Trail** project. Much of the corridor can stay largely without much improvement, particularly east of Main Street.

### Riverside Park, Downtown Trail and Bridge over the Contoocook River Projects

The Hillsborough Trails Groups could begin pursuing connections between the existing Town-owned parcels, the old railroad corridor and the three brownfields parcels currently under study. CNHRPC is assisting the Town of Hillsborough with a brownfields assessment of the Town-owned Woods Woolen Mill properties [Map 25, Lots 28 & 29], approximately 2 acres in size.

#### Brownfields

assessments are designed to determine the level of contamination on a property and to identify cleanup and reuse options. The intention is to convert these old properties into a safe riverside park with trailhead parking in addition to providing a vital new segment of the rail trail.

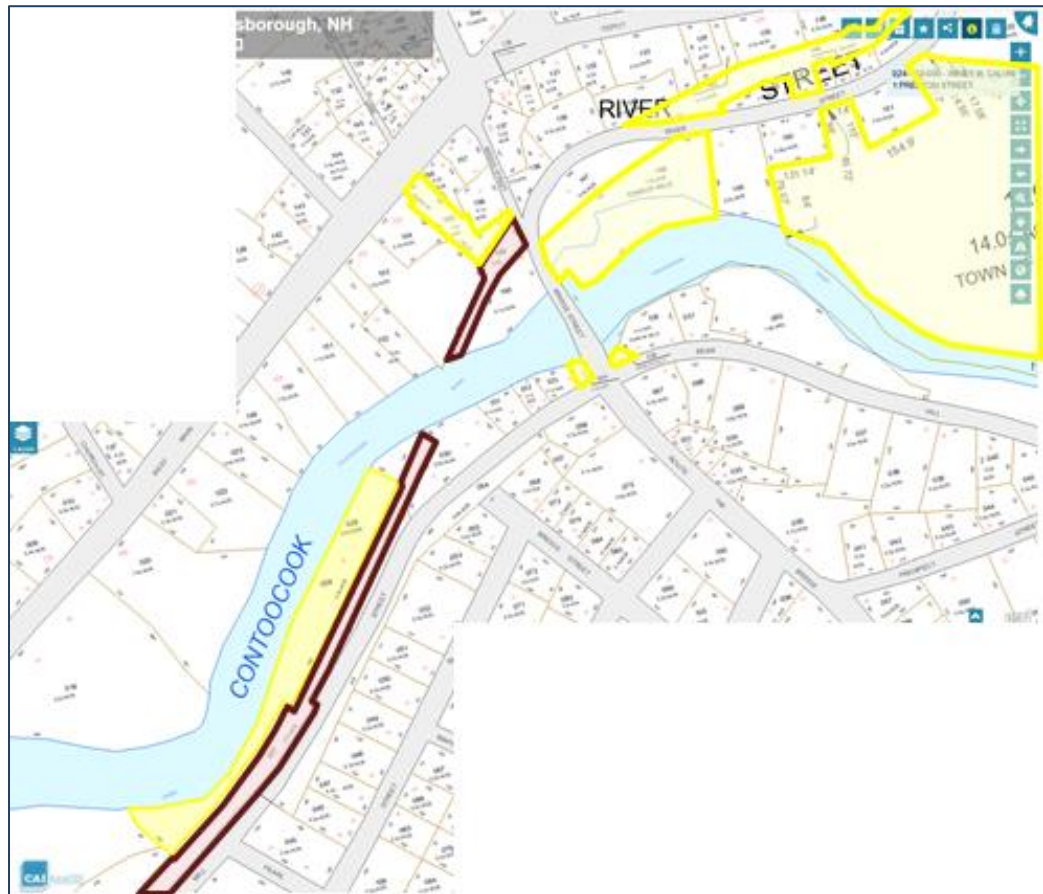


*Photo of Hillsborough Rail Trail Extension by Contoocook River by CNHRPC 2017*

One of the potential phases of the brownfields redevelopment is to reconstruct the bridge over the Contoocook River utilizing the existing abutments to enable the bicycle and pedestrian rail trail to cross to the other side. Phase 3D on the northern section of the Contoocook River will be extending the **Downtown Trail** to the Town owned property on NH 149. Here, the Town owns a 0.3 acre property [Map 23 Lot 155] used as a parking lot with access to both Bridge Street (NH 149) and West Main Street which may be another location for future trailhead. Reviewing public tax parcel ownership may help guide urban trail development efforts.



*Hillsborough Tax  
Map Perspective  
for Possible  
Future Trail  
Construction  
(Yellow-  
Municipal, Red-  
State), accessed  
June 2018*



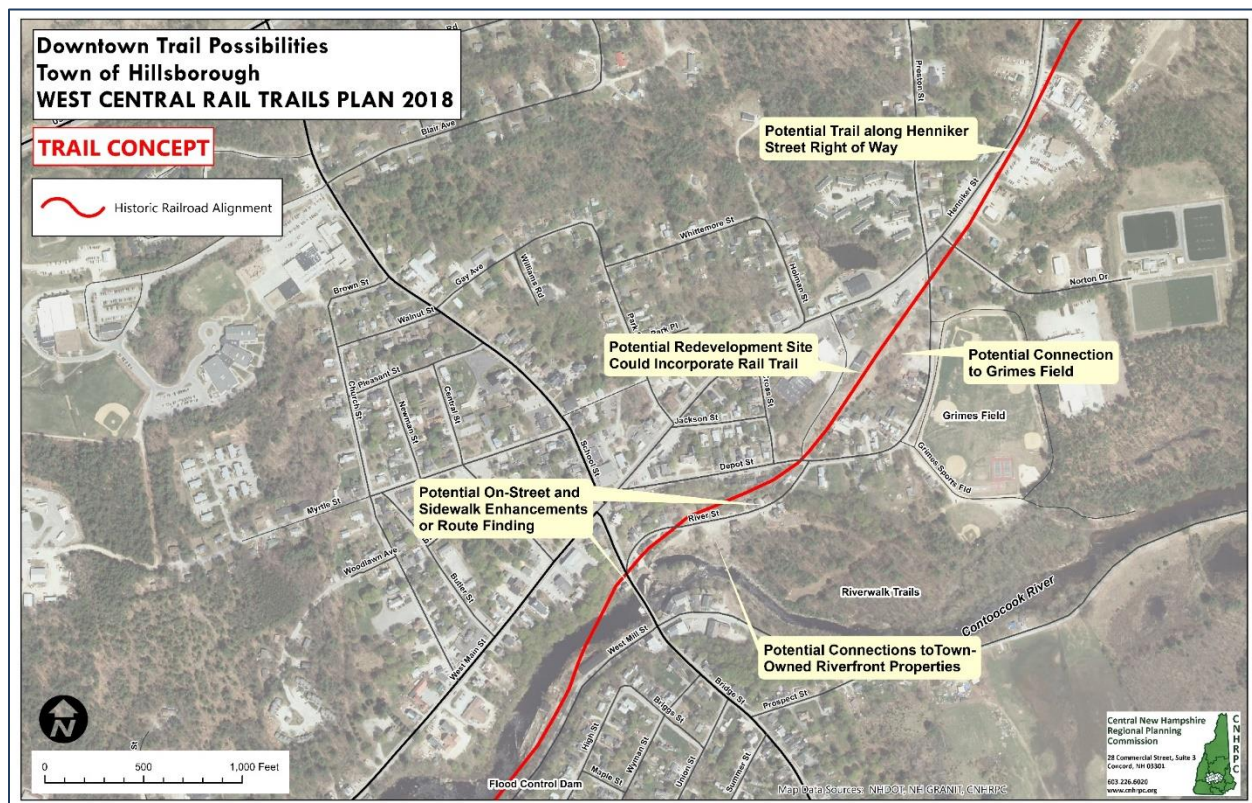


### Future Potential Downtown Trail Connections

On the other side of NH 129/Bridge Street, and across the Contoocook River, the Town owns a 1.4 acre parcel [Map 24 Lot 148] with the hydroelectric dam. Continuing the **Downtown Trail** on this parcel, the property has access potential onto River Street and Bridge Street and abuts the former railroad bed. The **Downtown Trail** could be extended to connect to existing local trails such as at Grimes Field, the Tooky OHRV Trail, and the Contoocook Riverwalk, and then beyond to the Henniker Street right-of-way, continuing on the former railroad bed.

The Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts group walked the entire **Figure 25** area and developed a list of potential trail ideas. When formed, the Trails Committee should be able to provide assistance and help prioritize activities.

**Figure 25. Hillsborough: Downtown Trail Possibilities (Concept Map)**



*Concept Map by CNHRPC with assistance from Trails Enthusiasts, June 2018*

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

#### West Central Rail Trails Plan Projects

The following **Table 1** is an implementation matrix of known currently underway, planned or potential proposed projects to enhance the existing rail trail system in West Central NH based on information provided to CNHRPC and observations for enhancement during **PLAN** development. Trail connections that unite established work along the organized **Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** and making hazardous locations safe should take priority. One of the main goals of this Plan is to develop rail trail segments connecting areas of population along either branch. Trail improvements and local access trails should be completed as funding and time allows, including to the **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**.

However, for all of the projects listed below, they display how trails organizations and/or CNHRPC could assist with regional rail trail efforts over the next 2-3 years, from 2018 to 2020. The **Community** in which the project originates is identified, along with the **Project/Trail** name, **Possible Trail Groups to Participate** and may take the lead, and a rough, relative **Low/Medium/High Difficulty** scale of completion. Where known, **Estimated Project Costs** are provided along with **Potential Funding Sources**, whether **Right of Way (ROW) is Required**, and the current known **Status** of the trail segments project.

The envisioned rail trail line is identified with each project under **Project/Trail** as either **Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT)** or **Contoocook Valley Recreational Trail (CVRT)**.

The purpose of **Table 1** is to summarize the known activity along these two former rail corridors and identify where future projects could best be located.

Table 1. WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN: Community Project Needs List

Community	Project/Trail on Which Former Rail Branch: CLSRT or CVRT	Possible Trail Groups to Participate	L/M/H Difficulty	Estimated Project Costs \$ (K)	Potential Funding Sources	ROW Required?	Status
Concord	Pursue <b>Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment</b> , 2.5 Miles (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	H	\$80-100	RTP 2019	City Agreement	Begin 2019
Concord	Pursue <b>Pierce Manse to Smokestack Center Segment</b> , 1.25 Miles (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	H	Unknown at this time	Private	Y	Begin 2020+
Hopkinton	Construct <b>Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment at Stevens Rail Trail</b> , 2 Miles (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	H	\$78	RTP	Yes	Finishing in Summer 2018
Hopkinton	Pursue Trail Surface Improvement from Town Parcel in <b>Mast Yard State Forest</b> to Hero's Bridge (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	M	Unknown at this time	Private	N	Begin 2020+
Hopkinton	Investigate Potential <b>Intervale Road to Hopkinton Dam Segment</b> (HHBRT)	Assemble	M/H	Unknown at this time	Unknown	Possibly, I-89 and/or USACE	Investigate in 2019+
Warner	Pursue <b>Northern Bagley Extension</b> (Exit 8) (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	M	Unknown at this time	RTP	NHDOT, FHWA	ROW in process
Warner	Complete <b>Chemical Lane to Exit 9 Segment</b> (CLSRT)	FCLSRT, Warner Cons Comm	M	Unknown at this time	Private & TAP	Yes, I-89	Continue in 2020+
Warner	Pursue <b>Evans to Waterloo Road Segment</b> (Exit 9) (CLSRT)	FCLSRT	H	\$575	Private match for \$575 through TAP	Yes, I-89	Begin 2018-2020+
Warner	Pursue <b>Exit 8 Project</b> (CLSRT)	FCLSRT, Warner Cons Comm	H	Unknown at this time	Unknown	Yes, I-89	Begin 2018-2020+
Bradford	Complete the <b>Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension</b> with a Bridge over Lake Todd (CLSRT)	Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford, FCLSRT	M	\$42	RTP	Secured	Finishing in Summer 2018



Community	Project/Trail on Which Former Rail Branch: CLSRT or CVRT	Possible Trail Groups to Participate	L/M/H Difficulty	Estimated Project Costs \$ (K)	Potential Funding Sources	ROW Required?	Status
Bradford	Investigate Signalized Bicycle and Pedestrian <b>Crossings at NH 103 &amp; Main Street (CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT	M	Unknown at this time	Private	N	Begin 2019+
Bradford	Investigate Signalized Bicycle and Pedestrian <b>Crossings at NH 103 &amp; NH 114 (CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT	M	Unknown at this time	Private	N	Begin 2020+
Bradford	Produce Alternative Map for Main Street Trail Connections to <b>Tilly Wheeler Trail (CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT	L	Unknown at this time	Private	N	Begin 2020+
Bradford	Explore Connection from Southern End of <b>Tilly Wheeler Trail</b> to the NH 114 <b>(CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT, Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford	H	Unknown at this time	Private	NHDOT, Private	Begin 2020+
FCLSRT (Other)	ESRI Story Map Education <b>(CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT	L	\$10k	RTP 2019	N	Application to be submitted
FCLSRT (Other)	CNHRPC Assistance with RTP Grants, projects <b>(CLSRT)</b>	FCLSRT	L	Unknown at this time	N/A (through CNHRPC)	N	Begin 2018+
Henniker	Develop an Existing Multi-Use Trails Map of the Town <b>(CVRT)</b>	Henniker Trails Comm	L	Unknown at this time	N/A (through CNHRPC)	N	Begin 2019
Henniker	Integrate <b>Browns Way</b> as a Contoocook Valley Rail Trail section with public input as deemed prudent, 2.5 Miles <b>(CVRT)</b>	Henniker Trails Comm	L	Unknown at this time	N/A	N	Begin 2020+
Henniker	Hold Rail Trail Visioning with the Henniker Trails Committee <b>(CVRT)</b>	Henniker Trails Comm	L	Unknown at this time	N/A	N	Begin 2020+
Henniker	Obtain Permission for Official USACE <b>Flood Control Area Trail</b> , 2.1 Miles <b>(CVRT)</b>	Henniker Trails Comm	M	Unknown at this time	Private	Possibly, I-89 and/or USACE	Begin 2020+

Community	Project/Trail on Which Former Rail Branch: CLSRT or CVRT	Possible Trail Groups to Participate	L/M/H Difficulty	Estimated Project Costs \$ (K)	Potential Funding Sources	ROW Required?	Status
Hillsborough	Construct the <b>Downtown Trail</b> Extension to the <b>Hillsborough Recreational Trail</b> from the New (Former Brownfields) Riverside Park (Phase 3A) <b>(CVRT)</b>	Town of Hillsborough, Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts	H	Unknown at this time	Private, TAP, Brownfields	Possibly	Fall 2018 - 2019
Hillsborough	Construct a Bicycle & Pedestrian Trailhead at the Riverside Park for the Connecting the <b>Downtown Trail</b> Extension (Phase 3B) <b>(CVRT)</b>	Town of Hillsborough, Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts	H	Unknown at this time	Private, TAP, Brownfields, Municipal	Possibly	2019
Hillsborough	Reconstruct a Bike & Pedestrian Bridge on the Existing Contoocook River Abutments and Extend the <b>Downtown Trail</b> (Phase 3C) <b>(CVRT)</b>	Town of Hillsborough, Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts	M	Unknown at this time	Private, TAP, Brownfields, Municipal	Possibly	Begin 2019-2020+
Hillsborough	Consider <b>Downtown Trail Possibilities (CVRT)</b> for Future Consideration	Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts	H	Unknown at this time	UPWP SPR, Private, Municipal, TAP	Possibly	Begin 2019-2020+

### *Types of Trail Surfaces for Which Use and Where*

Paved Surface Trail – Most suitable for developed or Urban Areas a strong transportation need. Get heavier use than unpaved trails and host wider variety of users, more suitable as transportation corridor. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Not suitable for motorized vehicle use. More expensive initial cost, but less frequent maintenance is required.

Hard Packed Unpaved Surface Path Trail – In Villages, Lower Density Rural Areas. Unpaved trails should be developed and maintained to have a fairly smooth and dense surface to enable a wider variety of use than unimproved trails. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Lower initial cost, with some maintenance of the surface required. This type of surface appears most suitable for a majority of the West Central NH rail trails as it will enable bicycle and pedestrian use for all abilities.

Unimproved Rail Bed – The surface of the rail bed is unimproved, consisting of whatever material had been placed under the railroad ties. The surface is suitable for hiking, is often either too soft or rough for casual bicycling, but may be suitable for mountain biking. It is not Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Easy trail to maintain. This trail surface may be suitable for areas where ATV use is currently established and desired by the community, areas where trail improvement is not practical or permit-able, primarily on portions of the Contoocook Valley Rail Trail.

Unimproved Trail – In Forests, Parks, Mountainous Areas, or on Forest Management Roads. Natural rocky, root-filled paths offer hiking and mountain biking experiences. Easy trail to maintain.

Class VI Road – Town owned but not maintained by the Town. Usually gravel, rutty roads which are privately maintained by the property owners who live along the road. Often used by equestrians and motorized trail vehicles, snowmobiles. Heavy motorized use often not appropriate because of costs to landowners.

No matter what surface a trail may have, trails groups need to check local trail usage requirements to ensure the proper fit for intended use, especially prior to publicly announcing trails availability.



## Strategy and Approach

The FLSCRT is an established organization with local representatives on the ground doing the legwork- developing visions, evaluating alternatives, talking with landowners and neighbors, signing agreements, obtaining easements, writing grants, holding fundraisers, working with contractors, promoting the trails, and more. Their efforts will focus on the **Concord – Lake Sunapee Rail Trail** which runs through Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, Bradford and Newbury. Where possible, the CNHRPC could assist the FLSCRT with some of these tasks.

The formation of a new Trails Group would be most effective to organize the potential future **Contoocook Valley Rail Trail**. Although there are only three communities here, Hopkinton, Henniker and Hillsborough, there are multiple existing interest groups including snowmobile clubs, OHRV clubs, mountain biking clubs, other trails organizations, and the US Army Corps of Engineers and New England College. CNHRPC could continue to ascertain interest and help coordinate efforts with trails groups with the goal of encouraging a primary organization, such as the Friends of the Contoocook Valley Rail Trail.

Obtaining support of the six Central NH region communities- Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Bradford, Henniker and Hillsborough- for overall development of either rail trail and its individual segments is essential for any group attempting to establish trails. Consultation with the known

## OBTAIN LOCAL SUPPORT FOR RAIL TRAILS

Without community support, trail development will not be successful. The more local groups talking about trails, the greater chance of success for establishing trails people will use. Trails groups endeavoring to develop trails or trail systems should see to the following local commitments to ensure successful stages to trail development.

Get the rail trail ideas into the Master Plan.

Place trail funding needs into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Obtain letters of support from:

- ⇒ Board of Selectmen
- ⇒ Planning Board
- ⇒ Conservation Commission
- ⇒ Parks and Recreation
- ⇒ Economic Development Committee
- ⇒ Energy Committee
- ⇒ Police and Fire Departments
- ⇒ Road Committee
- ⇒ Historical Society
- ⇒ Schools
- ⇒ Neighborhood Groups
- ⇒ Abutting Communities
- ⇒ and more!

- Set up tables and tents at community events, Farmer's Market, Old Home Day, Library Sales, etc to raise awareness and support.

Tips Courtesy of the FCLSR

existing trails clubs and organizations as mentioned in this **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN** will be necessary for success. Effective Trails Groups will engage and inform community organizations about existing and future potential trails efforts.

Activities for Trails Groups include:

- ⇒ Give talks to community organizations
- ⇒ Hand out flyers and post on bulletin boards
- ⇒ Get into a school classroom and present to students
- ⇒ Recruit the Boys & Girls Scouts for assistance
- ⇒ Set up an online web presence
- ⇒ Hold nature walks on potential trail sections
- ⇒ Reach out to a landowner and hold a public walk

### ***Trail Funding Opportunities***

A variety of funding sources exist at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. Most trail projects described in the **WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL PLAN** will require significant funds from a variety of sources. Most existing trails have used and trails to be constructed will likely use federal transportation program dollars. In the past, this has taken the form of Transportation Enhancements (TE), Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) or Recreational Trails Program (RTP), all of which required a 20% local match. While federal funding programs are the largest component, many other sources exist to help fund rail trails.

### **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

A major funding source for trail development could be the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway

### **INVENTIVE TRAILS FUNDING**

The traditional funding programs mentioned in the Plan are solid and competitive. How about looking into these potential funding sources for Trails Groups projects:

- Add a Donation button to the 501-C3 Trails Group website
- Take a look at the sponsors on the pages of similar trails groups
- Sign up for the [NH Center for Non-Profits](#) grants newsletter
- Review [NH Charitable Foundation](#) grants
- Apply for [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#) funding
- Apply for [New England Grass Roots Environmental Fund](#) grants
- Apply for [Clif Bar Family Foundation](#) funding
- Take a look at the grant spreadsheet of [Healthy Eating Active Living \(HEAL\) NH](#)
- Hold fundraisers with local businesses, especially those near the trailhead or along the corridor
- Especially organized trails groups can look into [Volunteer NH](#) for AmeriCorps volunteer funding

Tips Courtesy of the FCLSR

Association (FHWA) [Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\)](#) funding. These federal funds, administered by the NHDOT, are intended to foster safe, accessible, non-motorized transportation infrastructure which is in good physical condition. Eligible activities include the construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized uses, including the conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors.

TAP is currently authorized under the [Fixing America's Surface Transportation System Act \(FAST\)](#), signed into law in December 2015 and effective through 2020. New Hampshire's annual allocation for TAP is approximately \$3.2M (\$2.6M federal). Funding is awarded in highly competitive application rounds every two years.

Reimbursement for up to 80% of a project Individual awards range from \$320,000 - \$800,000, plus a 20% local match is necessary. Minimum (\$400,000) and maximum (\$1,000,000) total project limits may vary if other funding sources are provided by the applicant. These grants are considered more challenging to administer because of their strict requirements. Refer to the [NHDOT TAP](#) information website for more information and to obtain the application, due July 13 for the current 2019 TAP round.

### Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Trails organizations often prefer to apply for the [Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) administered by the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

## CREATIVE GRANT CALENDAR TRACKING

Assemble an online **Grant Calendar** to organize various grants' details! This technique enables Trails Groups to record deadlines, application rounds, and other important information about each potential grant to seek for trails. Try adding the following to an online Calendar:

- Information for each Grant's qualifications and funding \$ amount available
- When applications become available
- Letter of interest deadlines
- Application deadlines
- Grant process benchmark dates
- When funding announcements will be made
- When funding will become available to recipients
- When to solicit match \$ funds
- And more!

This **Grant Calendar** can help Trails Groups plan out during the year when to talk to landowners, when to obtain community support, when to fundraise and when to plan construction.



(NHDNCR)'s Bureau of Trails (NHBOT), a reliable source of limited grant funding for motorized (30%), non-motorized (30%) and "diversified" or multi-use (40%) trails. Eligible projects include maintenance and restoration of existing trails, purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment, construction of new trails, and the development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages. Projects utilizing these funds must adhere to a series of state and federal requirements, including landowner permissions, best management practices, matching contributions, [NH Natural Heritage Bureau](#) review for sensitive species, grant administration, and more.

While the maximum award has varied over the years, awards are currently provided between \$8,000 to \$80,000 (or 80% of the total project value) for most approved projects, with a required 20% match for the entire value of the project. Education projects may apply for \$3,000 to \$10,000. Competitive grant rounds are held annually.

### **Rails to Trails Conservancy**

The [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#) (RTC) is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to connect former railroads by developing a trails network to connect people and places. Beyond trail amenities, RTC trails create opportunities for active transportation and physical activity by connecting trails to businesses, schools, parks, employers, and neighborhoods using the existing railroad beds. The 2018 grant round awarded \$140,000 to 10 trails projects throughout the United States.

The RTC has an extensive list of grant opportunities and technical assistance for converting former rail corridors to shared-use trails on their [website](#).

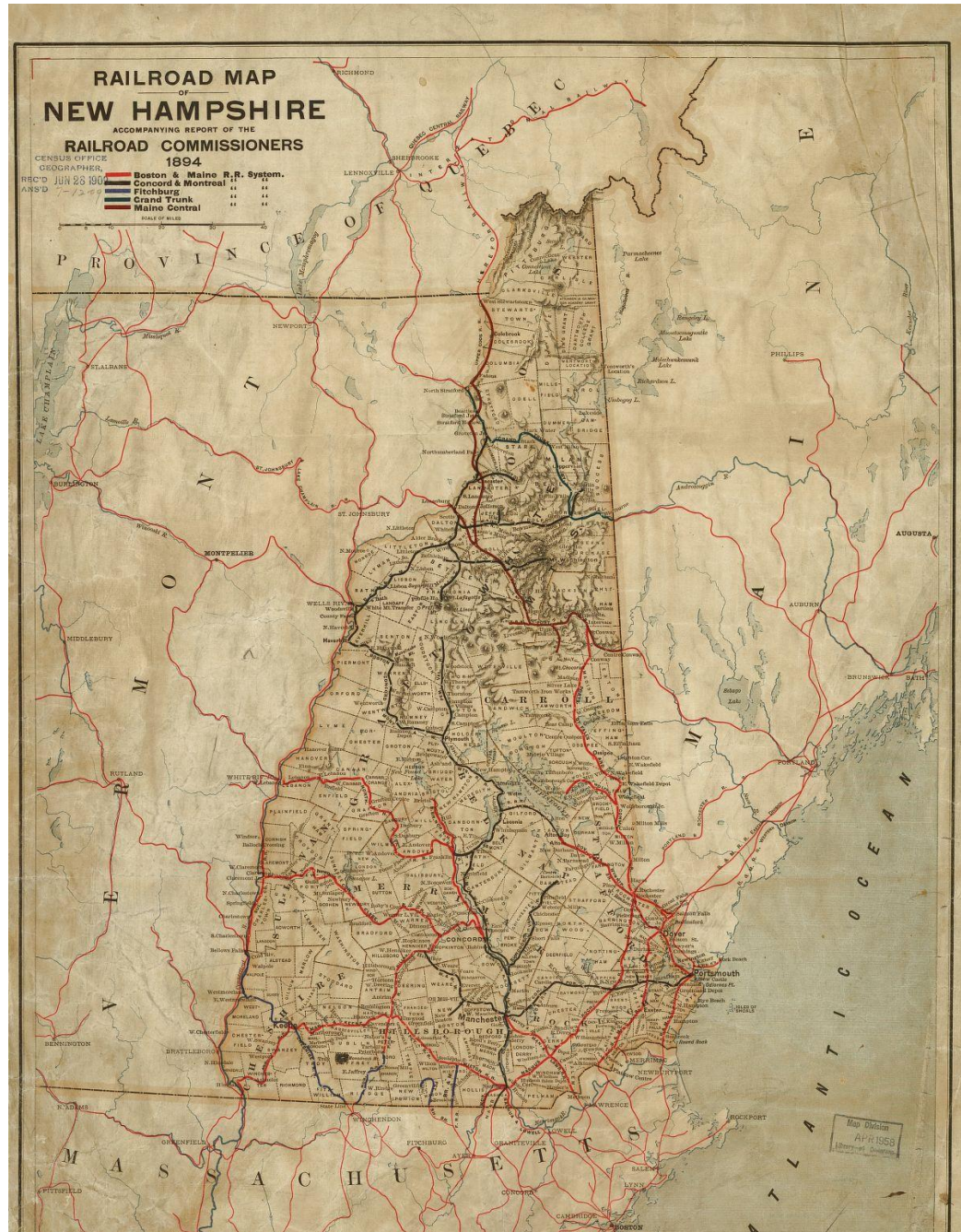
### **Other Trails Funding and Assistance – Regional and Local Level**

Not only grants can fund trail projects. Local businesses may be willing to sponsor a section of trail for publicity. Organized non-profit trails groups can hold special events and fundraisers to accept donations towards rail trail activities. Community volunteers such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or college students on break can be resources for improve alternative transportation in their hometowns. Municipal equipment and employee time could be available instead of renting vehicles and operators. For more funding sources and assistance ideas, view the [National Trails Training Partnership funding tips](#) for trails and greenways.

Trails groups can ask local trails clubs – snowmobile, equestrian, mountain biking, and others- about how they can help with rail trail efforts. Some of these groups may have already established relationships with landowners to use land along these corridors for certain uses or during the winter months. Municipal Committees and Boards, such as the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Historical Society, or Trails Committee should be informed of rail trail efforts and request letters of support from each Board to leverage credibility with other groups. Trails groups should work with these Committees to get any trails projects incorporated into the Master Plan, Capital Improvements Program, or Conservation Commission Natural Resources Inventory, Economic Development Plan, Village Plan, and more to raise awareness and support. The School District might support a group's rail trail project presentation to inform children and teachers, and after, there may be volunteers willing to help out. More discussions held at the municipal level and incorporation into planning documents should yield greater support for successful rail trails. The more local parties to available support a trails project, the higher its chance of advancement.

Additional avenues to be pursued are not always financial. The local regional planning commission to this 6-town area is the [Central NH Regional Planning Commission \(CNHRPC\)](#), who can sometimes provide technical assistance to trails groups or may be able to provide in-kind match or other time.

The CNHRPC is often able to develop a map or fact sheet, assist with a grant application, coordinate introductions to interested people and groups, host meetings, provide data, and more.



*NH Railroad Commissioners Map, 1894*



## APPENDICES

### List of Internet Hyperlinks Used within this Document

These hyperlinks are listed within the order found within the WEST CENTRAL RAIL TRAILS PLAN to facilitate their usage.

Central NH Regional Planning Commission <http://www.cnhrpc.org/>

Friends of the Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (FCLSRT) <http://concordlakesunapeerailtrail.com/>

NH Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

[www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped](http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped)

NH Bureau of Trails (NHBOT) <https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/Trails/default.aspx>

NH State Parks Division <http://www.nhstateparks.org/>

NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNRC) <http://dnrc.nh.gov/>

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region <http://www.uvlsrc.org/>

Henniker Trails Committee <http://www.henniker.org/general/page/trails-committee-1>

Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) <https://www.merrimackrivergreenwaytrail.org/>

New Hampshire Snowmobile Association (NHSa) <https://nhsa.com/>

Townline Trail Dusters Snowmobile Club <http://www.traildusters.snowclubs.com/>

Contoocook Snowmads Snowmobile Club <https://www.facebook.com/people/Contoocook-Sno-Mads/100000652877242>

Kearsarge Trail Snails <https://kearsargetrailsnails.com/>

Lake Sunapee Snowmobile Club <http://lsscinc.org/>

Night Riders Snowmobile Club <http://www.nightridersnh.com/home.html>

Henniker Trail Travelers <http://www.hennikertrailtravelers.com/>

Concord Conservation Commission's Trails Committee <http://www.concordnh.gov/trails>

Mast Yard State Forest <https://www.concordnh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9051>

City of Concord's Trails System Maps <http://www.concordnh.gov/index.aspx?nid=1033>

City of Concord <http://www.concordnh.gov/>

Northern Rail Trail <http://northernrailtrail.org/>

Northern Rail Line Abandonment Notice 2016 <https://www.bmrrhs.org/s/Northern-Railroad-Main-Line-Abandonment-Notice.pdf>

Hopkinton Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission

<http://hopkintonconservationland.org/>

Hopkinton Online Hiking Maps [http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/departments/recreation/local\\_hiking\\_trails\\_in\\_detail\\_\(courtesy\\_of\\_eagle\\_scout\\_b\\_ehrmanntraut\).php](http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/departments/recreation/local_hiking_trails_in_detail_(courtesy_of_eagle_scout_b_ehrmanntraut).php)

2010 Hopkinton Recreation Guidebook <http://www.hopkinton-nh.gov/-RecGuide.pdf>

Hopkinton Village Greenway <http://hopkintonconservationland.org/map-view>

Stevens Rail Trail Description <http://hopkintonconservationland.org/stevens-rail-trail>

Contoocook Riverway Association <https://www.contoocookdepot.org/>

Sunapee-Ragged Kearsarge Greenway <http://www.srkg.com/>

Warner Conservation Commission <http://www.warner.nh.us/departments.php?department=concom>

Warner Parks and Recreation Department <http://www.warnerparksandrec.com/>

Warner Rail Trail <http://www.warner.nh.us/railtrail>

NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) <https://www.nh.gov/dot/index.htm>

US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/>

Lower Lake Todd Association <http://www.laketoddvillagedistrict.us/>

Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford <https://www.facebook.com/RHCBradford>

Town of Bradford <http://www.bradfordnh.org/>

NH Bureau of Trails (NHBOT) Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

<https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/Trails/grants/recreational-trails-program.aspx>

NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) <https://www.des.nh.gov/>

ESRI Story Map <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en>

USACE Hopkinton Lake Map

<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Portals/74/docs/Recreation/HEL/HopkintonLakeMap.pdf>

State of NH OHRV Trail System <http://www.nhstateparks.org/Activities/atving/trail-information.aspx>

New England College (NEC) <https://www.nec.edu/>

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Hopkinton-Everett-Lake>

Veoride Bike Share <http://www.henniker.org/general/page/veoride-bike-share-partnership-new-england-college>

Deering Fish and Game Club <http://deeringfishandgame.net/>

NHDOT NH State Trails Plan, 2005

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped/documents/StateTrailsPlanFullReport.pdf>

NH Center for Non-Profits <https://www.nhnonprofits.org/>

NH Charitable Foundation <https://www.nhcf.org/how-can-we-help-you/apply-for-a-grant>

New England Grass Roots Environmental Fund <https://grassrootsfund.org/>

Clif Bar Family Foundation <http://www.clifbarfamilyfoundation.org/>

Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) NH <https://www.healnh.org/>

Volunteer NH <http://volunteernh.org/>

NH DOT Transportation Alternatives Program

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/tap/index.htm>

Fixing America's Surface Transportation System Act (FAST) <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact>

NH Natural Heritage Bureau <https://www.nhdf.org/Land-Conservation/Natural-Heritage-Bureau>

Rails to Trails Conservancy <https://www.railstotrails.org/>

National Trails Training Partnership <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/TipsFund.html>



## Hillsborough Trails Enthusiasts Site Walk Summary

Hillsborough Rail Trail Exploratory Meeting

October 19 2017

Attendance

Dick McNamara

Terry Yeaton

Linda

ewrubel@gmail.com

pedlingfool@mcttele.com

### Vision

After introductions Craig explained the recent history of the idea of a Hillsborough rail trail, including the abandoned railroad bed that goes from Concord through Hillsborough to Peterborough and Massachusetts with only small breaks in between. Craig also explained the popularity of the Northern Rail Trail (Lebanon to Boscawen) and the Concord to Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT). The CLSRT is similar to what we would be dealing with here in Hillsborough because the rail bed has reverted back to its underlying landowners, meaning it would require getting permission or easements from each of the landowners along the way. The CLSRT organization has been doing this with some success, but is taking the long view.

The group felt that their primary motivation was to build a trail for bicycle and pedestrian use. The group also felt it was probable that places that already are open to ATV use would stay that way. It appears that more investigation is in order before making decisions on what uses are appropriate where.

### Existing Conditions

The group explained what they knew of the corridor. From the Henniker side, the trail is rough but mountain-bikeable. It is passable east of Livingston's Arctic Cat and in decent shape there. Through the center of town, it isn't known all that well what the condition of the route is, or if it is even visible. The group is familiar with where the former railroad bridge once was, and is familiar with the brownfield site (Woods Woolen Mill) on the south side of the river. The rail bed parallels Mill St crossing in front of driveways of homes. It then meets up with the parking lot for the Monadnock Rail Trail.

The Monadnock rail trail allows ATVs, and is managed by NH DRED (or whatever their new name is). This trail is too soft for biking in some places because of the soils and ATV use, while other locations have hard packed cinder that is still good for riding on. South of the paper mill in Bennington there is a gap where there is still railroad track, but after that it can be ridden all the way to Peterborough. The group noted that it is currently possible to link up the pieces of trail by riding on the street.

#### Property Owners

The Livingstons of Livingston Arctic Cat: some people felt they would be amenable to trail use on their property. It was felt they would probably want to allow ATVs because of their business. It was noted that there isn't too much ATV use right now on the trail behind their property.

Terry also was familiar with Alan Ager associated with the Uhaul, Rymes oil, and Sprague Revocable Trust which is associated with a farm.

#### Next Steps

Google Maps: Craig will create a google map where everybody can zoom in and see exactly where the former rail bed goes.

Site Walk: The group feels that we should do a group walk of the corridor so we can map out exactly what is on the ground and get an idea for what might be a viable first project. Craig could map out the results.

We will re-group and re-strategize after the walk.

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#### **Notes from the October 30, 2017 Site Walk of the Potential Rail Trail Corridor**

Prior to the October walk, the group came to agree on a few points:

- The primary purpose of the effort is to build a trail for pedestrian and bicycle use
- It is probable that areas currently open to ATV use would continue to have ATV use, and that would be the assumption going forward

After the site walk, there were a few additional primary conclusions:

- It appears extending the Hillsborough Recreational Trail northward to the Woods Woolen Mill brownfields site may be an excellent first step for a project
- Much of the corridor can probably stay largely as it is, particularly east of Main Street

Link to Google Map:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1DgmsMsRLgsDLHYKBdTO8KKPCT1F3OSz&usp=sharing>

Additional Notes:

1. The existing Hillsborough Recreational Trail heading south towards Deering should be considered an asset to the town. Although it is open to ATVs, the trail's condition and relatively light traffic does not necessarily preclude use by others. The surface is however somewhat soft, so most bicyclists prefer to ride on the adjacent roads.
2. The group saw benefit in extending this rail trail closer into the center of town. Because of the proximity to residents and the desired nature of a future trail, it was agreed that a non-motorized trail be preferred.
3. It was decided that an excellent opportunity for new rail trail and a candidate for a first-section of trail included extending the Hillsborough Recreational Trail northward to the Woods Woolen Mill brownfield site.
  - a. The extension towards the center of town would be bicycle and pedestrian only
  - b. The corridor is State owned, so there would need to be outreach to NH Bureau of Trails
  - c. The corridor passes in close proximity to several homes, so outreach to abutters is a must, and any trail development would need to be sensitive to their concerns
  - d. There are views of the Contoocook River and historic railroad infrastructure
  - e. A logical terminus would be a re-developed Woods Woolen Mill site, but an out-and-back in the interim is likely still worthwhile
  - f. There are drainage issues that should be addressed before the corridor degrades further
  - g. There is a property for sale along the corridor which might offer an opportunity
  - h. A signed on-street connection from
4. An on-street connection from the terminus of the Hillsborough Recreational Trail (either at it's present terminus or near the Woods Woolen Mill site) into Downtown seems likely, as a pedestrian bridge along the former rail bed seems unlikely anytime soon.
5. Town owned property on River St along the Contoocook River presents an opportunity for recreation and possibly a park.
6. Longer term, opportunities for a trail connecting to and through Grimes Field should be investigated, however this did not emerge as a priority. Current ATV use was noted.
7. It was noted that there was potential for the rail trail to pass by the railroad building behind Family Dollar, and that a trail could enhance private development in the area. It may be worth investigating this further and sharing any concepts with the Planning Board and other town officials.
8. East of Preston St, a future trail paralleling Henniker Street within the existing road right of way seemed appropriate. This would likely not be a short-term project.
9. At Livingston's auto, the trail continues north/east, however this trail is regularly used by ATVs. The group did not feel it was necessary to take any action or make improvements to



this section of trail. It may be worth investigating obtaining easements on the trail to ensure it is publicly accessible in the long-term.

10. Along Brown's Way in Henniker and Old Railroad Drive in Hillsborough, it may not be necessary or desirable to make any changes to the existing condition.
11. Marking and signing a route through the length of town may be a worthwhile endeavor. It would use the rail bed where feasible and street connections where there is no publicly accessible trail.

Notes by Craig Tufts, CNHRPC Staff

## Standardized 11"x17" Maps: Envisioned Trails, Existing Trails, and Concept Trails

### Concord - Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (CLSRT)

- Concord: **Fisherville to Carter Hill Road Segment** (Vision Map)
- Concord: **Pierce Manse to Smokestack Center Segment** (Vision Map)
- Concord/Hopkinton: **Mast Yard State Forest Trails** (Trails Map)
- Hopkinton/Contoocook: **Exit 7 to Spring Street Segment with Stevens Rail Trail** (Vision Map)
- Warner: **Warner Rail Trail (Bagley Field Segment)** (Trails Map)
- Warner: **Depot Street/West Joppa Segment** (Trails Map)
- Warner: **Northern Bagley Extension** (Vision Map)
- Warner: **Exit 8 Project** (Vision Map)
- Bradford: **Tilly Wheeler Trail Extension** (Trails Map)

### Contoocook Valley Rail Trail (HHBRT)

- Hopkinton/ Contoocook: **Historic Railroad Alignments in Contoocook Village** (Vision Map)
- Hopkinton/Contoocook: **Intervale Road to Hopkinton Dam Segment** (Vision Map)
- Hopkinton/Henniker: **Flood Control Area** (Vision Map)
- Henniker: **Downtown Henniker Historic Railroad Alignment** (Vision Map)
- Henniker: **Browns Way Class VI Road** (Vision Map)
- Hillsborough: **Hillsborough Recreational Trail Ext./ Brownfields Redevt** (Concept Map)
- Hillsborough: **Downtown Trail Possibilities** (Concept Map)