



## Active Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: April 8, 2026

Start – End Time: 9:30 AM-10:48 AM

Location: 1 Park Place, Suite 101, Colonie, NY 12205

Facilitator: Ethan Townsend

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Matthew Rogers	Senior Planner	Labella Associates
Tim Lane	Deputy Mayor	Village of Menands
Ivan Vamos	Emeritus Member	New York Bicycle Coalition Board
Scott Miller	Secretary	Saratoga PLAN Trails Committee
Linda von der Heide	Principal Planner	Rensselaer County
Valerie Deane	Senior Transportation Analyst	NYS Department of Transportation – Region 1
Nicole McGrath	Senior Community Planner	Federal Highway Authority
Charles Welge	Director, Public Health Planning & Education	Albany County Department of Health
Benjamin Luke	Public Health Educator	Albany County Department of Health
Kris Alfonso	Senior Manager, Community Prevention	NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Occupational Health & Injury Prevention
Nate Owens	Deputy Town Planner	Town of Bethlehem
Ed Brennan	President	Albany Bicycle Coalition
Ethan Townsend	Transportation Planner	Capital Region Transportation Council
Andrew Tracy	Director of Transportation Operations	Capital Region Transportation Council
Martin Hull	Director of Regional Planning	Capital Region Transportation Council
Parker Morris	Transportation Planner	Capital Region Transportation Council
Adam McCarvill	Transportation Planner	Capital Region Transportation Council
Leah Rye	Administrative Specialist	Capital Region Transportation Council

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Ethan Townsend began the meeting at 9:33 AM. Those attending in person introduced themselves. Ethan introduced those attending virtually and reviewed the agenda.

### **2. Feature Presentation: Little River Recreation Area Feasibility Study, Village of Menands - Matthew Rogers, LaBella Associates**

Matt Rogers gave a presentation on the Village of Menand's Little River Recreation Area Feasibility Study. The project study area is 415 acres and is a combination of public and private lands. Right now the hydrology into Little River is constrained by culverts, but it is still tidal influenced from the Hudson River.

Ivan Vamos, a Menands resident and member of the project committee, provided some history and additional information on the area. He explained how the area developed from tributary of the Hudson River which separated Breaker Island from the main Western bank of the river, and was used for a variety of commercial and recreational purposes, to its current constrained form with the development of I-787.

Matt Rogers added that the hydrology significantly changed once culverts were installed to manage the Little River during the development of I-787. The culverts are not safe to use to navigate from the Little River into the Hudson River. This area faces increasing constraint from invasive water chestnuts, and silt accumulation, so the channel has been decreasing as wetlands have begun to develop. This leaves Menands as the only community along the Hudson River without direct access since the construction of I-787. The Village's hope is that if I-787 is adjusted or redeveloped, or if DOT were to replace those culverts with a bridge, the Village would be able to use the Little River to access the Hudson River.

The purpose of the current project is to provide recreational kayak access to the Little River, recreation and education opportunities, trail connections to the Empire State Trail, and future navigable access to the Hudson River. That study builds upon a 2008 feasibility study that examined the possibility of a recreational/nature area in the same location, and aligns with the Menands 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

Two concepts (A and B) were developed for the installation of a kayak launch. The idea goal is to install a full ADA accessible floating dock. Concept A was the favored concept, and would involve getting an easement or taking title of property owned by the Capital District Regional Farmers Market, and use of Private Road C. The cost estimate for the project \$300,000, not including the work necessary for coordination, easements, etc. Potential future trail connections were also explored, including a connection to the Empire State Trail. The Village of Menands applied for and was awarded \$200,000 in funding to prepare a BOA (Brownfield Opportunity Area) plan, aiming to begin July 2026. The project committee has had several conversations with DOT over the years because of the

Reimagine I-787 study. Reimagine I-787 did include a specific project for the Little River, taking the committee's recommendations.

Ivan Vamos spoke about the Little River component of the Reimagine I-787 study. When it was installed, I-787 eliminated pedestrian and cyclist access to certain areas. Ivan and others made various recommendations to DOT over time to improve and/or restore some access. Recommendations developed in 2001 were picked up by the Reimagine I-787 consultants and state staff. They proposed a set of bridges, and they improved a little bit on the design that was recommended by including an access bridge.

Matt Rogers closed the presentation by providing the next steps for the project, which are: 1) Identify future grant/funding opportunities. 2) Maintain partnerships. 3) Address railroad ownership. 4) Phased implementation as Funding permits. 5) Regulatory approvals.

Following the presentation there were questions and discussion on a variety of topics, including integration of the Resilient Broadway Multi-Modal Corridor Study that was recently completed in the area, water chestnut management, and DEC coordination.

Tim Lane shared that Menands is the only municipality on the entire Hudson River with no direct access to the river, despite having 2 miles of waterfront, and that the results the Troy-Menands bridge PEL study will have a big impact on what can be done to improve connections in this area.

Ethan Townsend asked people to reach out to him ([etownsend@capitalmpo.org](mailto:etownsend@capitalmpo.org)) if anyone has other questions for Matt Rogers or Ivan Vamos.

### **3. Discussion Items:**

#### **a. 2026 Trail Count Solicitation**

Ethan indicated that the Transportation Council's 2026 trail count solicitation is open. In 2025, the Transportation Council completed seven successful trail counts, but unfortunately one of its trail counters was stolen. The approach in 2026 will be a hybrid approach of in-house counters and vendor counts. The program is free for member agencies, but other entities can suggest counts as well (availability will be dependent on count request volume). Please email Ethan ([etownsend@capitalmpo.org](mailto:etownsend@capitalmpo.org)) to coordinate.

#### **b. 2026-27 Unified Planning Work Program**

Ethan shared that public review is open for the Transportation Councils 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Highlights of the UPWP include the implementation of "In Motion: The Plan to 2050" and the "Capital Region Vision Zero Safety Action Plan." Other initiatives include hiring consultants to prepare a variety of studies, plans and surveys; beginning the planning for a regional active transportation network; and continuing to provide on demand services such as data collection, technical assistance and modeling.

Work specific to active transportation planning includes continuing the regular meetings for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee as well as work on the Active Transportation Priority

Network and trail planning support. New initiatives include supporting NYSDOT TAP evaluations, providing micromobility guidance, and exploring the possibility of a regional bike registry.

c. Status of Planning Initiatives

Ethan provided an update on the Transportation Council's various planning initiatives.

**4. Participant Updates**

Ed Brennan shared that the Albany Bicycle Coalition (ABC) is sponsoring a Smart Cycling class next weekend, April 11-12. It will be led by instructors that are League of American Bicyclists certified. Also on April 12<sup>th</sup>, ABC is doing a one-hour workshop on e-bikes at the Delaware Library. Ed believes someone from CDTA and the CDPHP *Cycle!* program will be at the workshop as well. ABC also has an upcoming e-bike program that it is doing in cooperation with the Warren County police department. The date has not yet been set, but the program will have two parts - a program for law enforcement in the morning, and a program open to the public in the afternoon. Ed runs e-bike classes for NYBC (New York Bicycle Coalition), and they have a GTSC (Governor's Traffic Safety Committee) contract. Ed indicated that he would be more than happy to do a local class. More information on upcoming ABC events can be found here: <https://albanybicyclecoalition.com/upcoming-events/>

Ivan Vamos shared that the NY State Trails Council has been doing a little work with e-bike issues. Not all e-bikes are the same, and there are several different classes of e-bikes. The urge for some less knowledgeable municipalities is to ban all e-bikes, potentially because of inaccurate assumptions about them. Pedal-assisted class one bikes are completely different from some of the other types of e-bikes out there, and perform pretty much like a regular bicycle. Those types of e-bikes are very important to keep on the regional bike networks, including the trails.

Ed Brennan highlighted the importance of coordination among municipalities, especially where there are trail systems. As an example, the Warren County Trail goes through three different jurisdictions. Two of the jurisdictions have in their local law that e-bikes are allowed to go anywhere that a bicycle can go, but the third jurisdiction doesn't allow e-bikes at all.

Kris Alfonso shared information on the Walk, Bike and Roll New York Symposium, which is taking place from June 2-3 at the Sleepy Hollow Hotel and Conference Center in Tarrytown, NY. More information about the event is available on ITSMR's website: [www.itsmr.org/event/2026-walk-bike-roll-new-york-symposium/](http://www.itsmr.org/event/2026-walk-bike-roll-new-york-symposium/)

Ed Brennan added that on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the day before the symposium, NYBC is sponsoring a bike ride and get-together. For more information, visit: <https://nybc.net/RideAndDine>

**5. Upcoming ATAC Meetings: July 8, 2026; October 21, 2026**

Ethan asked that if anyone has a topic that they would like to present on or hear about at a future ATAC meeting, to reach out to him to coordinate.

Meeting ended at 10:48 AM.