

GENESEE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

Resolution 14-2 Accepting the *Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 6523

WHEREAS,

1. The *FY 2013-2014 Unified Planning Work Program* includes Task 6523, *Irondequoit Seneca Multi-Use Trail Feasibility Study*, for the purpose of determining the feasibility of a 3.6-mile-long trail along the east bank of the Genesee River through Seneca Park, connecting the El Camino Trail to the Irondequoit Lakeside Trail and, via the O'Rourke Bridge, to trails on the west side of the river;
2. Said Task included the inventory of existing and planned conditions, an assessment of needs and opportunities, the development of alternatives based on public input and advisory committee guidance, and the identification of the preferred alternative following public review of the draft study;
3. Said Task has been completed and has resulted in the report, *Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study*, which includes concept-level planning and design and cost estimates for the preferred project alternative; and
4. Said summary has been reviewed by GTC staff and member agencies through the GTC committee process and has been found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Long Range Transportation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Genesee Transportation Council hereby accepts the *Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study* as evidence of completion of UPWP Task 6523; and
2. That this resolution takes effect immediately.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned duly qualified Secretary of the Genesee Transportation Council certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Genesee Transportation Council held on March 13, 2014.

Date _____

ROBERT A. TRAVER, Secretary
Genesee Transportation Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study



The purpose of the Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study is to assess the feasibility of developing a 3.7-mile multi-use trail along the eastern side of the Genesee River from St. Paul Boulevard at Collingwood Drive north through Seneca Park to the O'Rorke Bridge in the Town of Irondequoit. The trail is designed to link the existing El Camino Trail with the existing Irondequoit Lakeside Multi-Use Trail and the proposed Genesee River Promenade Boardwalk.

The study area is 274 acres, located in both the Town of Irondequoit and the City of Rochester, and is primarily comprised of an inactive railroad corridor and Seneca Park. The railroad right-of-way is 3.7 miles long and forms the eastern edge of the study area. The southern portion of the railroad property is owned by Monroe County, and the northern portion is owned by CSX. The remaining land between the railroad corridor and the Genesee River is comprised of Monroe County-owned Seneca Park and areas owned by New York State.

This study included outreach to both the general public and to key stakeholders. Representatives from various organizations served on the steering committee, and provided continuity and study oversight. The general public was invited to attend two Town Planning Board meetings to learn more about the trail project, and provide feedback to the committee. The Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study builds on previously completed planning initiatives that have occurred in and adjacent to the study area.

The study included an inventory and analysis phase where the existing conditions in and around the Irondequoit Seneca Trail study area were assessed. Topography, soils, ecological character, habitat, drainage, wetlands, land use, destinations, property ownership, access, and circulation were all evaluated. None of these factors present a significant constraint to the development of a trail in the study area; however, steeper terrain in some areas makes achieving ADA compliance difficult for certain trail segments. The project addresses a number of opportunities and constraints, which include: connectivity to other parks and trails, adaptive re-use of a transportation corridor, habitat diversity, scenic views, historic resources, active transportation, and property ownership.

Alternatives. Alternatives were developed by carefully evaluating the data gathered in the inventory and analysis phase. When the feasibility study was initiated, one trail route was originally envisioned to connect the El Camino Trail to the Irondequoit Lakeside Trail. This route utilized the path of the abandoned CSX Railroad corridor from St. Paul Boulevard to Thomas Avenue. This alternative is 3.7 miles in length, and offers a single pathway for all user groups along the eastern side of the study area. Utilizing the railroad corridor for the trail route has a number of opportunities, but also a number of issues. In stakeholder meetings, it was clear that the railroad corridor route was not preferred by some property owners.

Monroe County, one of the two property owners, offered alternative routing possibilities. The County owns most of the land in the southern half of the study area. This land is contained in Seneca Park and the Seneca Park Zoo. Rather than a single pathway, the second alternative is a system of interconnected strands that provide options for different users. In this alternative, the northern part of the trail would still be located in the abandoned railroad

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study

corridor currently owned by CSX. The southern part of the trail on County land would be comprised of a trail network that includes an improved riverside trail, shared-use park roads, an ADA Loop Trail, and the existing unsurfaced footpath in the former CSX railroad corridor.

Recommended Trail Alignment. The recommended trail alignment is a system of trail segments that collectively provide a safe, accessible experience for all trail users. The trail is intended to be part of an inclusive community trail network. Providing Universal Access and full ADA compliance wherever possible is a prime objective of this project. The trail alignment combines features of both of the alternatives and has two phases for implementation.

Phase One: *(from El Camino north to Seneca Park Avenue. 2.0 miles)*

The proposed system is comprised of four main strands on the Monroe County property between Collingwood Drive and Seneca Park Avenue.

- The enhanced **Riverside Trail** will serve as the primary trail along the top of the river bluff, providing best views of the river gorge and moving much of the trail traffic away from residential properties at the south end of the corridor. Although much of the Riverside Trail will meet ADA criteria, steeper terrain in a few locations will prevent full ADA compliance along this part of the project. (See report Figure 5 for mapping and description of steep slope areas.) The Riverside Trail will require improvements in the form of repairs, upgrades, and realignment in select locations, as well as resurfacing.
- **An ADA-Accessible Loop Trail** will accommodate users of all mobility levels. The ½ -mile loop trail will be accessible from three park lodges/shelters and their respective parking lots near the Trout Pond in Seneca Park. The loop uses part of the Riverside Trail, as well as a loop around Trout Pond. The ½ mile ADA accessible Loop Trail will provide visitors with river views and interaction with local ecology.
- **Shared-Use Park Roads** will provide for north-south bicycle travel through Seneca Park. Existing park roads have generally good sight distances, low traffic speeds and minimal volume of vehicles. With minor upgrades to signage and pavement markings, the park roads can be safely shared by bicyclists and motorists. Both the Shared-Use Park Roads and the Riverside Trail will connect with the El Camino Trail.
- The existing **Railroad Pathway** on the former CSX rail bed will remain as-is and continue to function as a neighborhood footpath. Aside from minor drainage and access improvements, the trail in the railroad corridor will not receive any upgrades south of Seneca Park Avenue. Keeping the former rail bed intact as a neighborhood footpath leaves future improvement options open for consideration by Monroe County.

Phase Two: *(from Seneca Park Avenue north to Thomas Avenue 1.7 miles)*

The recommended location for the northern part of the trail is in the abandoned railroad corridor currently owned by CSX. The **Rail Trail** will follow the railroad corridor from Seneca Park Avenue to Thomas Avenue for 1.7 miles. At Thomas Avenue the trail will connect to the existing sidewalk grid, a signalized intersection and trailhead parking located on the north side of Pattonwood Drive. The recommended trail construction would result in full ADA compliance between Seneca Park Avenue and the northern trailhead at Pattonwood Drive. This segment of the project is identified as Phase 2 on the attached Phasing Plan figure.

Implementation. The trail system is proposed on properties that are owned by Monroe County and CSX Railroad. The former CSX rail bed between Long Acre Road and Seneca Park Avenue is now owned by Monroe County. Representatives from Monroe County Parks and Planning departments were included in discussions during the course of the study, and should continue to be included in future discussions about trail development, management and ownership. Preliminary discussions found County representatives to be receptive to the possibility of trail development on County land and the recommendations of this study.

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Irondequoit Seneca Trail Feasibility Study

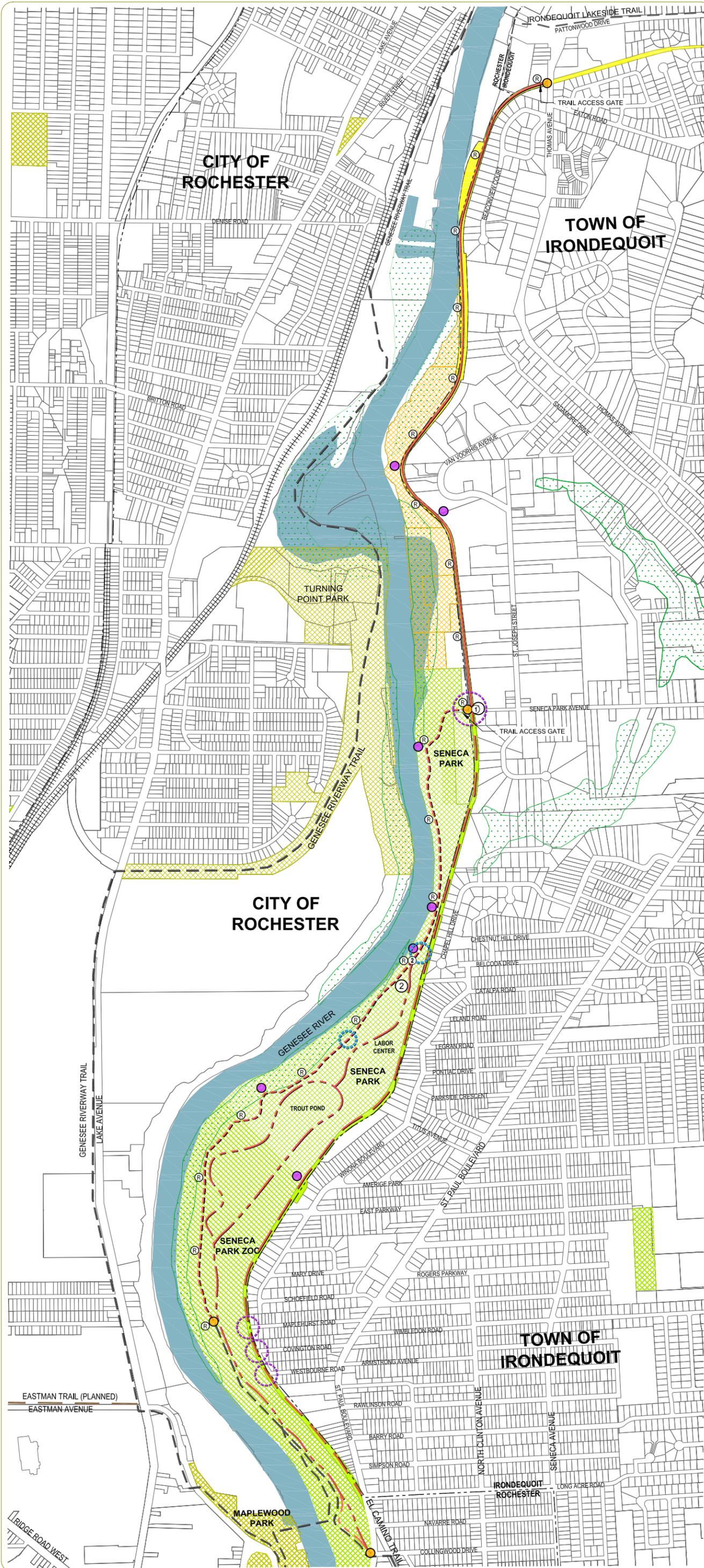
Discussions with CSX Railroad were not pursued during the course of the study. A strategy will be required to establish permanent access to, or acquire the land from CSX between Seneca Park Avenue and Thomas Avenue. The cost of land acquisition is estimated at approximately \$491,000. The total cost of construction for improvements recommended in the study is estimated at approximately \$1.4 million. Implementation of this project would most likely require a collaborative partnership between New York State, Monroe County, the Town of Irondequoit, and local partners, including the Genesee Land Trust. Some combination of these partners could effectively acquire the land, build the trail, and maintain the facilities.

The feasibility study includes cost estimates, information regarding SEQRA documentation, the permitting process, funding opportunities, conceptual design details, and project phasing. The study also addresses trail construction standards, user guidelines, and operations and maintenance. Appendices are included that provide a summary of public input, an overview of schematic costs, the economic impact of trails, and potential areas of conflict between trail users.

The Irondequoit Seneca Trail is a highly feasible trail development project that would significantly enhance the connectivity of the evolving regional trail system. The recommended trail alignment has the support of the Town of Irondequoit, the general public, and Monroe County. The Irondequoit-Seneca Trail would provide the community with significant environmental, economic, and public health benefits.



Irondequoit Seneca Trail Concept Sketch



Irondequoit Seneca Trail

Monroe County, New York

Attachment 1: Recommended Trail System

Overall Improvements

- Improved neighborhood connections to the Seneca Park trail system
- Better trail access during the spring/summer/fall months due to trail drainage improvements
- Fewer ice hazards during winter months due to trail drainage improvements
- Improved community connectivity
- Rest areas provide access to trail users of all mobility levels
- Completes a contiguous bicycle route from the El Camino Trail to the Irondequoit Lakeside Trail
- This level of active transportation facilities begins to comply with regional infrastructure planning

Decision Points

- Decision Point 1**
 - From North to South: The Rail Trail splits into two trails. The Railroad Pathway continues straight and the Riverside Trail curves to the west.
 - From South to North: The Railroad Pathway and the Riverside Trail merge to form the Rail Trail.
- Decision Point 2**
 - From North to South: The Riverside Trail splits into two trails. The Riverside Trail continues to the west and the Shared Park Road splits off to the east.
 - From South to North: The Riverside Trail and the Shared Park Road merge to form the Riverside Trail.

Active Transportation Network

- El Camino Trail: 2.25 Miles
- Irondequoit Lakeside Trail: 4.80 Miles
- Irondequoit Seneca Trail System: 4.73 Miles (Proposed)

TOTAL: 11.78 Miles of active transportation facilities

Legend

- Town/City Boundary
- NYS DEC Wetlands
- NYS Owned Land
- Rochester Parks
- Monroe County Parks
- Railroad Corridor (Monroe County Owned)
- Railroad Corridor (CSX Owned)
- Planned Multi-Use Trail
- Existing Multi-Use Trail
- Neighborhood Connection Improvements
- Footbridge Improvements
- Rest Areas with Seating (Located every 300 yds., approximately a 5 min. walk)
- Overlook
- Trailhead with Signage (Refer to Figure 19 for signage schedule)

Recommended Trail System

Rail Trail

- CSX Railroad Corridor Trail Improvements (8' wide asphalt trail) 1.62 Miles

Railroad Pathway

- Monroe County Railroad Corridor Trail Improvements (Minor repairs as needed) 2.05 Miles

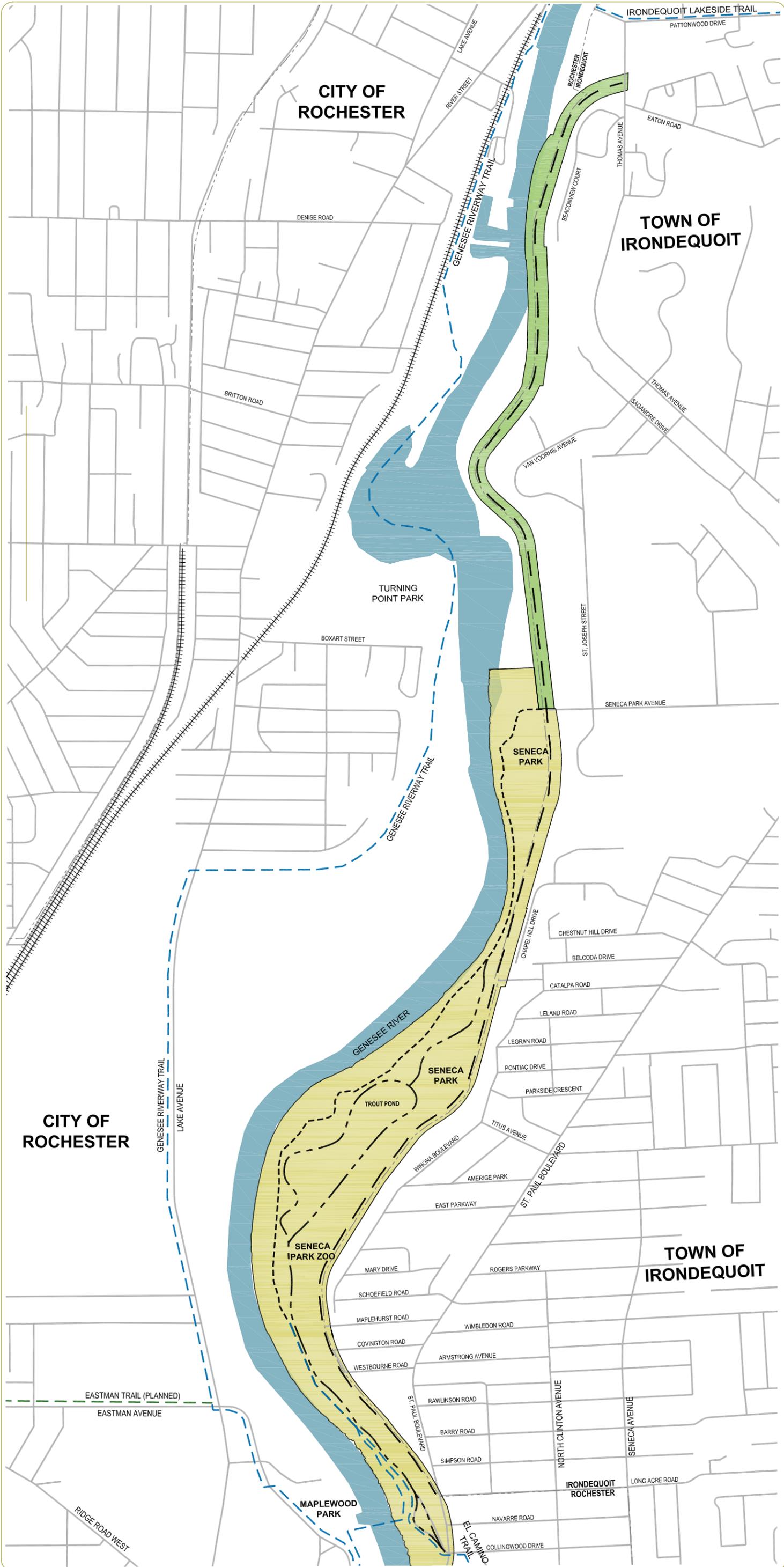
Shared Park Road

- On-Road Bicycle Facility (Signage and pavement markings) 2.44 Miles

Riverside Trail

- Existing Trail Improvements (8' wide asphalt trail) 1.74 Miles





Irondequoit Seneca Trail
Monroe County, New York

Figure 20: Phasing Plan

Legend

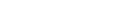
-  Town / City Boundary
-  Planned Multi-Use Trail
-  Existing Multi-Use Trail

Phase 1 Improvements 

Railroad Pathway

-  Monroe County Railroad ROW
-  Trail Improvements (Repairs as needed)
- 2.05 Miles

Shared Park Road

-  On-Road Bicycle Facility (Signage and pavement markings)
- 2.44 Miles

Riverside Trail

-  Existing Trail Improvements (8' wide asphalt trail)
- 1.74 Miles

Phase 2 Improvements 

Rail Trail

-  CSX Owned Railroad ROW
-  Trail Improvements (8' wide asphalt trail)
- 1.62 Miles

