



# Oneida Rail Trail

## 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

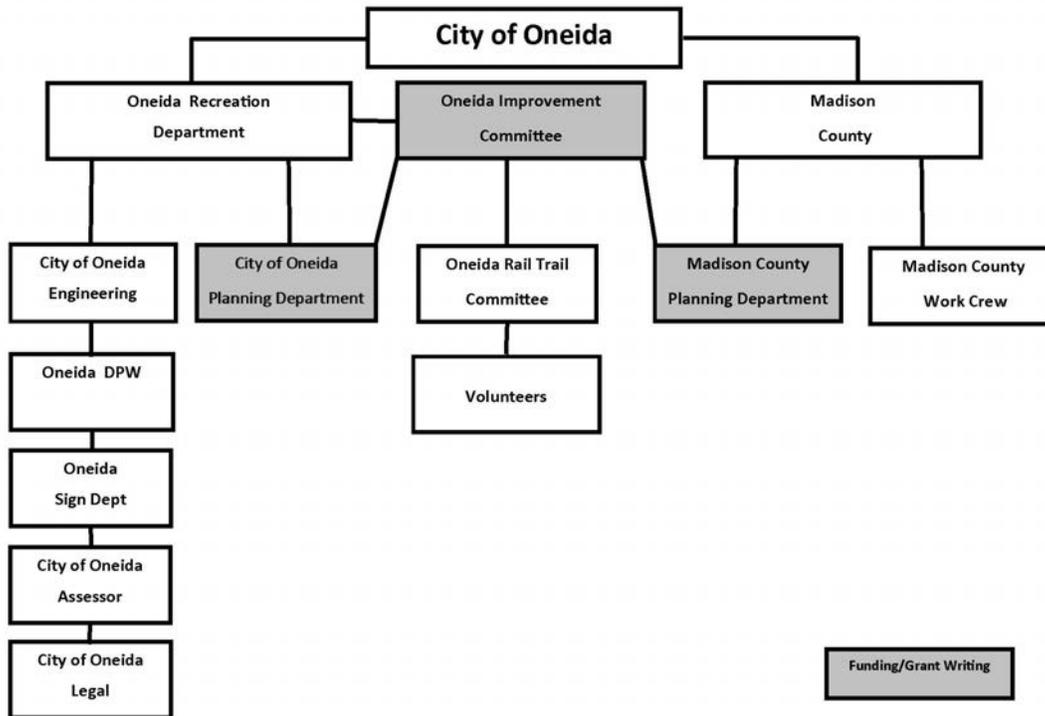
and 2015 Goals



# PROJECT PARTNERS

The ORT represents a collaboration across municipalities and agencies. This report was prepared by the ORT Committee.

## Oneida Rail Trail Structure



### Oneida Rail Trail Committee

*John Taibi  
Steve Blair  
Luke Griff  
Joe Magliocca  
Jim Chamberlain  
Patti Meakin  
Jamie Hart  
Jon Rauscher  
Danielle Krol*

Attend an ORT Committee Meeting!  
Last Thursday of every month  
Oneida Recreation Center  
217 Cedar Street, Oneida  
6:00 pm

Public welcome

**Mission:**  
“formerly designate railroad right-of-ways as greenways and initiate implementation of trail system.”

-City of Oneida Comprehensive Plan

January 15, 2015

The Oneida Rail Trail project continued to gain steam in 2014. We ended 2013 hoping to be selected as one of the transportation projects by the New York State DOT. The good news was received in January that the City of Oneida indeed was selected to receive \$545,000 in funding to construct 3.1 miles of handicapped accessible trail from the Erie Canal Trailway in Wampsville to N. Willow Street in Oneida. People from all over the state, country and even world travel the Erie Canal Trailway. This can only help to increase the Oneida Rail Trail's visibility. Riding the momentum of support the City of Oneida, with the help of its ORT partner the Madison County Planning Department, submitted its application for NYS DOT TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) funding in June of 2014. In late October we learned the City of Oneida was awarded \$716,000 for the 0.8 mile stretch of the ORT picking up where the TEP funding left off and extending through downtown Oneida.

The Oneida Improvement Committee, Inc. the not for profit partner of the ORT received the Parks & Trails New York's Growing Grassroots Grant for the development of a website which would house all Oneida Rail Trail information. Another benefit of the website is to recruit volunteers and donations to sustain the future ORT. [www.ImproveOneida.com](http://www.ImproveOneida.com) became live in May of 2014. The Oneida Improvement Committee also adopted a three mile section of the Erie Canal Trailway from Rt 316 in Oneida to N. Court Street in Wampsville. The first I Love My Park Day event in May cleaned and groomed this adopted section. Another project of the OIC was to open the Oneida Rail Trail Store in the Oneida Commons on Cedar Street in Oneida. There you can find bike supplies, ORT merchandise, local railroad history cards and books by ORT Committee member and local railroad historian John Taibi.

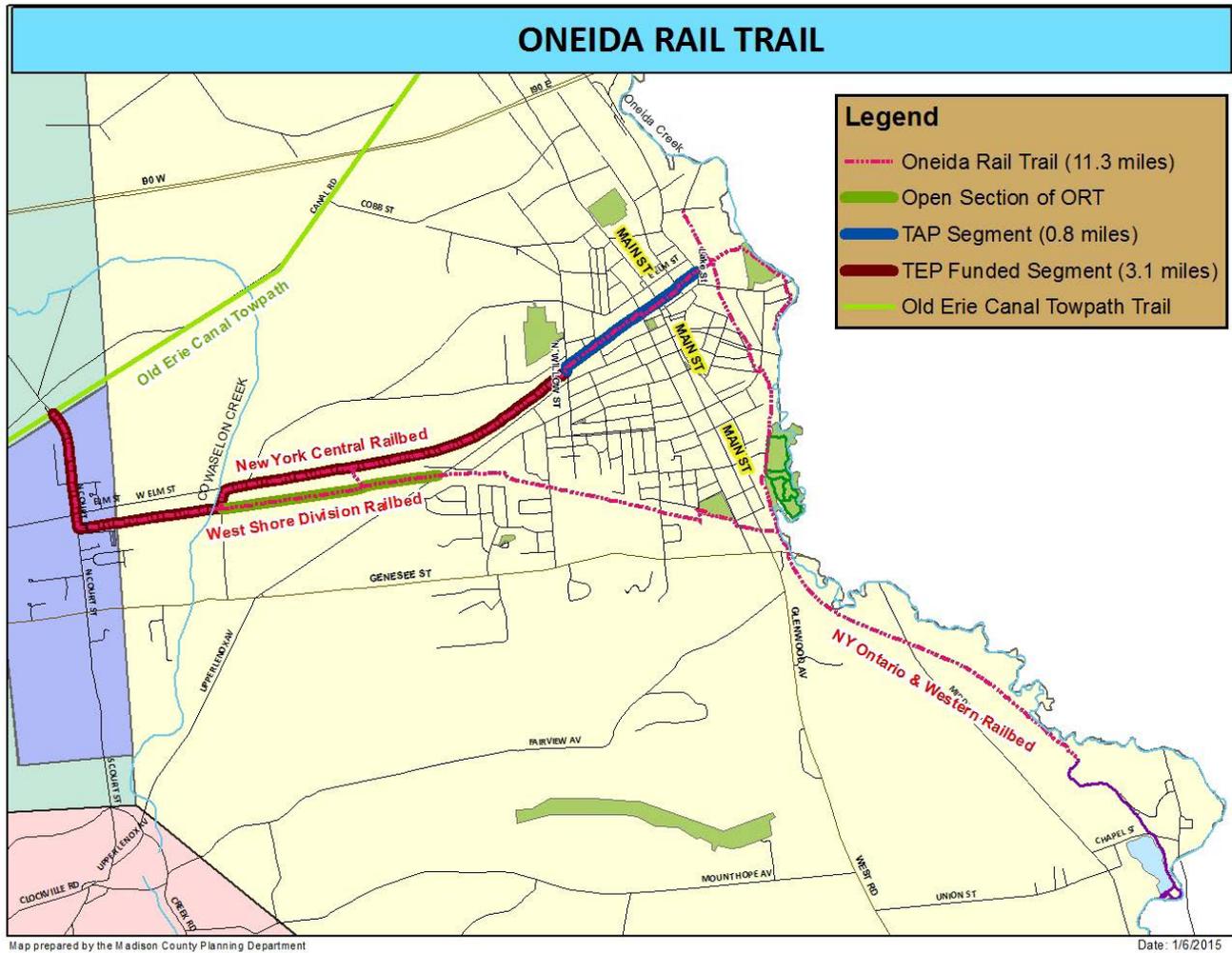
Another sign of the far reaching support for the ORT was seen when the SUNY ESF Landscape Architecture Department selected it as a fall studio project; students spent their fall semester studying the City of Oneida and the Oneida Rail Trail. They reached out to the community in many ways to research design ideas that would enhance the quality of life for our community and those who visit the ORT. While all of the accomplishments to date have been amazing, the one that all ORT Committee members would agree was the most gratifying was the opening of the first official mile of the Oneida Rail Trail on September 8, 2014. Preparing for the trail opening allowed the committee and loyal volunteers to get their hands dirty. All of our and the community's hard work had paid off as we witnessed the cutting of the ribbon by our local officials on that splendid late summer evening.

As the ORT Committee reflects on the past year, we look forward to 2015 as we work to design the four miles of trail that we graciously received funding for. Those four miles will contain the path to the future ensuring that people of all abilities can utilize it and the link to the past that will keep the history of our community alive and well. We look forward to the day when our downtown is bustling with activity and a meeting place for our families and visiting trail users. Our work is far from over: we will continue to educate the community about the ORT and work to open more sections of the trail and seek volunteers to plan and maintain this future linear City of Oneida Park.

Regards,

Oneida Rail Trail Committee Members





The Oneida Rail Trail is a proposed 11.3-mile non-motorized, multi-use trail located in the City of Oneida. The Oneida Rail Trail (ORT) will preserve and utilize existing rail beds (no tracks remain) to create a cultural corridor along three former rail lines: the New York Central, West Shore Division, and New York Ontario & Western. These former rail beds run through the heart of downtown Oneida and connect to the Village of Wampsville to the west and the City of Sherrill to the southeast.

Through the use of these rail beds, the Oneida Rail Trail will link three communities, multiple neighborhoods, businesses, offices, parks, tourist destinations, education facilities, and other trails including the Old Erie Canal Towpath to create a new economic engine in the area and source of community pride.

Currently a 1 mile section is officially open for public use. This 1 mile section stretches from Hubbard Place to Lenox Avenue. The trailhead and parking are located at Hubbard Place.

Another 3.9 miles of the trail is in the process of being developed through funding awarded by the NYS Department of Transportation. This section stretches from the Old Erie Canal State Park through the Village of Wampsville and then east along the former New York Central Railbed into the downtown of Oneida.

One of the unique features of the ORT project is that because it involves three intersecting railbeds it is not just an out and back trail but instead will offer the option for a loop around the city.

# 2014 HIGHLIGHTS



January 2014  
OIC Selected for  
Growing Grass-  
roots Grant  
Page 6

March 2014  
OIC adopts 3 mile  
section of Erie  
Canalway Trail  
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June 2014  
ORT selected for  
SUNY ESF Studio  
Project  
Page 9

May 2014  
Oneida Rail Trail  
Store opens in  
Oneida Commons  
Page 8



September 2014  
Grand Opening of  
1 mile segment of  
the ORT  
Page 10-13



October 2014  
ORT selected to  
receive \$716K in  
NYS DOT TAP  
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# GROWING GRASSROOTS GRANT

January 2014 - The Oneida Improvement Committee (OIC) was awarded \$1,500 from Parks & Trails NY as a recipient of the Growing the Grassroots Grant!

Growing the Grassroots is a capacity building-grant for non-profits to increase organizational visibility, grow membership, and attract additional volunteers so that they can be even stronger stewards of these important outdoor resources.

In 2014, Parks & Trails NY awarded 8 non-profits and the OIC was one of them!

The OIC used the \$1,500 grant award to design and develop a website for the organization.

This website, [www.ImproveOneida.com](http://www.ImproveOneida.com), went live in May 2014.

A large focus of the website is dedicated to the Oneida Rail Trail. Through the website, the OIC is putting a public face to the Oneida Rail Trail project by making brochures and project information more accessible to the public. The website is also helping to recruit volunteers and attract donations.

Visit [www.ImproveOneida.com](http://www.ImproveOneida.com)



# ERIE CANALWAY TRAIL ADOPTION



March 2014 - On behalf of the Oneida Rail Trail, the OIC adopted a 3.1 mile section of the Erie Canalway Trail.

Through cooperation between NYS Parks and the NYS Canal Corporation, the Oneida Improvement Committee, on behalf of the Oneida Rail Trail, adopted a 3.1 mile section of the Erie Canalway Trail from Durnhamville to Wampsville.

Keeping the Erie Canalway Trail clean and welcoming is important especially because the Oneida Rail Trail will eventually tie into the Erie Canalway Trail and connect users on both trail systems to and through the City of Oneida.

Adopt-a-Trail signs are now posted along this section of the Erie Canalway Trail.

On May 3, 2014, the Oneida Rail Trail Committee and volunteers from throughout the community came together to clean-up the adopted section of the canal for I LOVE MY PARK DAY.

# ORT STORE

May 2014 - An ORT Store was opened in the Oneida Commons to sell Oneida Rail Trail merchandise, bike supplies, postcards of historic Oneida as well as local railline history books.

**Proceeds go to support the completion of the Oneida Rail Trail!**



## Visit the Oneida Rail Trail Store at Oneida Commons

157 Cedar Street Oneida, NY



- **Bike Supplies**
  - Tubes
  - Patch kits
- **ORT Merchandise**
  - ORT T-shirts
  - ORT Stickers
- **Historic Railroad picture cards**
- **Books by Rail Historian John Taibi**
- **Free Cycling Guides**
- **And much more!**



June 2014 - The ORT was selected as a design studio project by SUNY ESF Landscape Architecture Department.

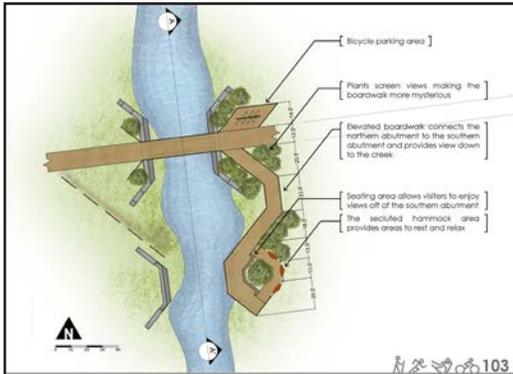
Over the course of the Fall Semester, 39 senior landscape architect students analyzed the ORT and developed a design report that includes detailed renderings and conceptual build outs for the trail corridor.

The report also describes community input data that was collected including from a community design charrette held on September 10, 2014.

The ideas presented in the report help demonstrate the exciting possibilities for the ORT.



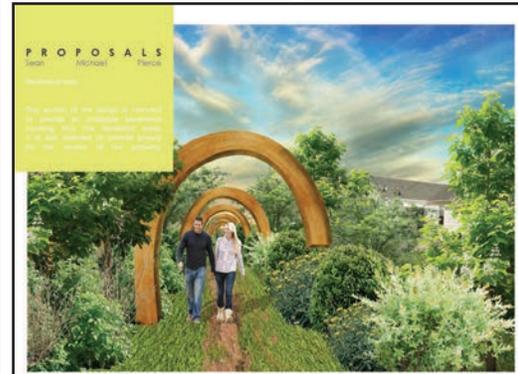
Here are just some of the design ideas developed as part of this studio project:



Cowaselon Creek Bridge Rendering

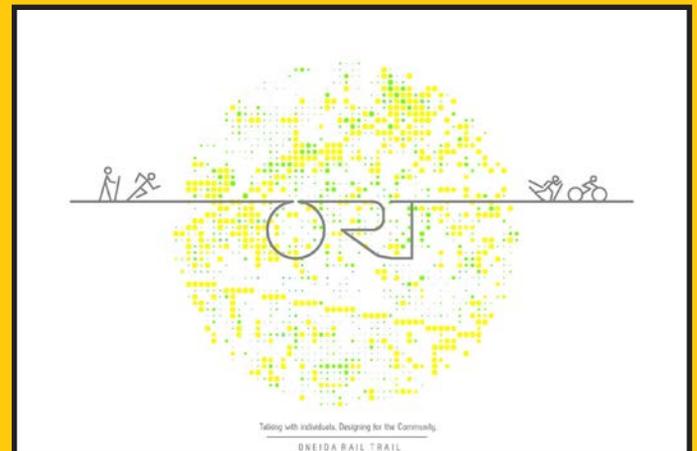


Concept for the ORT crossing at Route 5



Rendering of how the trail can be designed and enhanced to buffer private property

To view the final report visit [www.ImproveOneida.com](http://www.ImproveOneida.com)



# GRAND OPENING

September 2014- One of the main goals of 2014 was to open the 1 mile trail segment from Hubbard Place to Lenox Ave.

Two clean-up events were held to get the section ready for the grand opening. Thank you to the volunteers who donated their time clearing and trimming. Signage and gates were also installed at the trailhead at Hubbard Place.

On September 8, 2014 the City held the Grand Opening event at the new Hubbard Place trailhead. Over 50 people attended. After the ribbon was cut, John Taibi, local rail historian, led the group on a walking tour of the segment.

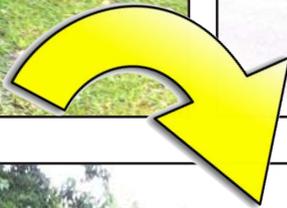
While many portions of the railbeds are used by the community now, this 1 mile section represents the first portion of the ORT to be officially open and designated for public use. The trail is open to hiking and biking as well as cross-country skiing and snow showing. Leashed pets are also allowed on the trail.



A BIG THANK YOU to  
**Bartlett Tree Experts** for  
donating time and equip-  
ment for the clean-up!



# GRAND OPENING



# GRAND OPENING





The first section of the **ONEIDA RAIL TRAIL** is opening!

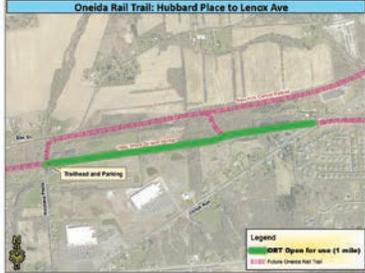
## Save the Date!

# September 8th

## 6 pm

**Ribbon-cutting event  
at the new Hubbard Place trailhead!**

Join us for the ribbon-cutting event to officially open a 1 mile section of the City of Oneida's Oneida Rail Trail (ORT). Events include opening remarks by Mayor Max Smith and a guided walking tour by local rail historian John Taibi.

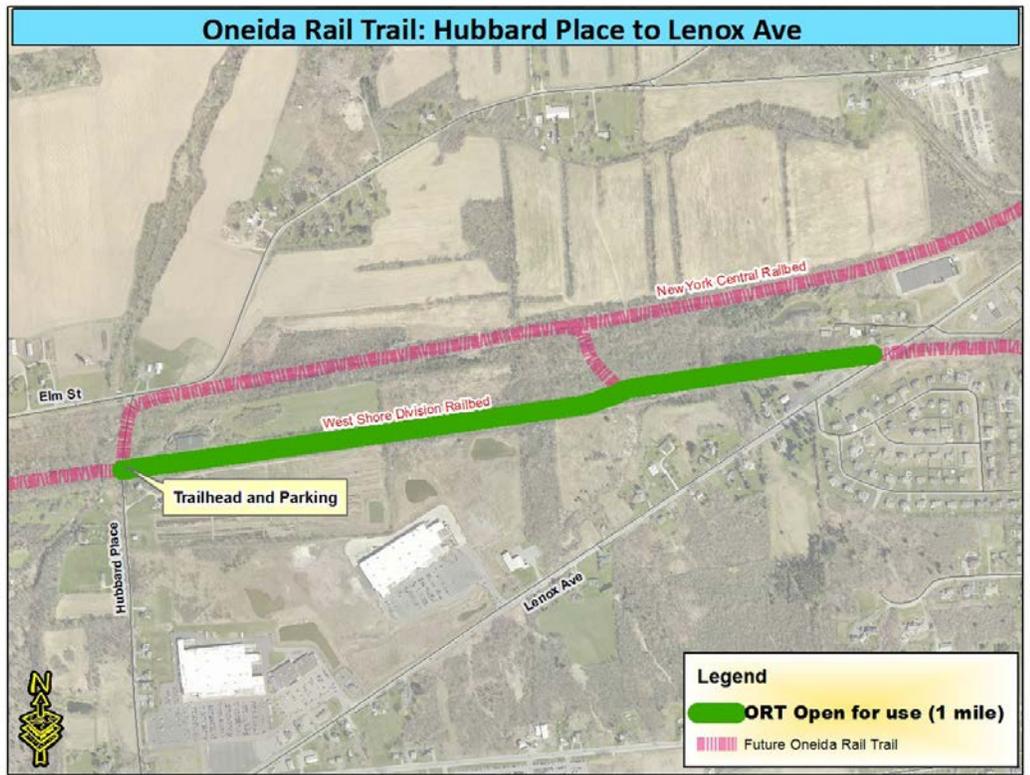


The 1 mile section to open extends from Hubbard Place along a former railbed to Lenox Avenue. Trailhead and parking is along Hubbard Place. Utilizing existing railbeds, the envisioned ORT trail system will eventually circle the City. While many portions of the railbeds are used by the community now, the 1 mile section represents the first portion to be officially open and designated for public use.



A clean-up event will be held Saturday, Sept 6th from 9 am- 12 pm to get the trail ready for opening. If you are interested in volunteering please email [info@improveoneida.com](mailto:info@improveoneida.com)

Get out &  
enjoy  
the 1 mile  
segment!



# NYS DOT TAP Award

October 2014- The City of Oneida was awarded NYS DOT TAP funding in the amount of \$716,000 for a 0.8 mile section of the ORT.

The City of Oneida partnered with Madison County to submit an application to the NYS DOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for a 0.8 mile section of the ORT.

This 0.8 mile segment of the ORT extends from N. Willow St (the terminus of the NYS DOT TEP grant) east through Oneida's downtown to Lake St.

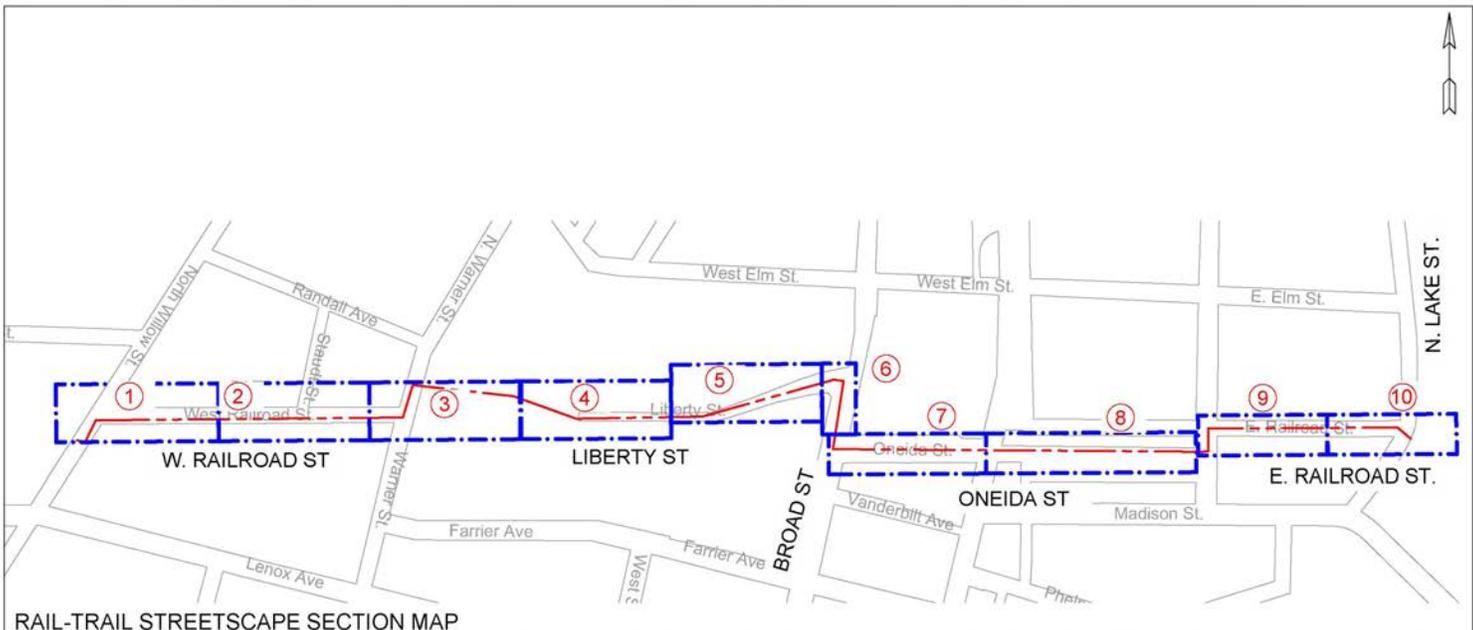
Proposed improvements include sidewalk replacement, new roadway bike striping, a pedestrian plaza along Oneida St, curbing, signage, and five enhanced crosswalks.

Prior to construction, design work and environmental review will have to be complete. NYS DOT states it is usually two years between TAP funding approval and the start of construction.

## Background on TAP

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a federal reimbursement program administered in New York by NYS DOT.

TAP funding is dedicated for strategic investments in non-motorized transportation alternatives. The intent of the program is to encourage tourism and economic development opportunities Statewide. The funds cover up to 80 percent of the cost of a project, with the remaining 20 percent or more coming from the project sponsor.



RAIL-TRAIL STREETSCAPE SECTION MAP

The Oneida Rail Trail would not be possible without the support of our community! Thank you!!

Thank you to Community Carwash in Oneida!

For the week of March 30 - April 5, 2014, 20% of the proceeds of all car washes at the Community Car Wash went to the Oneida Rail Trail. It added it up to \$400!



## Oneida Improvement Committee's Ale Trail Craft Beer Tasting

Saturday, July 26th  
1:00—4:00 pm

**ONLY 200 TICKETS  
AVAILABLE**

Oneida American Legion  
N. Main Street  
Tickets \$30

Includes ArcStock Ticket

Tickets on sale now at  
[www.improveoneida.com](http://www.improveoneida.com)



### NY Brewers

Saranac	Ommegang
Lake Placid	Southern Tier
Adirondack	Brooklyn
Ithaca	Butternuts
Good Nature	Middle Ages
Empire	Captain Lawrence

### US Brewers

Sierra Nevada	Firestone Walker
Lagunita's	Troeg's
Bell's	Founders
Stone	Dogfish Head

Brewers list subject to change

Ages 21+ Only - Valid ID Required. This event focuses on craft beer not its abuse. We reserve the right to refuse admission/service to those who are visibly impaired.

## ArcStock Music Fest & Ride for the ARC

VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK NOON—4:00 PM  
3 of CNY's Hottest Bands Kick off ArcStock with  
Food, Crafts & More! Only \$10 pp Ride for the ARC @ 10 am



For more information [www.madisoncortlandarc.org](http://www.madisoncortlandarc.org) twitter @ARCMadCort Facebook Madison Cortland ARC

The OIC held the first annual Ale Trail Craft Beer Tasting Fundraiser on July 26, 2014.

Over 20 breweries were part of the event. Proceeds raised went to the OIC for initiatives such as the Oneida Rail Trail. The tasting was in conjunction with the Arc-Stock Music Fest

Thank you to all those who volunteered to work at the event and make the day fun and successful!

# 2015 Goals

As you can see, 2014 was the year that the Oneida Rail Trail went from concept to reality. The ORT Committee looks forward to advancing even further in 2015. Here are the goals of the ORT Committee for 2015:

- Develop a promotional video of the ORT
- Continue to seek out grants and fundraising opportunities
- Continue to educate the community on the project through public presentations and promotional materials
- Schedule and advertise community clean-up events along the ORT
- Organize public walks/rides along currently open sections of the ORT
- Continue to work with Stoneleigh housing to integrate the trail into their project
- Continue to coordinate with NYS DOT for improvements to and trail crossing at Lenox Ave.
- Work with local businesses to promote bike friendliness in Oneida
- Work with the City to officially open the section of the West Shore Division between Seneca St to Sayles St
- Work with the City of Oneida to help implement the NYS DOT TEP and NYS DOT TAP grants for the 3.9 mile section of the ORT extending from the Old Erie Canalway Trailhead in Wampsville to Lake St in Oneida



“People are different on a path. On a town sidewalk strangers may make eye contact but that is all. On a path they smile, say hello and pet one another’s dogs.  
- Anne Lusk

Bicyclists along the West Shore Railbed

# The Oneida Rail Trail.....



## Connecting People to Community Destinations...

