



City of Saratoga Springs

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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FROM THE OFFICE OF MAYOR JOANNE D. YEPSEN

REDC AWARDS SARATOGA \$1.13 M TOWARD GREENBELT TRAIL

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY. – Saratoga Springs Mayor Joanne Yepsen has been hopeful all along but until this week, there wasn't certainty about the proposal put forth by the Mayor's staff to the state to construct a multi use trail called the Saratoga Greenbelt Downtown Connector. The City participated with other counties and cities in the Capital Region, submitting applications to the Regional Economic Development Council's Consolidated Funding Application process and it paid off, literally.

Mayor Yepsen was in attendance at the Regional Economic Development Council Award Event [yesterday](#) hosted by Governor Andrew Cuomo. The total amount allocated was \$70 M to 10 districts of which the Capital Regional district was awarded \$81.3 M as a Top Performer and Saratoga Springs will receive \$1.13M of that for the Saratoga Greenbelt Downtown Connector Trail Project.

"I am thrilled that the REDC and Governor Cuomo recognized our project as having significant economic development opportunity for our City, the region and New York State. Saratoga Springs plays an integral part in rebuilding the economy in upstate New York and we look forward to improving our quality of life by making Saratoga Springs safer for walkers and bikers and connecting much of the city by the Greenbelt Trail", states Mayor Joanne Yepsen.

The project evolved from the city's Complete Streets Planning efforts and incorporates the integration of bicyclist, PED, and transit improvements within the City's primary urban corridor and connects the downtown with a rapidly developing new neighborhood and destinations within the City. The trail will run from the corner of Maple and Lake Avenue intersection and extends to the new Route 50 bike/pedestrian connection close to the eastern loop of Excelsior Ave.

Mayor Yepsen declared the Downtown Connector as a primary segment in the Saratoga Greenbelt Trail (SGT), a public-private partnership with a master plan that was developed by local citizens and unanimously adopted by the City Council. This section of the City has seen tremendous growth in the last few years with significant private investment including new residential units, retail and a grocery store, and office space. 334 new residential units are either under construction or have been recently completed. The Downtown Connector will serve to transform the neighborhood with new landscaping, LED streetlights, and an 8-foot trail flanked by bike racks and benches where residents and tourists can sit and relax between excursions.



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“It’s very exciting,” said Yepsen. “This is big step forward in Saratoga Springs becoming more bikeable and walkable-friendly. It’s about improving the quality of life for Saratogians.” The project has wide community support from businesses, residents, the Saratoga Greenbelt Trail committee, and the Capital District Transportation Authority. It promotes the implementation of the City’s adopted Complete Streets Policy, Saratoga Greenbelt Trail Plan, and Climate Smart Community Pledge by reducing local greenhouse gas emissions through the promotion of safe alternatives to driving. The project was chosen through a competitive solicitation process and is slated to start in early summer of 2017.

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