



Developing Compelling Conceptual Maps

A map is often the most effective visual tool for sharing a project proposal and can help generate excitement around a potential trail. Online mapping tools are available for creating maps, and many of these resources do not require advanced cartography or GIS skills.

The map should display the general route the greenway trail might take, potential destinations along the route, and the locations where greenway trailside amenities or parking might be located. Early in a project's life, maps can be purely conceptual; they do not need to necessarily represent the exact route the trail will follow, given the need to complete engineering and environmental reviews.

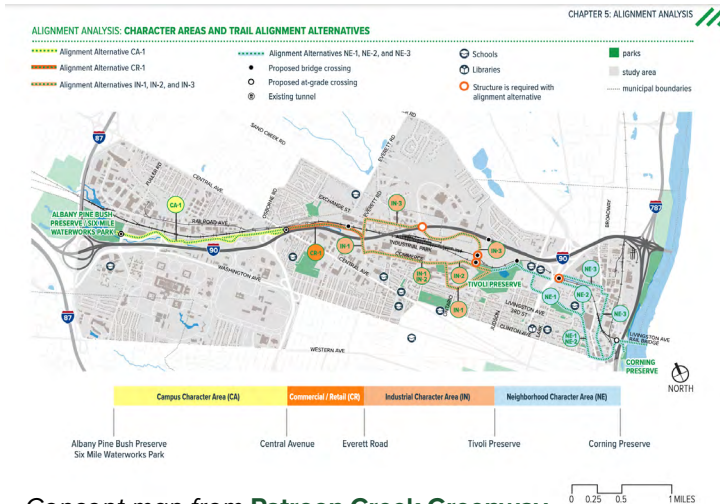
A map should include the following components:

- Potential greenway alignment
- Key destinations (schools, parks, libraries, commercial districts, housing developments)
- Potential barriers (streams/bodies of water, high-traffic road crossings)
- Municipal boundaries
- Tax parcels/land ownership data



Cautionary note for concept maps

To reduce confusion or potential opposition at the outset, use words like “potential” or “idea for a trail” to title and describe your map. Avoid proposing anything on, or running through, private property without speaking to the landowners first. If the proposed route and the encompassing lands are relatively certain, an interactive online map is a first step to take. If there are factors (such as private land ownership) that could cause conflict, a zoomed out, fixed image of a map or an interactive map that does not show a granular level of detail or limits the scale at which the proposed route can be viewed may be appropriate.



Concept map from **Patroon Creek Greenway Feasibility Study (2022)**.

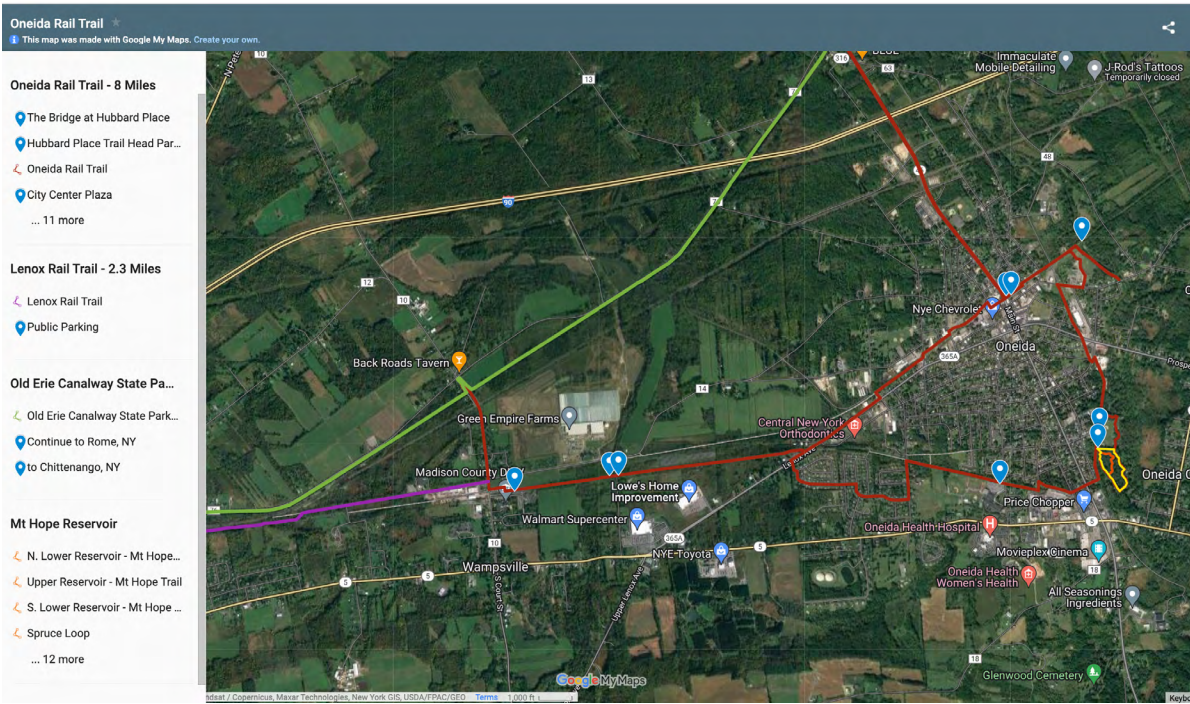
Tools & Resources

One of the most accessible, free, and easy to use tools is Google’s “My Map” feature (mymaps.google.com), which allows users to draw lines that can be used for greenway trail routing. Users can place points to indicate the locations of amenities or parking. An additional helpful aspect of digital mapping is the ability to change the basemap, so satellite imagery can be used to help identify the route that a former rail or canal corridor followed, as well as other obstacles, such as streams or creeks that the trail would need to cross. Other tools, including WikiMapping or ArcGIS Online, can also be considered although some require funding for full access.

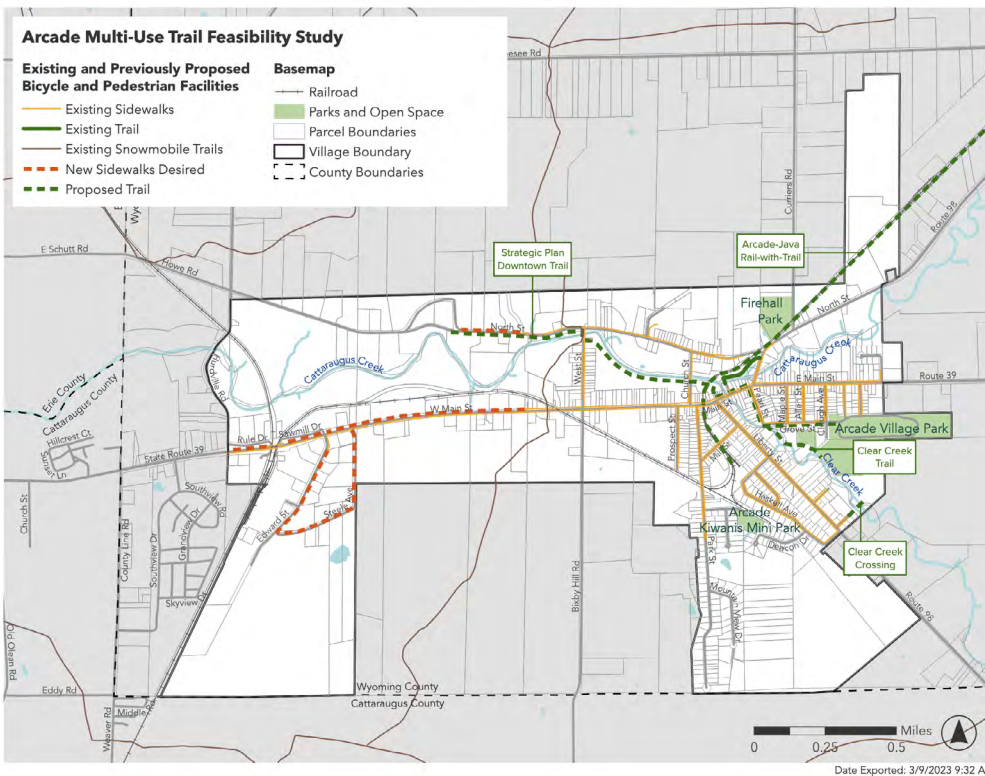
As a supplement to the 2021 New York State Greenways Trails Plan, a website and mapping application was created to give the public an opportunity to review the inventory of existing, planned, and proposed greenway trails located across the state. This mapping tool can be used to identify corridors that might be appropriate for a new greenway trail, or to identify other existing, planned or proposed trails to which a new trail might connect. Visit: <https://greenway-trails-plan-nysparks.hub.arcgis.com/>

Examples of Concept Maps

Example 1: Oneida Rail Trail Google MyMap



Example 2: Arcade Multi-use Trail Feasibility Study



Greenways Guides are a series of resources developed from **Trails Across New York: A Grassroots Guide to Developing Greenway Trails** guide. Read and download the full guide at ptny.org/greenways