



# **Bicyclists Bring Business Workshop Report Utica**

**September 12 and 13, 2017**

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*The Bicyclists Bring Business Roundtable and Bike-a-Round are made possible by financial support from the New York State Canal Corporation.*

Visit [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org) to learn more about Bicyclists Bring Business,  
including previous years' workshops.



## BACKGROUND

Bicycling's popularity and the growth of bicycle tourism are well documented by several studies, including one by the Outdoor Industry Association that states that bicycling is second only to running and jogging as the most popular outdoor activity in America by frequency of participation for adults. Additional studies in states around the country have demonstrated that bicycle tourists are a growing market, generating hundreds of millions of dollars per year in realized or potential economic impact. The Erie Canalway Trail (ECT), New York's premier multi-use trail, and one of the nation's longest, has an abundance of everything this growing market of bicycle tourists seek: safe, off-road cycling between historic communities; scenic landscapes, historic sites, parks and other attractions; detailed maps and route descriptions; and cycling options ranging from day trips to week-long adventures.

According to the economic impact study of the ECT published in 2014, these factors – along with the widespread name recognition of the Erie Canal – help the ECT to attract nearly 1.6 million annual visits and generate over \$250 million in annual economic impact.

New York's multi-use trail network received a significant boost in 2017 with a commitment by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of \$200 million in funding to complete the ECT and the Hudson River Valley Greenway, connecting the east-west system to New York City and the Canadian border. The new trail system, called the Empire State Trail (EST), will be the nation's longest. The hope is that the EST will elevate the state's profile among long-distance cyclists, bringing new tourists and economic development to

trailside communities. Building new trail sections will also bring “backyard” recreational opportunities to many communities along the route.

In order to help Canalway Trail communities capitalize on ECT tourism (and, future EST tourism) Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) and the New York State Canal Corporation have conducted 14 Bicyclists Bring Business roundtables in communities across the state since 2006. In 2008 *Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's Canal Communities* was produced by PTNY and the Canal Corporation to bring the message to an even wider audience. The goal of the roundtables and the guide is to help local businesses, elected officials, tourism professionals, and community members discover what services and amenities are important to bicyclists so that they can better attract and profit from the growing bicycle tourism market.

In 2012, a community Bike-a-Round the morning following the roundtable was added, a field component that enables program participants to experience their community's services and infrastructure from the perspective of a visiting cyclist.



## SEPTEMBER 2017 PROGRAM LOCATION

Parks & Trails New York, the New York State Canal Corporation, the City of Utica, Oneida County Tourism, and Utica Bike Rescue presented a free Bicyclists Bring Business roundtable at thINCubator in downtown Utica on September 12, 2017. Mohawk Valley GIS and Zagster bike share provided additional support for the event. thINCubator, located in the historic Bagg's Square district, is a shared work space and business incubator that supports Utica's business community and facilitates collaboration with area educational institutions, civic organizations and government agencies.

Utica, with a population of just over 60,000, is one of six large urban centers located directly on the ECT. It is the county seat of Oneida County, and serves as a gateway to the wider Mohawk Valley and the Southern Adirondack

Mountains. Downtown Utica is about a mile south of the Mohawk River, the Enlarged Erie Canal, and the Canalway Trail which runs along the Canal. From its intersection with Genesee Street in Utica, the ECT runs 15 miles west to Rome, uninterrupted and off-road save for a short stretch in Oriskany. East of Genesee Street lies one of the ECT's largest



*Utica's iconic street clock*

remaining gap sections, 14 miles of on-road riding to Herkimer via Routes 5 and 5S.

Downtown Utica's distance from the trail is unlike most of the other large cities along the route.

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*"The City of Utica is a great location for bike enthusiasts to visit and enjoy all the amenities our community has to offer. In partnership with many organizations, we are working collaboratively to enhance the overall biking experience as it is a great quality of life asset and economic driver."* - Utica Mayor Robert M. Palmieri

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Utica marks a transition point in trail experience and aesthetics, as trail sections to the west, including 36 miles through Old Erie Canal State Park generally run directly alongside historic or working Canal, while sections to

the East in the Mohawk Valley are often separated from the Canal and the Mohawk River. While farther removed, easterly trail sections offer an equally attractive cycling experience, with dramatic sweeping views of the Mohawk River and rolling farmland.

In 2015, an electronic counter was installed for one month at Lock 20 in Marcy, 4.5 miles west

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*"The Canalway Trail continues to grow in popularity, both for residents of the 200-plus communities that share the Trail and for an ever-growing number of visitors who come here to ride, to explore and to enjoy our historic canal system."*

*- NYS Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton*

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of Utica, and the location of a Canal Corporation Biker-Hiker-Boater Campsite. Observed trail traffic during that time was extrapolated to an annual estimate of 49,424 uses. As Marcy is quite close to Utica, the trail between Lock 20 and Aqua Vino restaurant in Utica is entirely off-road, and a gap section exists to the City's east, similar use levels can be expected on trail sections closer to downtown.

While much of this trail use is by locals, as the largest urban area between Syracuse and the Capital District, Utica is a logical stopping point for many touring cyclists.

Utica and the wider Mohawk Valley's cycling network has experienced growth in recent years, and more is expected with construction of the Empire State Trail.

The City of Utica and local cycling advocates have developed loop routes around Utica, as well as a planned protected bike lane on the Broad/Dwyer/Bleeker corridor, heading east from Genesee Street. This facility would serve as an alternate to the current ECT on-road route which uses Route 5 on the north side of the Canal.

A new section of ECT, routing for which was released in draft format in August 2017 as part of the Empire State Trail project, will be constructed on the north bank of the Canal. The

trail will fill in the existing ECT gap section with an off-road multi-use facility.

## EVENING ROUNDTABLE

Several dozen people from across Utica and surrounding communities, including elsewhere in Oneida County and the



*Matt Van Slyke from Utica Bike Rescue and Homegrown Bicycle Adventures describes the Bike Thru History project*

Mohawk Valley, and others from Herkimer, Onandaga, and Otsego Counties participated in the evening roundtable at thINCubator. The roundtable was held from 6 to 8 p.m. so that business owners could attend on their way home from work.

After light refreshments and introductions, Matt Van Slyke from Utica Bike Rescue and Homegrown Bicycle Adventures began the roundtable by describing the Bike Thru History project. Bike Thru History is a set of 44 cycling routes in the Mohawk Valley, which can be found on the Mohawk Valley Path Through History site

([www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com](http://www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com)).

The routes range in length from under a mile to more than 50 miles, include both off-road, multi-use trails like the ECT and on-road routes, and vary in difficulty. Each route includes a

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*“It was good to ride with and hear different perspectives from other people. The course took me to places I haven’t biked yet...”*

*- B3 Bike-a-Round participant*

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detailed map, downloadable gpx file and cue sheets, and descriptions of points of interest and historical sites along the route. Bike Thru History makes a great amount of information available to cyclists, especially those visiting the Mohawk Valley for the first time; it also represents collaboration and coordination between the local cycling community and county tourism and historic preservations agencies.

The next presenter was Andrew Karas, an Engineer with the City of Utica, and an avid cyclist. Mr. Karas outlined recent steps taken by the City to encourage cycling in the area. Utica passed a Complete Streets law in 2016, and the City followed this up with creation of a long-term paving plan in 2016, and installation of sharrows at various locations and designs for protected bike lanes in 2017.

Mr. Karas updated participants on all of these efforts. He also summarized discussions and planning related to the route of the future ECT in the Utica area, and how the proposed trail routing on the north bank of the Canal may affect the City’s planning.

Finally, PTNY Project Director James Meerdink presented insights and ideas gleaned from other bicycle-friendly communities and cited statistics that substantiate the impact of bicycle tourism on local economies. Photos from the Le P’tit Train du Nord in Quebec and the Katy Trail in Missouri illustrate how trail-side communities have created programs and developed

infrastructure to cater to the bicycling tourist.

In the discussion following the presentations, Roundtable participants pointed out the need for maintenance on local trail sections, improved signage directing trail users to Downtown Utica, and updated signage for loop routes within Utica.



*Roundtable participants represented a diverse group of stakeholders*

Participants also stressed the need for better coordination between communities and organizations interested in improving the cycling network and encouraging use.

*See Appendix A for a more detailed summary of the discussion.*

## **MORNING BIKE-A-ROUND**

The morning after the Roundtable, PTNY and other event organizers joined area residents, business owners, transportation planners, local cycling advocates and local government representatives to explore Utica by bike. As in previous years, looking at the trail and the community from the perspective of a first-time bicycle tourist was an eye-opening experience.



*Bike-a-Round participants discuss trail conditions west of Utica*

The 8-mile ride began and ended at the Aqua Vino parking lot, which is also the location of Zagster bike share station and a public parking area. From this location, cyclists headed west on the trail towards Harbor Lock and a historically difficult railroad crossing. Participants returned along the same route before heading south along Genesee Street to downtown Utica. They made their way through Utica's Varick Street entertainment district, home to F.X. Matt Brewery and the finish of the famous Boilermaker Road Race, and past important destinations such as the Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute.

*Existing wayfinding signage in Utica*



The group navigated a recently-installed pedestrian bridge and traffic roundabout, and rode past critical transportation facilities,

including the CENTRO HUB and Utica Central Station.

They also rode through residential neighborhoods and the historic Bagg's Square district. As the group made their way around, the cyclists referenced checklists found in the *Bicyclists Bring Business* guide.



*Participants discussing the regional cycling network and enjoying lunch after the Bike-a-Round*

Participants indicated strengths of the trail network and suggested improvements at each of the nine designated stops along the way. Generally, participants observed the need for continued work on the all-important Genesee St. connection to the Trail, as well as improved signage and wayfinding in Utica to guide cyclists to important destinations.

## PUBLICITY

The Canal Corporation, City of Utica, Oneida County Tourism, local MPO Herkimer Oneida County Transportation Study, and the Mohawk Valley Cycling Club assisted PTNY in publicizing the event through email alerts, physical mailings, and social media. A hard-copy invite was sent to area elected officials, and select businesses and civic organizations. Invitations were also sent to area state and federal

legislators, and flyers were posted at key locations in the area. A press release was sent to media outlets in the Mohawk Valley and Central NY regions, including local and regional papers, and all the major television stations.

WKTV, the NBC affiliate in Utica, did segments and collected footage from both the Roundtable and Bike-a-Round events. The Bike-a-Round was also mentioned on local radio, which attracted several additional participants to Wednesday's ride.

The event was publicized with an e-alert and an article in the PTNY e-newsletter, as well as posts on [PTNY](#) and [ECT Facebook](#) and Twitter pages, reaching more than 10,000 people.

After the event, summaries were published in PTNY's e-newsletter and in the newsletter for the statewide Canalway Trail system, *Canalway Trail Times*.

## PARTICIPANT SURVEY

PTNY asked attendees from the evening presentation in Utica and the Bike-a-Round participants to provide feedback via an online survey.

11 people submitted responses. All of the respondents who participated in the evening presentation and/or bike-a-round found the events worthwhile and informative.

When asked what Utica and Oneida County needed to do to attract more bicycle tourists, 88% indicated that additional bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks and bike lanes was desirable.

*Survey responses to "What does your community need most to benefit from Canalway Trail tourism?"*

Bike/pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)	8	15.7%
Bike racks	6	11.8%
Benches	2	3.9%
Kiosks	2	3.9%
Community maps in central locations	7	13.7%
Visitor-friendly business hours	2	3.9%
Bicycle friendly business designation	5	9.8%
Welcome center	2	3.9%
Wayfinding signs	7	13.7%
Cooperative advertisements in cycling magazines	2	3.9%
Bicycle tour packages	6	11.8%
Luggage/bike transportation service	2	3.9%

"Community maps in central locations" and "Wayfinding signs" were also felt to be important by respondents. Creation of a "Bike-friendly business designation" and installation of "Bike racks" were also considered important by approximately half of respondents.

*See Appendix B for a full summary of survey responses.*

## OTHER INPUT

Participants on the September 13 Bike-a-Round filled out the Assessment Checklist (How Bicycle-Friendly is Your Canal Community?) from PTNY's *Bicyclists Bring Business Guide*. Several themes emerged from respondent answers and comments.

The first is that Utica and Oneida County are doing some great things already. 80% of respondents said they had a Bicycle Advisory Committee or similar group in their community. Many respondents also noted that there are benches and picnic tables available by the trail.

The assessment asked what it is like for cyclists to enter the community, and most respondents recommended improvements such as making the "Welcome to..." sign at the beginning of the trail more obvious.

All respondents said that it isn't obvious to trail users when they are at the entrance to the community and more should be done to make it seem more welcoming. 75% also agreed that there isn't something that grabs cyclists' attention and encourages them to learn more.

Other respondents stated that they would like to see more secure bike parking and more police presence in trail areas. Several said that there were clear signs and pavement markings to direct cyclists from the community to the Erie Canalway Trail, but many of the paved areas are not well maintained and/or free of debris.



*Poor surface conditions on the ECT west of Utica was a common complaint*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Coordinate local tourism promotion, trail development, and bike/pedestrian advocacy efforts, including addressing current trail maintenance needs as well as participating in planning for new trail sections.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** Improve signage and wayfinding to ensure that cyclists can easily access businesses and attractions from the Erie Canalway Trail, and can get to the trail from downtown and residential areas.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Increase bicycle-friendliness throughout Utica's downtown and residential areas, by adding bicycle-friendly amenities such as bike lanes, cycle-tracks, and covered bicycle parking.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Capitalize on Utica's location on the Erie Canalway Trail and as the gateway to the Mohawk Valley and the Southern Adirondacks by marketing the area to cyclists, and by encouraging local businesses, institutions, and service providers to tailor their offering to cyclists.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** Secure funding to complete recommendations.

*Please see Appendix C for more detail on recommended next steps*



## APPENDIX A

### BICYCLISTS BRING BUSINESS WORKSHOP

### ROUNDTABLE & BIKE-A-ROUND SUMMARIES

#### Roundtable Comments

September 12

1. Local infrastructure

a. Erie Canalway Trail

- i. Utica section of the Erie Canalway Trail has maintenance issues; roots are concerns for many cyclists
- ii. Local perception of Trail area is negative - loitering, vagrancy, etc
- iii. Lighting could be improved on Utica section to address negative perceptions



*Cyclists navigate North Genesee Street*

b. North Genesee Street

- i. “Nightmare” in terms of traffic speed, roadway configuration


2. Local & Regional Planning

- a. Utica does not have a Bike Master Plan, but the City has adopted a Complete Streets policy and plans to incorporate bike infrastructure into upcoming paving projects
- b. Planning to address Genesee Street is in progress (NYSDOT project)
- c. The planned Empire State Trail route will use the existing ECT west of Utica; east of Utica the route will consist of newly constructed off-road trail on the north side of the CanalXX

3. Promotion of Cycling & Trail Tourism

- a. Despite natural beauty and proximity of Adirondacks, Mohawk Valley does not seem to draw same attention for cycling as other areas – though there are well-known cycling loops in the area that can accommodate all abilities
- b. Need for better connections to other regional trails and outdoor recreation groups – Otsego Outdoors, etc.
- c. Path Through History/Bike Thru History Routes and website are a positive step (<https://www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com/bike-thru-history>)

4. Wish List

- a. Better wayfinding, other signage, and kiosks to assist visitors in getting to the trail, and in accessing downtown from the trail
  - b. Marquee trail-related attraction in Utica ala Amsterdam's pedestrian bridge and overlook
  - c. Trail gateways; idea of "Trails to Ales" theme (referencing FX Matt Brewery in Utica)
  - d. Additional consideration for the Erie Canalway Trail in the Regional Economic Development Councils funding awards
  - e. Long-term parking availability; existing sites need to be mapped
5. Next Steps for Utica Cycling Network (from table prompts)
- a. Need for a local bike advocacy group; Utica Bike Rescue is willing to support/participate
  - b. Repaving of Canalway Trail from Utica to Lock 20
  - c. Brand Utica as halfway point along upcoming Empire State Trail
  - d. Secure involvement of advocates in policy decisions
6. New Groups to be Involved in Bike/Ped Advocacy (from table prompt)
- a. Local advocacy group needed
  - b. Chamber of Commerce
  - c. Boilermaker representative
  - d. Downtown Utica Neighborhood Association
7. Biggest Obstacles to Better Cycling Network in Mohawk Valley (from table prompt)
- a. Safety
  - b. Paving & maintenance
  - c. Bike racks needed on buses
  - d. Implement cycling-related parts of City of Utica Master Plan
  - e. De-prioritizing the car
  - f. Secure bike parking in Utica
- 

## Bike-a-Round Observations

### September 13

*Each number corresponds to location on the map located at the end of this section.*

#### 1. RR Crossing

- a. Trail approaching RR crossing needs maintenance
- b. Cyclists must dismount at tracks – any future improvements should feature level railroad crossing

#### 2. Lock 20

- a. Cyclists must dismount to cross the lock
- b. New signage needed

#### 3. Erie Canalway Trail/Aqua Vino trailhead

- a. Gateway and kiosk would be very helpful here in informing trail users of Utica's services, also map of both ECT/EST network and Utica bike routes; also clarification re. parking rules
- b. Should be a sign with warning for curb drop and more signs to get to other side of the trail; should be uniform signage
- c. Graffiti present on signs at this location
- d. Overgrown grass, roots, leaves covering the trail.
- e. Bike share kiosk located here

#### 4. North Genesee Street

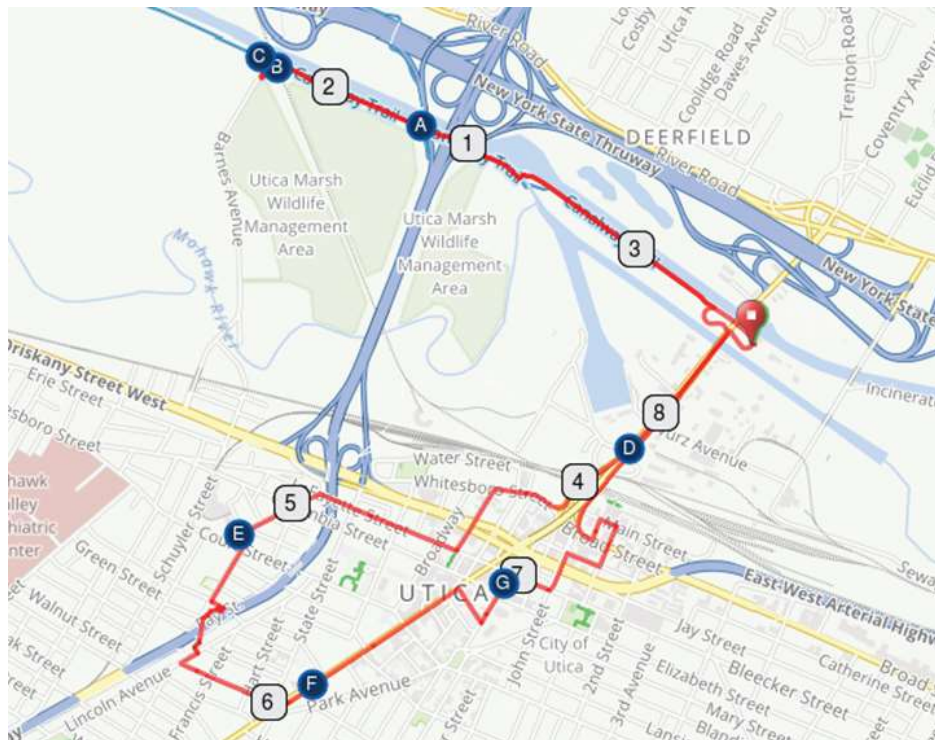
- a. Existing buffer is helpful on bridge; some green paint would help facility to stand out even more
- b. Some will want to bike on sidewalk; signage needed to allow or direct
- c. Signage needed on northbound Genesee – “North to Trail”

#### 5. Varick Street

- a. FX Matt and Boilermaker located in this area; both interested in bike/ped to some degree
- b. New apartments coming soon – Could a Zagster station go here?
- c. Street could use bike racks; City Code should be updated if permit is needed for bike rack installation



*Shared-lane markings on a residential street in Utica*



## APPENDIX B

### BICYCLISTS BRING BUSINESS WORKSHOP

### PARTICIPANT SURVEY

**1. Please enter your zip code:**

13501 – Utica (2)  
 13413 – New Hartford (3)  
 13323 – Clinton (2)  
 13326 – Cooperstown  
 13224 – Syracuse

**2. Please select any affiliation you may have that influenced your decision to attend the event(s):**

Business Owner	2	12.5%
Member/employee of a recreation based organization	1	6.3%
Member/employee of a community organization	2	12.5%
Village/town employee	0	0.0%
County employee	0	0.0%
Municipal Official	0	0.0%
Tourism Official	0	0.0%
Natural, recreational or historic site employee/volunteer	2	12.5%
Outdoor Enthusiast	6	37.5%
Other	3	18.8%

Other responses: “State Employee”, “Sport Cyclist” and “Mobility Manager for a Non-Profit Organization”

### **3. Why are you interested in bicycle tourism?**

1. I am currently involved with the Empire State Trail development.
2. The future of youth and business attractiveness depends on bicycle infrastructure and will bring all kinds of tourists and long term residents to the Utica area
3. As a cyclist, I see the value in promoting all forms of bicycling. If an area has great bicycling tourism, then they need infrastructure that will support it. Also, biking tourism will help to create businesses and jobs that will help to keep younger people in the area and improve the quality of life.
4. We recently launched the website [www.OtsegoOutdoors.org](http://www.OtsegoOutdoors.org) and are trying to stay ahead of the curve on where outdoor recreation is headed for both tourists and locals.
5. I'm interested in non-car modes of transportation. I believe cars ruin the urban space between buildings and is why many American cities are struggling while older, more people-centric cities throughout the world continue to thrive. I believe a focus on bicycle tourism will provide economic incentive to move toward streets they make biking and walking attractive.
6. I spoke at the meeting and said that there is a large population of cyclists that want more challenging rides than the canal trail offers. I have travelled extensively for bicycle tours, and I believe that central NY has some of the best overall cycling around. I believe that the canal can serve as a tie in for the more challenging rides that some riders seek. It should be a partnership with the Parks and Trails commission, business and the tourism departments.
7. Bike tourism provides an opportunity to tell our park story in a different and unique manner.
8. Utica and the Erie Canal provide wonderful biking opportunities that I think can be very important in promoting the area, tourism, health and fitness and overall economic growth too. One thing that I would like to see happen is our local officials getting behind the idea of developing the bike canal trail so that it is in top biking condition. There is so much that can be done like using landscaping and signage to enhance how the trail looks. This bike trail could be used as a gateway to Utica. Rochester is a perfect example of a city that treats the canal and the land that surrounds the canal as prime property. It is beautiful along the canal in Rochester.



9. As the Mobility Manager, I have a unique position because I serve two counties, Herkimer and Oneida. I am able to assist anyone that lives in the community looking for resources or information on all modes of transportation including cycling. Resources are available on a website and paper form.

**4. Did you attend the evening Bicyclists Bring Business Roundtable discussion in Utica on September 12?**

Yes	6	66.7%
No	3	33.3%

**5. Was the Roundtable worthwhile?**

Yes	6	100%
No	0	0.0%

**Why was the Roundtable worthwhile, or not?**

1. I learned new information about the Path Through History and how to research trails within that context. I also heard from bicyclists and business owners about what needs they have regarding trails.
2. It helps motivate others.
3. The data showing the influence bicycle tourism can have on a community definitely convinced me that this is one of the best tourism opportunities we have in our region.
4. Most of the information I was already aware of but it was a good discussion. I am not sure that urban planners are as prepared as I think they should be to push for greater focus on non-cars in the street-scape.



5. It is helpful to know what the plan is. I was disappointed that there was not somebody from the county tourism department there.

**6. Did you attend the Utica Bike-a-Round on the morning of September 13?**

Yes	3	33.3%
No	6	66.7%

**7. Was the Bike-a-Round worthwhile?**

Yes	3	100.0%
No	0	0.0%

**Why was the Bike-a-Round worthwhile?**

1. It was good to ride with, and hear different perspectives from other people. The course took me to places I haven't biked yet and was one of the more aggressive urban rides I've ever completed.
2. It is always good to see other biking opportunities and discuss new trip ideas.

**8. Would you be willing to work with other members of your community or neighboring communities to encourage more Canalway Trail tourists to stop in your community? If so, please input your email address.**

Yes	6	66.7%
No	3	33.3%



Emails:

1. sbheyboer@gmail.com
2. Sonne@dicksonnes.com
3. snkjr81@gmail.com
4. market@otsego2000.org
5. daniel\_umstead@nps.gov
6. nhampel@theparkwaycenter.org

**9. In your opinion, what does your community need most to benefit from Canalway Trail tourism?**

Bike/pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)	8	15.7%
Bike racks	6	11.8%
Benches	2	3.9%
Kiosks	2	3.9%
Community maps in central locations	7	13.7%
Visitor-friendly business hours	2	3.9%
Bicycle friendly business designation	5	9.8%
Welcome center	2	3.9%
Wayfinding signs	7	13.7%
Cooperative advertisements in cycling magazines	2	3.9%
Bicycle tour packages	6	11.8%
Luggage/bike transportation service	2	3.9%

## APPENDIX C

### BICYCLISTS BRING BUSINESS WORKSHOP

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Coordinate local tourism promotion, trail development, and bike/pedestrian advocacy efforts.

It is critical that local and regional stakeholders work together to pursue tourism and economic development goals related to cycling and usage of the Mohawk Valley's trail system. Bicycling and pedestrian improvements related to the local street and sidewalk network, such as installation of bike lanes or pedestrian amenities, serve both visitors and local residents. These should be coordinated with tourism and trail promotion.

<b>Action 1-1:</b> Establish a bicycle/ped advisory committee to advocate for additional cycling facilities, contribute to planning and execution of cycling events, and provide input on bicycle tourism marketing efforts. Committee members may also represent local organizations, businesses and other recreational interests.	Short-term Priority
<b>Action 1-2:</b> Take these recommendations before the Utica City Council and Oneida County Legislature to raise awareness regarding the importance of trail tourism to the local economy and the community benefits that walking and biking infrastructure bring.	Medium-Term Priority
<b>Action 1-3:</b> Involve committee members in the planning processes for local and regional transportation projects with bike/ped and trail implications, including planning and construction of bike lanes in Utica, NYSDOT's improvement to N. Genesee St., and the planning and construction of the Empire State Trail.	Ongoing
<b>Action 1-4:</b> Working with local governments and trail owners including the Canal Corporation and NY State Parks to address surface conditions and maintenance issues on the Marcy to Utica section of trail by repaving/resurfacing.	Medium-Term Priority

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** Improve signage and wayfinding to ensure that cyclists can easily access businesses and attractions from the Erie Canalway Trail, and can get to the trail from downtown and residential areas.

Cyclists coming into or passing through Utica on the Canalway Trail currently have little information about the services and amenities located less than a mile from the Aqua Vino parking area. Enhanced wayfinding signage should direct cyclists from the trail to downtown Utica's businesses and attractions, clearly indicating their location as well as amenities such as public parking, public restrooms and Wi-Fi.

<b>Action 2-1:</b> Improve the connection between the trailhead at Aqua Vino and Downtown Utica by installing additional wayfinding signage and pavement markings.	Short-term Priority
<b>Action 2-2:</b> Install kiosks at Erie Canalway Trail trailheads, and downtown Utica detailing attractions and services available to cyclists, and mapping the regional trail network. Also consider adding signage or information on Utica's services and attractions at the Biker-Hiker-Boater Campsite at Lock 20 in Marcy.	Medium-Term Priority
<b>Action 2-3:</b> Consider installation of pictogram signage with symbols for WiFi, restrooms, visitors center, and other amenities for bicycle tourists on the Erie Canalway Trail west of Utica, and possibly on the ECT road route to the east.	Medium-Term Priority
<b>Action 2-4:</b> Create a wayfinding and signage plan for both on- and off-road cycling facilities in Utica that references Erie Canalway and Empire State Trail Design Guides, as well as standards such as Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and NACTO guide.	Medium-Term Priority

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Increase bicycle-friendliness throughout Utica’s downtown and residential areas.

Adding bicycle-friendly amenities such as bike lanes, cycle-tracks, and covered bicycle parking will ensure that both visitors and local residents can safely and comfortably reach downtown destinations by bicycle. These improvements will also provide an incentive for commuters and customers to ride their bikes downtown, reducing air pollution caused by traffic congestion and reducing the amount of space dedicated to automobile parking.

<b>Action 3-1:</b> Install separated multi-use paths and/or protected cycling lanes on the Broad/Dwyer/Bleeker Street corridor and at other suitable locations throughout the City. Installation of bike facilities should correspond to the paving schedule when possible. Other signage, treatments and pavement markings should also be considered to increase cyclist safety and comfort. [Consult the NACTO guide ( <a href="https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide">https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide</a> ) for examples and standards.]	Short-Term Priority
<b>Action 3-2:</b> Install bicycle racks in business districts and other well-used destinations (The Mohawk Valley Resource Center For Refugees was one such location identified on the ride). Branded bike racks such as those installed in Bagg’s Square aid in neighborhood place-making, and should be considered.	Short-term Priority
<b>Action 3-3:</b> Establish a bicycle infrastructure fund through the Metropolitan Planning Organization or regional economic development agency that allocates funding to pay for bicycle enhancements such as bicycle racks.	Medium-Term Priority
<b>Action 3-4:</b> Encourage businesses to participate in PTNY/NYS Canal Corporation’s Bike Friendly New York business certification program, <a href="http://www.ptny.org/bikefriendly">www.ptny.org/bikefriendly</a> . Also, Utica should consider	Medium-term Priority

working to achieve Bike Friendly Community designation through the League of American Cyclists, <a href="http://bikeleague.org/community">http://bikeleague.org/community</a> .	
<b>Action 3-5:</b> Raise awareness for bicycling by expanding or continuing existing cycling events such as the Mayor's Ride and/or doing new events such as community rides, Ciclovias (temporary bicycle-only streets), "pop-up" bike lane demonstrations, and bicycle rodeos. Participation in Bike to Work week and similar competitions, and offering valet parking for bicycles at major events are other ways to encourage cycling in Utica.	Medium-term Priority

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Capitalize on Utica's location on the Erie Canalway Trail and as the gateway to the Mohawk Valley and the Southern Adirondacks by marketing the area to cyclists, and by encouraging local businesses, institutions, and service providers to tailor their offering to cyclists.

<b>Action 4-1:</b> Bring representatives from Utica and other Mohawk Valley communities, including Rome, together with tourism officials and influential groups such as the Boilermaker Road Race, F.X. Matt Brewery, and the National Park Service (Ft. Stanwix) to consider trail-related events that would attract both visitors and locals. ( <i>Tuesdays on the Towpath</i> on the Erie Canal State Park section of trail is a nearby example of a successful event collaboration.)	Short-term Priority
<b>Action 4-2:</b> Continue to promote Bike Thru History Routes, and to integrate cycling messaging into general promotions undertaken by Oneida County Tourism and others.	Ongoing

<p><b>Action 4-3:</b> Consider installing amenities that cater to bicycle tourists such as Fix-It stations, public showers, secured bike storage, and 24-hour bicycle vending machines (see <a href="#">Bikestock</a>). <a href="#">Some communities</a> (<a href="http://www.canals.ny.gov/boating/marinas.cgi">http://www.canals.ny.gov/boating/marinas.cgi</a>) along the Erie Canalway Trail have these amenities as part of larger centers that serve boaters.</p>	<p>Medium-term Priority</p>
<p><b>Action 4-4:</b> Work with CENTRO to incorporate bike racks on public buses, and bicycle-friendly amenities at the CENTRO HUB and other local and regional transportation facilities.</p>	<p>Medium-term Priority</p>
<p><b>Action 4-4:</b> Work with Amtrak to improve facilities for cyclists at Utica’s Boehlert Transportation Center at Union Station, including inquiring about public use of bike lockers. Also, continue to join statewide partners in advocating for “roll-on” bike service on Amtrak routes, especially those serving the Canal Corridor.</p>	<p>Short-term priority/ Ongoing</p>

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** Secure funding to complete recommendations.

**Action 5-1:** Assign local economic development staff the responsibility for grant writing. Research the following grant programs:

- NYS Canal Corporation:  
<http://www.canals.ny.gov/community/grant.html>
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation:  
<http://nysparks.com/grants/>
- Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor:  
[http://www.eriecanalway.org/get-involved\\_grants-fund.htm](http://www.eriecanalway.org/get-involved_grants-fund.htm)
- Herkimer Oneida Counties Transportation Study:  
<http://www.ocgov.net/oneida/planning/hocts>
- Other NYS agencies offering grants through the CFA process:  
<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>
- New York State Department of Transportation, Transportation Alternatives/Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Programs:  
<https://www.dot.ny.gov/TAP-CMAQ>
- Community foundations
- Corporations
- HMOs and health care providers