2023-24 Trail Count Program

CAPITAL REGION
Transportation
Council

February 2024

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This document was prepared and published by the Capital Region Transportation Council, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a planning area that includes the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga (except for the Town of Moreau and the Village South Glens Falls, which lie within the adjoining MPO region for the Adirondack-Glens Falls Transportation Council) and Schenectady. This report was funded in part through grants from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions of this report do not necessarily state or reflect the official views or policy of the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Contents

Background

The Capital Region Transportation Council has been involved in the collection of trail use data since 1997 when "The Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail & Its Impacts on Adjoining Residential Properties," was released. Since then, the Transportation Council has regularly conducted counts of trail users on the regional trail system. Trail use data has been used in local and regional active transportation planning, economic impacts analysis, to inform grant applications, and to plan ongoing maintenance of trail facilities.

Developing a regional trail and greenway system has been a New Visions "Big Ticket Initiative" or "Key Project" since the early 2000s. The Capital District Trails Plan (2019) identified nearly 200 miles of trails needed to close gaps and create a seamless regional trail system. There have been numerous regional efforts to obtain funding to close major gaps and construct trails that would have a significant regional impact. While much progress has been made, particularly with the completion of the Empire State Trail in 2020, needed connections still remain. As the Transportation Council prepares to update its Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and create a blueprint for spending federal transportation funds on regional priorities, an updated analysis of trail use in the Capital Region is needed in order to identify regional trail network needs.

Figure 1. Regional Trail Network (miles)
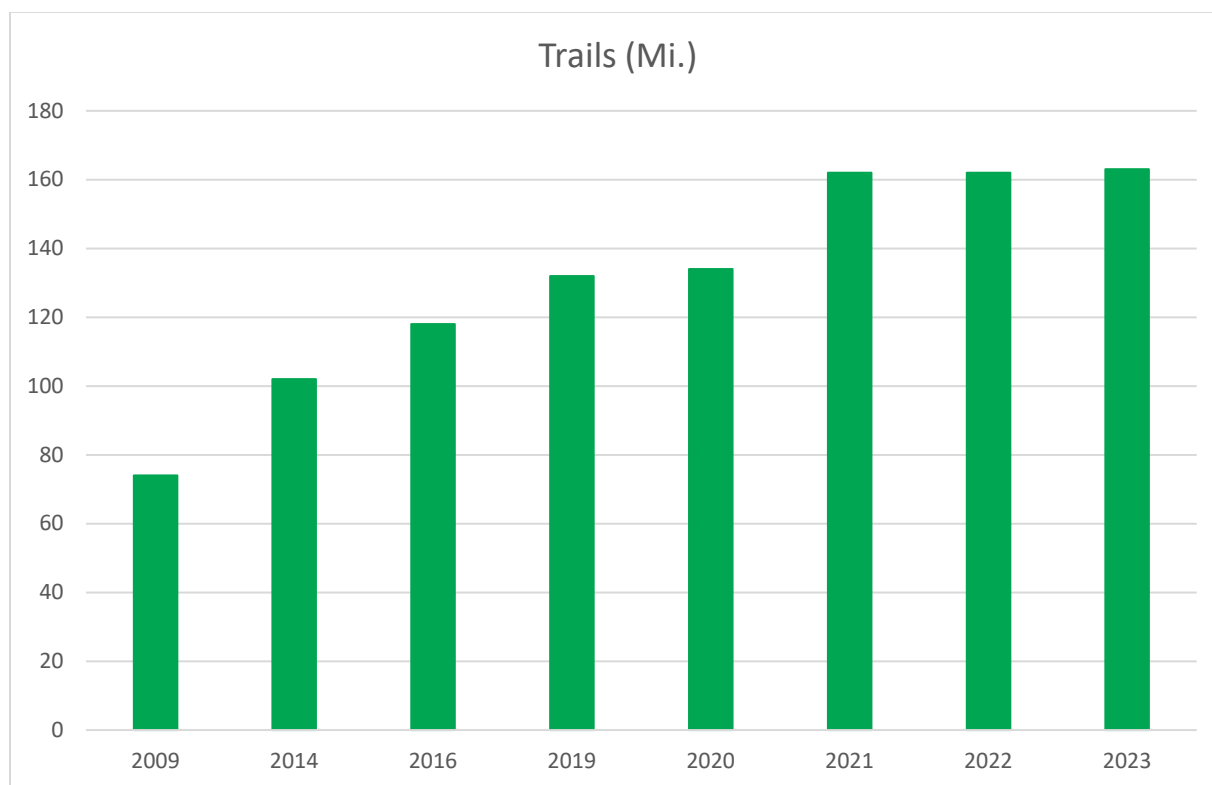
The Transportation Council is launching its 2023 Trail Count Program to justify federal investments in multi-use trails, understand how and where trail use is growing and where connections are needed, and communicate with local stakeholders about the regional trail network's utility as an accessible, low-carbon, alternative transportation network.

Trail user counts will be used to:

- Justify investments
- Gauge demand for new trail connections, parking, and amenities
- Inform local government grant applications
- Plan maintenance

- Understand weather impacts
- Communicate success
- Quantify growth
- Capture daily, weekly, and seasonal trends
- Understand network flows

Below: The Albany Skway, completed in the Fall of 2020, permanently closed an underused I-787 ramp. The approximately half-mile-long elevated multi-use trail, is fully accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Skyway features pedestrian lighting, seating and planters, and connects to the Albany Riverfront where users will find an Amphitheater and views of the Hudson River.

Methodology

The Transportation Council will install three (3) Eco Counter PYRO Boxes for up to three (3) weeks at various locations across the 160+ mile trail network. The PYRO Box uses a passive-infrared sensor to measure pedestrians and cyclists using a trail facility from the heat emitted by the user. It does not differentiate between pedestrians or cyclists but can simultaneously detect two people walking in a slightly staggered formation. The data collected from the PYRO Box is transmitted to Eco-Counter's data analysis software, which can be used to perform data analysis and create trail user reports.

Based on a pilot of the PYRO Box devices, the Transportation Council discovered data reliability issues when the devices were installed on pedestrian and bike facilities adjacent to roadways. This is because undesired cars were counted even though they were greater than fifteen (15) feet away (the advertised range of the PYRO Box). Until further testing and research can be performed, the Transportation Council will limit installations to multi-use paths separated from vehicle traffic.

Upon completion of the count, Transportation Council staff will extrapolate the data collected during the two (2) or three (3) week period to estimate seasonal and annual trail use based on the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project methodology. A trail use profile will be created for the trail owner and/or local municipality in which the trail is located. The New York State Greenway Trails Plan Working Group is currently developing a new protocol and methodology for collecting trail use data and estimating seasonal and annual use. This initiative is meant to provide a consistent model of data collection and coordination among planners, engineers, and government officials working on trail planning, design and construction in New York. Upon validation and testing, the Transportation Council will adopt the new methodology.

Above: Graphic that demonstrates how the PYRO Box works.
Source: Eco Counter

2023 Trail Count Overview

The PYRO Boxes were installed at eight(8) locations throughout the Capital Region's trail network between June - September of 2023. Counts were conducted by request and as part of ongoing transportation planning initiatives. A counter was removed earlier than planned on the Edison Street Pedestrian Bridge due to low, detected use and at Goldfoot Road on the Zim Smith Trail in Round Lake due to equipment failure.

	Trail / Facility	Facility Type	Days Installed	Weekday Average	Weekend Average	Monthly Average	Est. Annual Visits
1	Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail - Grove St.	Multi-use trail	28	441	464	16,085	**193,015**
2	Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail - Hudson Ave.	Multi-use trail	26	678	964	29,054	**348,652**
3	Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail - S. Pearl St.	Multi-use trail	20	203	416	7,053	**84,633**
4	Edison Ave Pedestrian Bridge	Pedestrian Bridge	12	2	5	40	**474**
5	Albany Skyway	Pedestrian Bridge	21	179	115	16,815	**201,775**
6	Zim Smith Trail - Mechanicville	Multi-use trail	30	168	185	4,997	**59,964**
7	Zim Smith Trail - Round Lake	Multi-use trail	12	384	414	11,364	**136,371**
8	South End Connector Trail - Vine St.	Multi-use trail	30	155	209	5,812	**71,173**

*stopped transmitting data after 1:00 pm on September 1, 2023

Trail and Pedestrian Facility Counts in 2023

CAPITAL REGION
Transportation Council

Legend

- ● Albany Skyway
- ○ Edison Ave. Pedestrian Bridge
- ── ● Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail
- ── ● South End Connector Trail
- ── ● Zim Smith Trail
- ☐ MPO Boundary
- ☐ Municipal Boundaries

Data Source: Capital Region Transportation Council

Round Lake Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 136,371

Mechanicville Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 59,964

Edison Ave. Pedestrian Bridge
Estimated Annual Visits: 474

Albany Skyway
Estimated Annual Visits: 201,775

Grove St. Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 193,015

Vine St. Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 71,173

Hudson Ave. Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 348,652

S. Pearl St. Trailhead
Estimated Annual Visits: 84,633

VERMONT

NEW YORK
MASSACHUSETTS

N

0   4   8   16 Miles

February 2024

Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS

Above: The extension of the Zim Smith Trail east to Mechanicville was completed in 2020. The extension included the construction of 2 new parking lots – at the Coons Crossing and Mechanicville trailheads – and a bathroom. Part of the extension in Mechanicville was constructed between a golf course and a railyard, requiring extensive fencing and landscaping to protect trail users.

Trail Profiles

The data and information on the following pages summarize trail use recorded at each of the count sites in 2023. The eight (8) count sites were located across five (5) trail facilities. Each profile includes estimated annual, seasonal, monthly, and weekly use which was calculated using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project extrapolation criteria. The profiles also include a brief description of the facility and location.

A number of factors influence data collection, including weather, nearby construction, and events. Wildfires in Canada impacted air quality in the Capital Region in June and July and prompted public health advisories that encouraged people to stay indoors and avoid outdoor recreation/exercise. In addition to multiple air quality advisory days, July 2023 was the hottest and wettest month on record. Ongoing construction on the South End Bikeway (Phase II Connector Improvements) and Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail (replacement of the trail bridge at Route 85/New Scotland Road) may have also effected trail use.

Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail

The Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail-Trail, referred to as "The Rail Trail," is a former D&H rail corridor that stretches nine (9) miles from the City of Albany to the Village of Voorheesville. Counts were conducted at three (3) trailheads between Albany and Voorheesville.

	Grove Street (2023)	Hudson Ave (2023)	S Pearl St. (2023)
Estimated Annual Usage	**193,015**	**348,652**	**84,633**
Weekly Usage	**5,404**	**10,235**	**2,675**
Estimated Seasonal Usage			
Winter	**17,371**	**31,379**	**7,617**
Spring	**79,136**	**142,947**	**34,700**
Summer	**52,114**	**94,136**	**22,851**
Fall	**44,393**	**80,190**	**19,466**
Average weekday	**441**	**678**	**203**
Average weekend	**464**	**964**	**416**
Maximum weekday	**Tuesday (777)**	**Wednesday (1,239)**	**Wednesday (333)**
Maximum weekend	**Sunday (778)**	**Sunday (1,374)**	**Sunday (628)**
Estimated Monthly Usage			
January	**5,790**	**10,460**	**2,539**
February	**5,790**	**10,460**	**2,539**
March	**13,511**	**24,406**	**5,924**
April	**21,232**	**38,352**	**9,310**
May	**21,232**	**38,352**	**9,310**
June	**23,162**	**41,838**	**10,156**
July	**25,092**	**45,325**	**11,002**
August	**27,022**	**48,811**	**11,849**
September	**21,232**	**38,352**	**9,310**
October	**11,581**	**20,919**	**5,078**
November	**11,581**	**20,919**	**5,078**
December	**5,790**	**10,460**	**2,539**

Trail user data was collected on the Rail-Trail in 2016 and 2022, too. A comparison of the counts shows increases in use at all count locations.

Helderberg-Hudson Rail-Trail

Grove Street, Voorheesville

June 20 – July 11, 2023
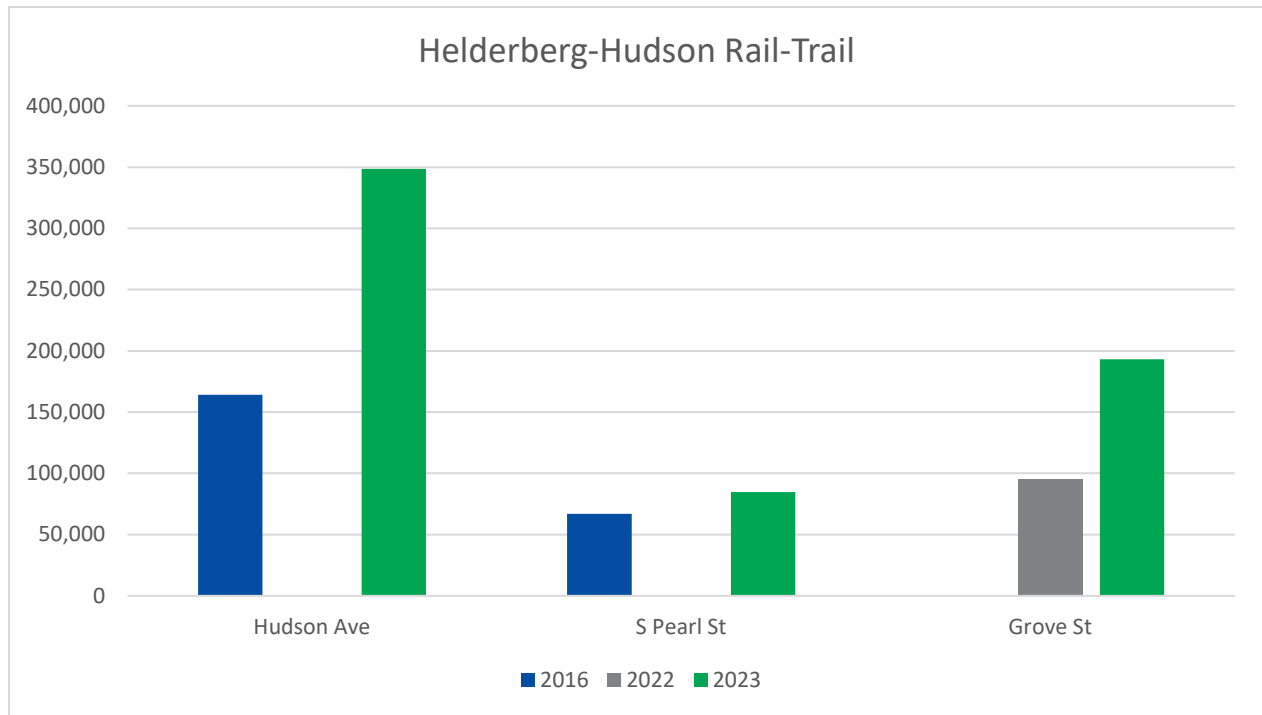
Daily Trail Use
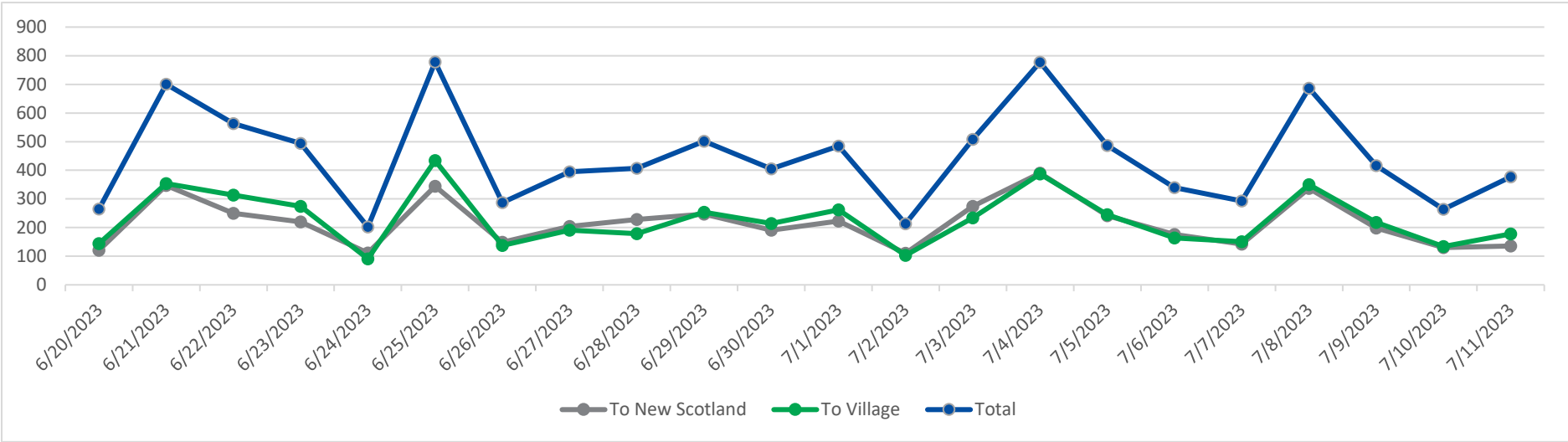
Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

	6/20/2023	6/21/2023	6/22/2023	6/23/2023	6/24/2023	6/25/2023	6/26/2023	6/27/2023	6/28/2023	6/29/2023	6/30/2023	7/1/2023	7/2/2023	7/3/2023	7/4/2023	7/5/2023	7/6/2023	7/7/2023	7/8/2023	7/9/2023	7/10/2023	7/11/2023
0:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
1:00		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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3:00		0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4:00		0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
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11:00		51	46	53	2	91	27	14	9	44	44	53	5	47	108	52	20	27	70	61	18	51
12:00		31	44	38	4	88	23	3	12	34	20	33	18	66	113	43	17	0	54	59	10	62
13:00		46	40	28	1	86	19	2	9	45	21	23	12	62	94	36	13	2	34	36	13	23
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22:00	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	
23:00	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Hudson Avenue, Bethlehem

July 12 – August 6, 2023

Daily Trail Use

Legend: To Voorheesville — To Albany — Total
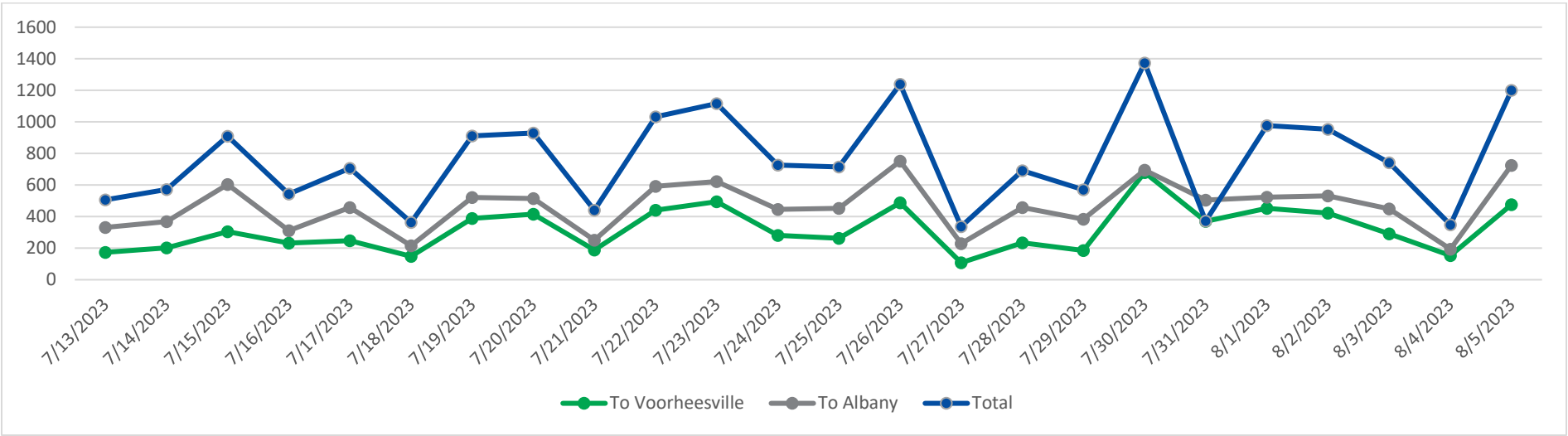
Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

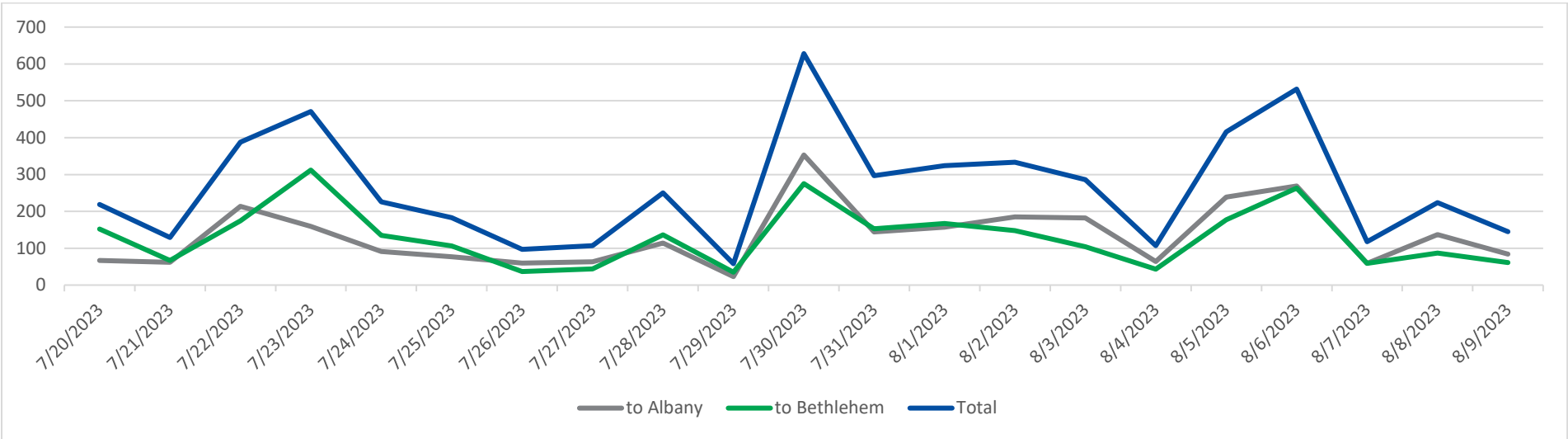|	7/12/2023	7/13/2023	7/14/2023	7/15/2023	7/16/2023	7/17/2023	7/18/2023	7/19/2023	7/20/2023	7/21/2023	7/22/2023	7/23/2023	7/24/2023	7/25/2023	7/26/2023	7/27/2023	7/28/2023	7/29/2023	7/30/2023	7/31/2023	8/1/2023	8/2/2023	8/3/2023	8/4/2023	8/5/2023	8/6/2023
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July 20 – August 9, 2023

Daily Trail Use

Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

	7/20/2023	7/21/2023	7/22/2023	7/23/2023	7/24/2023	7/25/2023	7/26/2023	7/27/2023	7/28/2023	7/29/2023	7/30/2023	7/31/2023	8/1/2023	8/2/2023	8/3/2023	8/4/2023	8/5/2023	8/6/2023	8/7/2023	8/8/2023	8/9/2023
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4:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	0	0	4	0	0	0	4	0	0
5:00		0	1	1	5	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
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8:00		6	37	35	28	20	11	3	17	2	44	7	15	9	15	9	45	36	0	9	16
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23:00	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	

Edison Avenue Pedestrian Bridge, Schenectady

June 29 – July 11, 2023

The Edison Avenue bridge connects Erie Boulevard and the sidewalk on the General Electric campus but does not directly connect to any regional trail facilities.

Based on the data collected, this facility gets very little use by bicyclists and pedestrians. Transportation Council staff observed litter and deteriorating conditions on the bridge which indicate that it may attract illegal or undesirable behavior and activities. The PYRO box was removed before the full counting period ended due to the low numbers of users recorded.

| Estimated Annual Activity		474
Estimated Weekly Activity		14
Estimated Daily Activity		2
Estimated Seasonal Usage		
	Winter	76
	Spring	161
	Summer	128
	Fall	109
Average weekday		2
Average weekend		5
Maximum weekday		**Wednesday (7)**
Maximum weekend		**Sunday (18)**
Estimated Monthly Activity		62
	January	14
	February	14
	March	33
	April	52
	May	52
	June	57
	July	62
	August	66
	September	52
	October	28
	November	28
	December	14

Albany Skyway

June 29 – July 20, 2023

The Albany Skyway is an important piece of the regional trail network and provides opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists to access the riverfront and connect to the Empire State Trail, South End Bikeway, and Albany County Rail-Trail.

Estimated Annual Activity		201,775
Estimated Weekly Activity		5,923
Estimated Daily Activity		770
Estimated Seasonal Usage		
	Winter	32,284
	Spring	68,604
	Summer	76,675
	Fall	24,213
Average weekday		175
Average weekend		125
Maximum weekday		Wednesday (350)
Maximum weekend		Saturday (172)
Estimated Monthly Activity (July)		26,231
	January	6,053
	February	6,053
	March	14,124
	April	22,195
	May	22,195
	June	24,213
	July	26,231
	August	28,249
	September	22,195
	October	12,107
	November	12,107
	December	6,053

Daily Trail Use

Legend: to waterfront — to downtown — Both directions
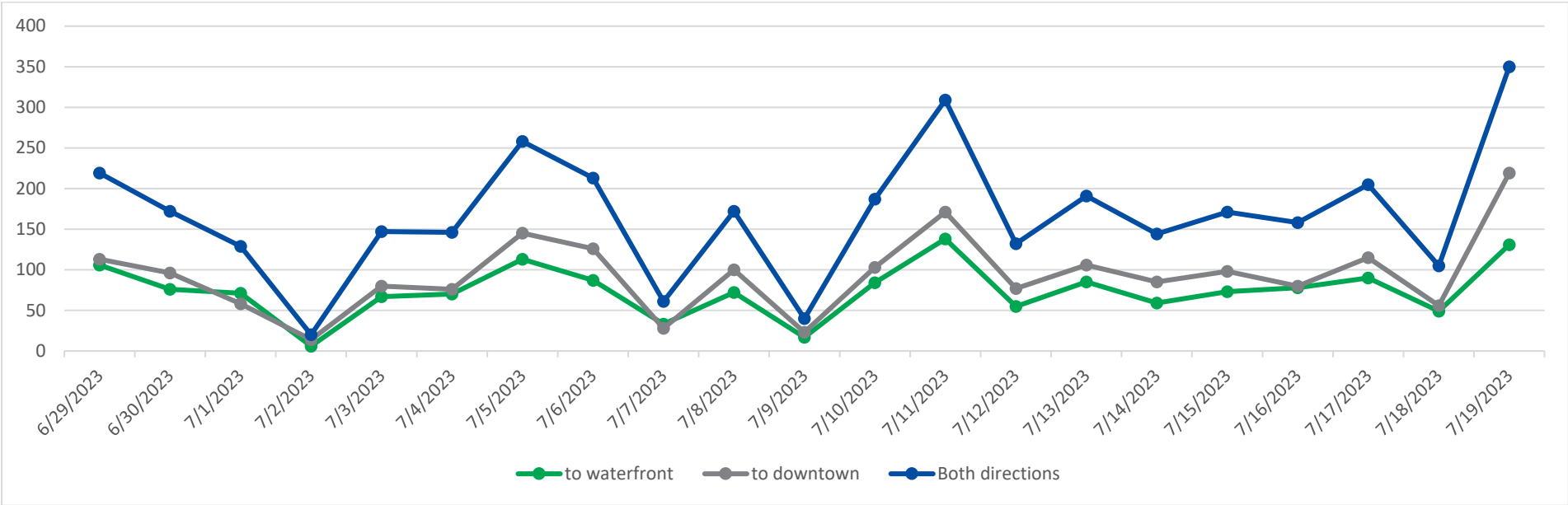
Heatmap: Skyway Use by the Hour

|	6/29/2023	6/30/2023	7/1/2023	7/2/2023	7/3/2023	7/4/2023	7/5/2023	7/6/2023	7/7/2023	7/8/2023	7/9/2023	7/10/2023	7/11/2023	7/12/2023	7/13/2023	7/14/2023	7/15/2023	7/16/2023	7/17/2023	7/18/2023	7/19/2023	7/20/2023
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1:00		0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	7	0	1
2:00		0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
3:00		0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
5:00		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
6:00		3	2	0	0	3	5	3	3	3	1	0	20	4	3	2	2	0	3	6	7	7
7:00		5	3	0	10	5	2	1	4	4	5	1	12	4	9	5	6	1	6	5	10	9
8:00		9	1	1	1	12	5	1	7	7	2	5	8	9	3	3	17	0	6	1	7	
9:00		8	6	0	1	7	2	3	13	13	4	6	14	5	3	3	6	2	5	4	16	
10:00		10	4	0	11	11	11	4	3	3	4	2	17	3	3	5	14	5	5	3	7	
11:00		6	1	0	8	9	5	4	10	10	6	8	12	2	16	11	2	12	12	5	9	
12:00	47	21	0	0	18	35	13	5	10	10	4	45	76	28	33	29	11	18	41	20	63	
13:00	46	15	5	0	15	14	7	3	3	3	3	11	26	8	14	13	10	5	10	8	22	
14:00	11	5	6	4	4	10	9	8	19	19	3	9	8	2	11	9	8	6	6	6	7	
15:00	12	8	5	3	22	7	10	2	10	10	0	5	12	7	9	11	18	9	7	3	9	
16:00	13	9	10	2	16	15	8	2	15	15	0	7	20	6	15	13	13	11	6	10	22	
17:00	22	16	9	0	10	16	32	3	14	14	0	34	15	13	28	14	11	12	10	9	28	
18:00	31	16	11	0	6	12	19	1	15	15	0	24	11	8	24	8	23	4	30	4	86	
19:00	22	13	17	2	2	23	18	8	12	12	1	20	26	11	13	8	7	14	23	1	18	
20:00	3	11	17	2	10	32	49	0	24	24	4	4	19	13	0	6	17	11	17	3	17	
21:00	7	11	8	0	3	32	8	8	6	6	1	5	10	2	2	0	3	43	10	1	14	
22:00	3	3	7	0	6	8	5	2	3	3	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	7	3	7	
23:00	2	2	1	0	4	7	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	

Zim Smith Trail

The Zim Smith Trail is a former D&H rail corridor that stretches eleven and a half (11.5) miles from Ballston Spa to Mechanicville.

|	Mechanicville	Round Lake
Estimated Annual Usage	**59,964**	**136,371**
Weekly Usage	**1,896**	**3,500**
Estimated Seasonal Usage		
Winter	**5,397**	**12,273**
Spring	**17,390**	**39,548**
Summer	**16,190**	**36,820**
Fall	**13,792**	**31,365**
Average weekday	**168**	**0**
Average weekend	**185**	**0**
Maximum weekday	**405**	**405**
Maximum weekend	**276**	**276**
Estimated Monthly Usage		
January	**1,799**	**4,091**
February	**1,799**	**4,091**
March	**4,197**	**9,546**
April	**6,596**	**15,001**
May	**6,596**	**15,001**
June	**7,196**	**16,365**
July	**7,795**	**17,728**
August	**8,395**	**19,092**
September	**6,596**	**15,001**
October	**3,598**	**8,182**
November	**3,598**	**8,182**
December	**1,799**	**4,091**
Monthly Average	**4,997**	**11,364**

Trail user data was collected on the Zim Smith Trail in 2006, 2016, and 2020 too. A comparison of the counts shows a significant increase in use at Goldfoot Road in 2020. The Zim Smith Trail extension from Coons Crossing to Zim Smith Trail East trailhead in Mechanicville was completed in 2020, increasing access to the trail, which could explain part of the increase. In March 2020, New York State on Pause was implemented and public health regulations and guidance led to a dramatic shift in work-from-home and reduced travel, making local trails attractive places to visit and recreate. This trend was observed across the region and elsewhere.
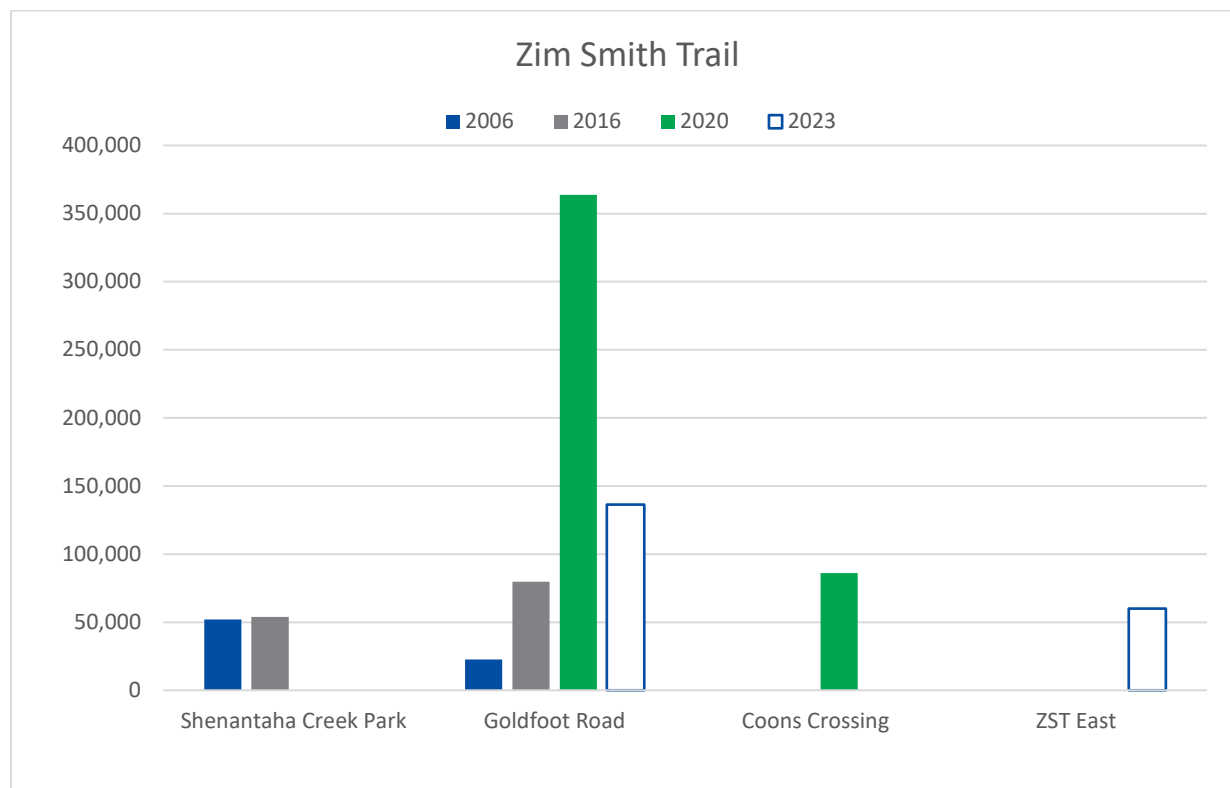
Zim Smith Trail

Zim Smith Trail East Trailhead, Mechanicville

August 6 – 19, 2023

Daily Trail Use
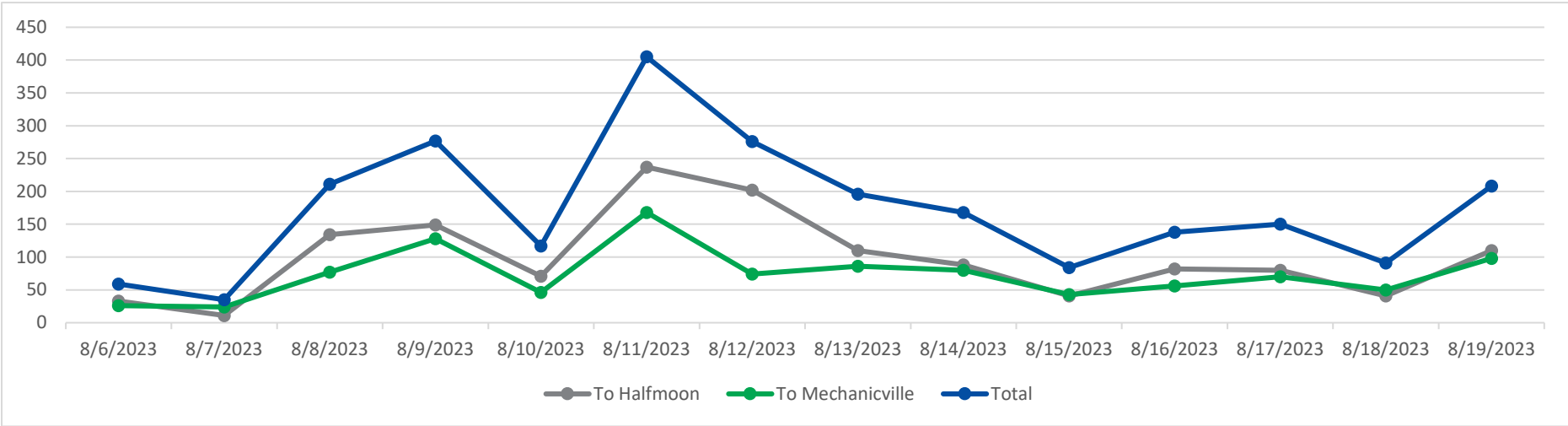
Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

|	8/6/2023	8/7/2023	8/8/2023	8/9/2023	8/10/2023	8/11/2023	8/12/2023	8/13/2023	8/14/2023	8/15/2023	8/16/2023	8/17/2023	8/18/2023	8/19/2023
0:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
1:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
4:00		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5:00		0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
6:00		0	3	6	6	9	5	5	7	0	4	2	0	5
7:00		0	14	8	10	19	14	11	6	3	8	16	1	3
8:00		6	6	12	26	19	9	16	8	6	14	13	1	21
9:00		0	7	17	18	35	24	15	6	4	8	14	6	18
10:00		0	15	12	16	26	24	24	8	10	14	6	3	25
11:00		2	3	61	5	72	35	24	5	2	10	12	8	26
12:00		4	5	46	6	87	39	8	18	12	12	2	10	26
13:00		0	17	18	6	22	20	4	12	9	7	2	14	15
14:00		0	20	7	0	36	52	6	8	5	3	23	7	18
15:00	15	3	63	17	8	23	13	18	14	6	3	16	12	16
16:00	13	5	22	9	1	26	10	16	13	8	11	10	11	9
17:00	11	0	9	16	5	1	13	19	11	6	8	8	6	13
18:00	10	9	10	25	9	20	11	8	23	4	10	11	10	5
19:00	9	6	14	17	0	6	4	17	17	9	23	11	2	4
20:00	1	0	3	3	0	0	2	3	5	0	0	2	0	4
21:00	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	1	3	0	2	1	0	0
22:00	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
23:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

August 24 – September 1, 2023

Daily Trail Use
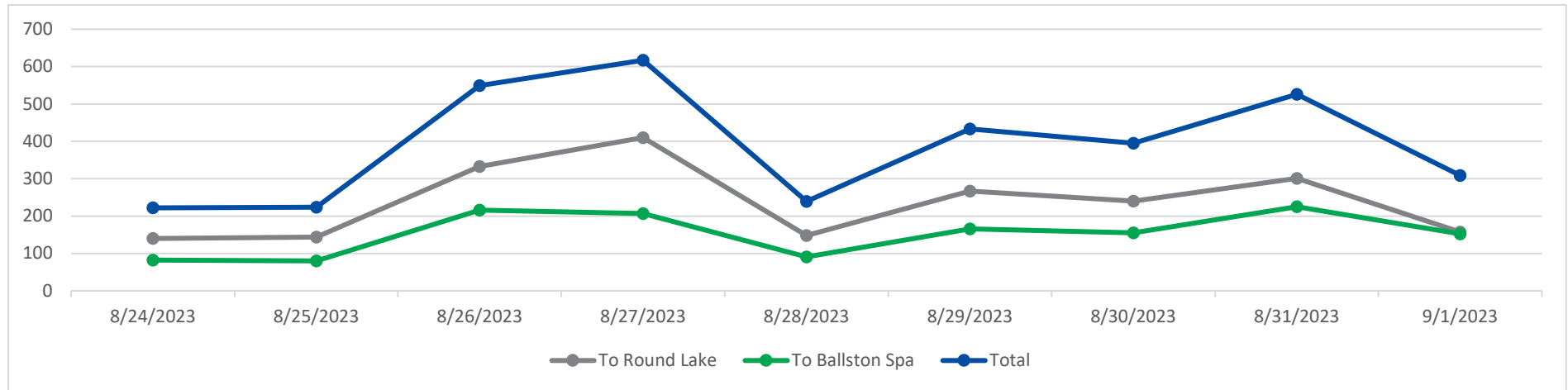
Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

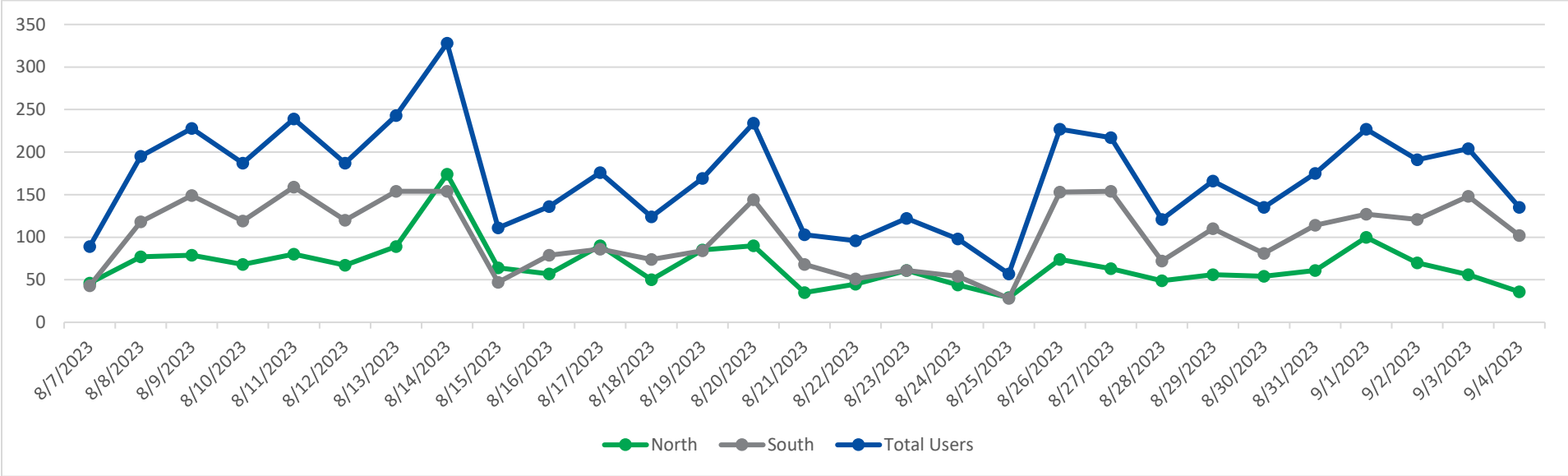|	8/24/2023	8/25/2023	8/26/2023	8/27/2023	8/28/2023	8/29/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023	9/1/2023
0:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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3:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5:00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
6:00		2	7	7	7	3	0	4	5
7:00		16	18	10	13	15	0	20	12
8:00		6	46	39	39	30	20	30	32
9:00	31	19	79	40	30	36	37	48	35
10:00	34	26	95	58	36	19	19	44	57
11:00	37	16	76	70	44	42	20	51	60
12:00	27	18	50	63	26	53	34	54	58
13:00	20	26	45	77	18	41	40	46	47
14:00	18	18	40	74	11	23	61	52	
15:00	14	29	38	56	0	22	44	44	
16:00	9	18	18	40	0	40	42	30	
17:00	18	9	10	33	0	42	30	46	
18:00	14	13	14	27	3	44	34	49	
19:00	0	4	13	20	12	20	11	8	
20:00	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	0	
21:00	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	
22:00	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
23:00	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	

South End Bikeway/Connector

August 7 – September 4, 2024

The South End Connector Trail follows a route under the I-787 underpass to create a 1.5-mile paved path that connects the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail to the Empire State Trail (a/k/a Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail).

	S. End Bikeway
Estimated Annual Usage	**71,173**
Weekly Usage	**2,250**
Estimated Season Usage	
Winter	**6,406**
Spring	**28,469**
Summer	**18,505**
Fall	**16,370**
Average weekday	**155**
Average weekend	**209**
Maximum weekday	**Monday (328)**
Maximum weekend	**Sunday (243)**
Estimated Monthly Usage	
January	**2,135**
February	**2,135**
March	**4,982**
April	**7,829**
May	**7,829**
June	**7,829**
July	**8,541**
August	**9,964**
September	**7,829**
October	**4,270**
November	**4,270**
December	**2,135**
Monthly Average	**5,812**

Daily Trail Use

Heatmap: Trail Use by the Hour

	8/6/2023	8/7/2023	8/8/2023	8/9/2023	8/10/2023	8/11/2023	8/12/2023	8/13/2023	8/14/2023	8/15/2023	8/16/2023	8/17/2023	8/18/2023	8/19/2023	8/20/2023	8/21/2023	8/22/2023	8/23/2023	8/24/2023	8/25/2023	8/26/2023	8/27/2023	8/28/2023	8/29/2023	8/30/2023	8/31/2023	9/1/2023	9/2/2023	9/3/2023	9/4/2023	9/5/2023
0:00		0	4	2	0	2	1	2	0	2	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	6	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
1:00		0	2	3	1	2	0	5	1	4	0	1	2	1	6	3	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	1	0
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3:00		2	0	3	9	4	1	1	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	0	0	7	2	0	4	4	0	5	0	0	2	1
4:00		0	1	1	1	4	0	1	2	3	2	0	4	2	0	1	1	1	0	2	5	6	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
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7:00		6	9	18	13	15	9	6	33	2	4	3	2	2	6	4	6	2	20	2	16	8	8	9	0	8	5	6	11	7	7
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19:00	7	5	11	11	3	5	9	4	5	3	6	6	7	4	2	2	11	17	13	1	9	6	1	14	6	9	15	0	7	1	
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21:00	0	3	1	1	4	3	1	2	5	3	6	3	3	5	4	0	1	2	0	1	1	3	8	1	4	0	0	0	3	1	
22:00	3	2	5	2	1	1	0	4	1	3	3	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	1	0	40	0	1	0	
23:00	0	5	4	3	9	7	3	0	1	2	2	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	8	1	0	1	1	3	4	2	2	0	1	4

Capital District Trails

The Capital Region has 162 miles of paved, multi-use trails connecting all four counties included in the MPO area. The region is at the nexus of the 750-mile Empire State Trail system that runs from New York City north through the Hudson and Champlain Valleys to Canada, and east/west from Buffalo to Albany following the Erie Canal. Major pieces of this system include the 36-mile Albany-Hudson Electric Trail from the City of Rensselaer to the City of Hudson; the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, the 360-mile Erie Canalway Trail that links communities along the old Erie Canal from Buffalo to Albany; and the 62-mile Champlain Canalway Trail that extends from Waterford to Whitehall. Other major trails in the region are the 11.5-mile Zim Smith Trail which currently stretches from Mechanicville to Ballston Spa and Albany County's 9-mile Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail that follows the former Delaware and Hudson rail corridor from the City of Albany to Voorheesville.

The Capital District Trails Plan proposed an additional 200 miles of trails to create a seamless regional network. It also created a cohesive branding scheme to promote the network as a regional system that connects the region's cities and towns and provides a link to communities outside of the MPO area but part of the Greater Capital Region, like the Cities of Hudson and Glens Falls.

Branding for the regional trail system developed as part of the Capital District Trails Plan (2019).

While the trail system provides a separate, safe, and dedicated space to walk, bike, or roll for local transportation and recreation, it also attracts business and tourism to the region each year. With over two (2) million trail users in the region each year, trails generate millions in dollars of sales tax and property tax revenue in the region. An estimate using 2015 median tax rates suggested that the trail system generates mid-range $6.6 million in just annual local taxes to counties, cities, villages, and school districts. Economic opportunities created by the trails, including retail and commercial businesses, also generate sales tax revenues which help fund critical infrastructure and services, like trail maintenance and amenities, in cities, towns, and villages.

As the regional trail system expands, the Transportation Counsil monitors projects that extend and enhance the network. A summary of trail mileage and location can be found on the following pages. More details on regional trail planning can be found on the Transportation Council's website a https://www.capitalmpo.org/what-we-do/regional-trail-planning and an interactive regional trail map can be found at https://www.capitalmpo.org/maps/council-maps.

The table below shows the distribution of trail mileage throughout the MPO area, by County. Saratoga County has the greatest percentage of trail miles in the region according to data collected by the Transportation Council. The mileage only includes paved, multi-use trails.
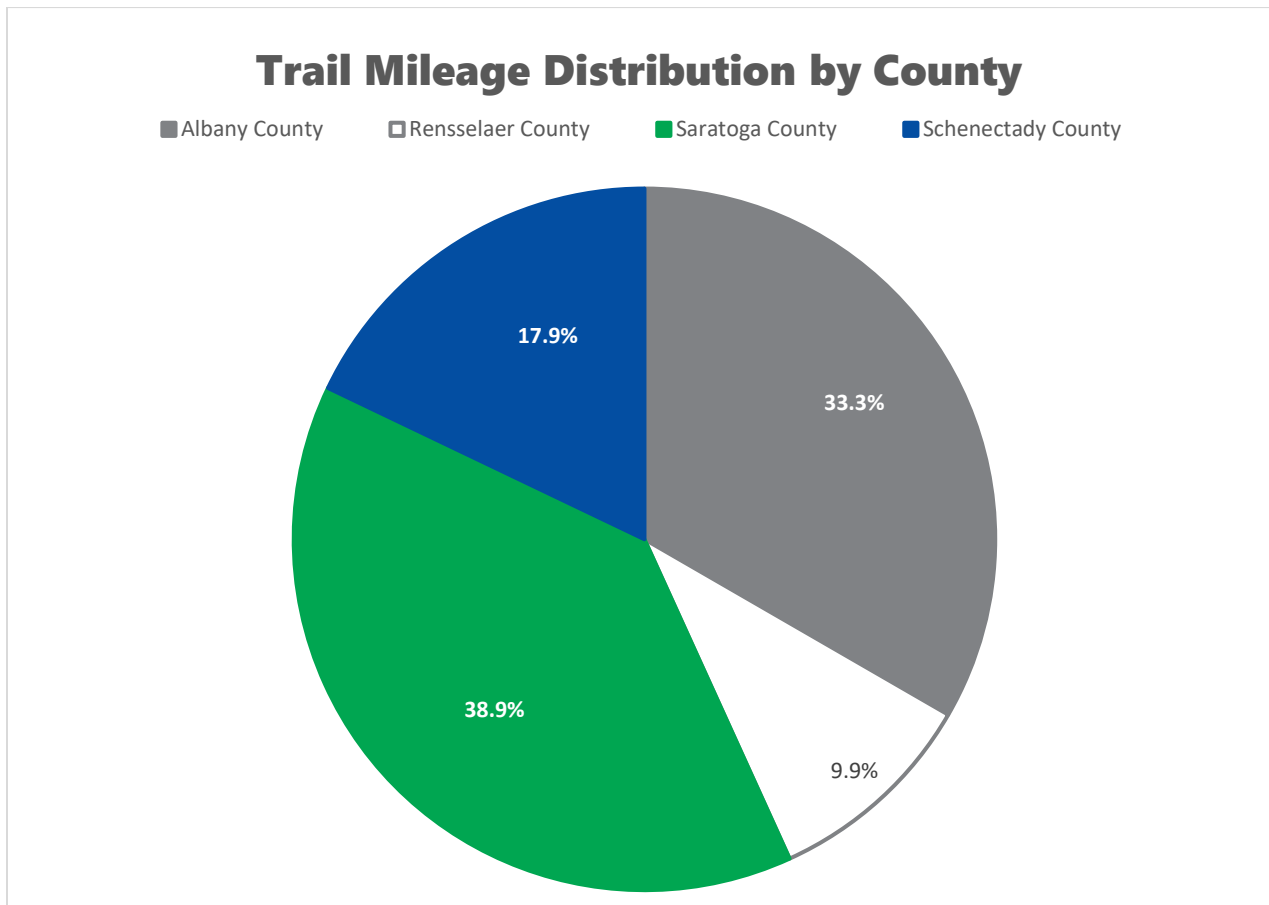
Trail Mileage Distribution by County

■ Albany County □ Rensselaer County ■ Saratoga County ■ Schenectady County

- 33.3% — Albany County
- 9.9% — Rensselaer County
- 38.9% — Saratoga County
- 17.9% — Schenectady County

Trail mileage includes paved, multi-use trails
Source: Capital Region Transportation Council

The table below shows trail mileage by municipality, based on paved, multi-use trail data collected by the Transportation Council. Trail mile ranges from 0.04 miles in the Town of Princetown in Rensselaer County to 21.47 miles in Clifton Park in Saratoga County. Thirty-nine (39) municipalities have no multi-use trails within their jurisdiction.
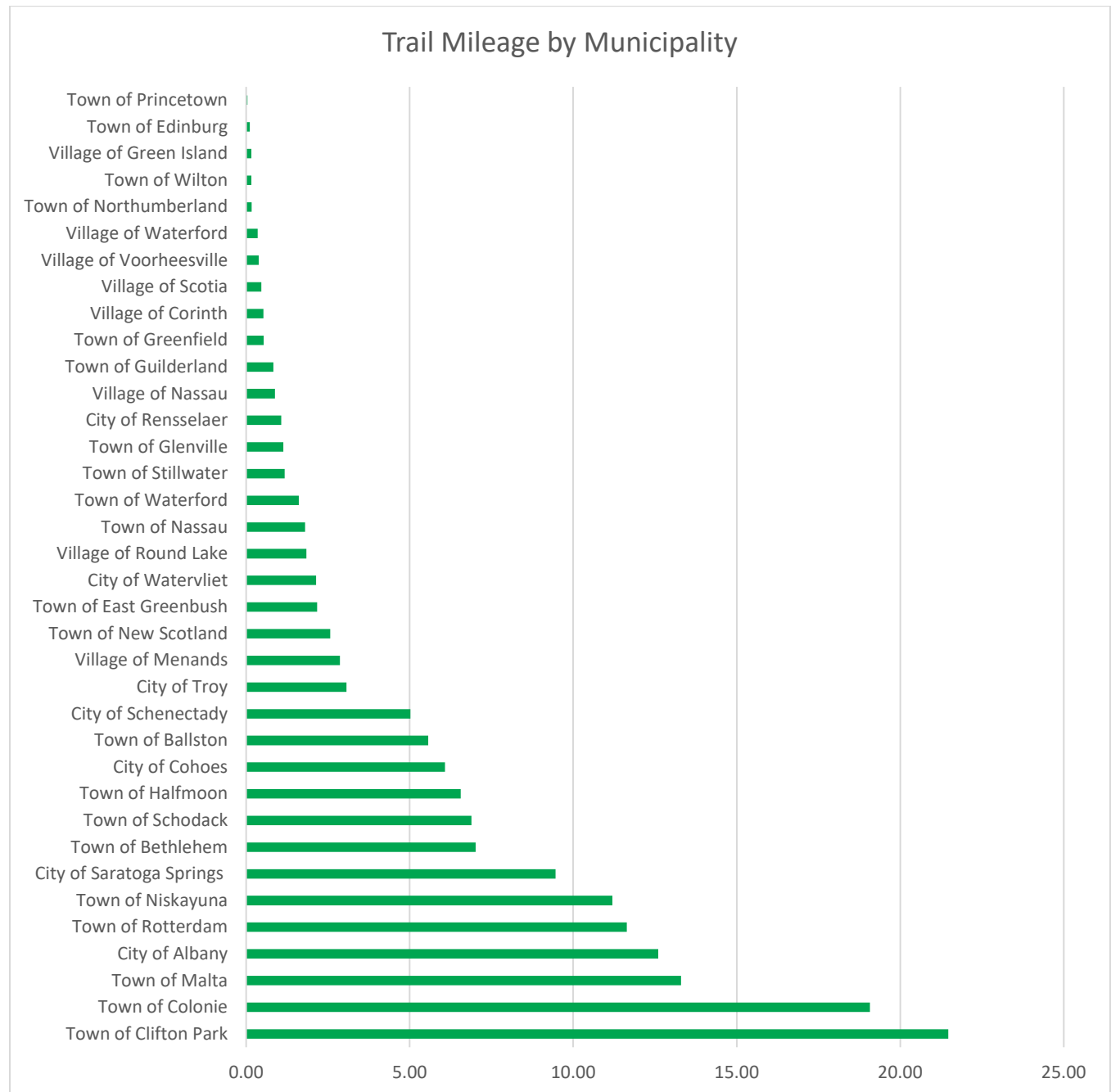
Trail Mileage by Municipality

Trail mileage includes paved, multi-use trails
Source: Capital Region Transportation Council

Trail Planning Resources

A range of resources are available to assist communities with trail planning, building, and maintenance. To request a trail count, email info@capitalmpo.org.

Transportation Council Trail Planning Products

- Capital District Trails Plan (2019)
- Trail Management Best Practices (2019)
- Capital Trails Marketing Strategy (2019)
- Capital Trails Logo & Branding Guidelines (2019)
- Capital District Trail User Counts (2016)
- Regional Trail Perspectives (2016)
- Online Trail Map

State Agency & Regional Stakeholder Products

- Empire State Trail Design Guide (2017)
- Empire State Trail User Projections (2018)
- Empire State Trail Plan (2018)
- Empire State Trail Inventory of Existing Trail Sections (2020)
- Empire State Trail Final report (2021)
- Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail 2022 Trail Visitation Report
- Who's on the Trail: Erie Canalway Trail (2023)
- New York State Department of Transportation On-Road Routes

Below: CDPHP Cycle! users bike on the half-mile Railroad Run trail in Saratoga Springs that connects the West Side neighborhood to the Saratoga Regional YMCA and Saratoga State Park.

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