

Project Description

The vision for Schuylerville is to develop a distinctive set of recreational and interpretive experiences around the historic Old Champlain Canal (OCC) between the Fish Creek Pedestrian Bridge and the Dix Bridge - a span of approximately 7,380 feet (1.4 miles). This linear park is flanked by the following capstone project areas: Fort Hardy Park with the new Canal Region Gateway Visitor Center in the south, and Lock 5 Island/Hudson Crossing Park with the restored Dix Bridge in the north. The western boundary is Canal Street and the eastern boundary is the Hudson River. With the OCC serving as the trail spine, the village’s identity as “Old Saratoga on the Hudson” can be restored by connecting these areas by land and water with the Towpath and Canal. This will result in a unique and significant destination for visitors.

Connecting these areas by land and water with the Towpath and OCC serving as the trail spine, will restore the village’s identity as “Old Saratoga on the Hudson”, resulting in a unique and significant destination for visitors.

The vision to open the Old Champlain Canal for recreation has been a consistent recommendation in local and regional planning initiatives for nearly 25 years. The two main initiatives that set the tone and tenor for this master plan are *The Stewardship Plan (2009)* and the *Champlain Canalway Trail Action Plan (2011)*. *The Stewardship Plan* set forth a framework of strategies to implement a unified and sustainable economic development vision for the 35-mile linear corridor on the Hudson River from Waterford to Fort Edward. Its goal is to establish a world class destination for national and international visitors. *The Champlain Canalway Trail Action Plan* suggested drawing heritage and recreational travelers to the corridor through the establishment of trails, linear parks, bike routes and water trails that connect assets along the corridor.

Three initiatives that have the potential to create the synergy needed to cause real economic development in the Schuylerville community are the forward-thinking leadership of the Town of Saratoga Supervisor and Village of Schuylerville Mayor and Village Board, the renewed attention from the Saratoga County Chamber to make it a day destination for visitors staying in and around Saratoga Springs, and the continued support from the Historic Hudson-Hoosic Rivers Partnership and partners.

Project Area Attributes

Strengths	Weaknesses
Schuylerville is centerpiece community in corridor	Sediment filled OCC causing flooding in FH Park
New Canal Gateway Visitor Center	PCB contamination
Restored Dix Bridge for ped/bike use	Strong foul smell in Old Champlain Canal
Existing Towpath	Pedestrian Crossings and Streetscape Issues
Active Lock 5 and Public Docks	Lack of wayfinding and interpretive signage
Hudson Crossing Park and historic Dix Bridge	Lack of overnight accommodations
New waterfront restaurant	OCC too shallow for any activity
Boat Launch, waterfront gazebo and beach	Numerous unmanaged stormwater outflows in OCC
Opportunities	Threats
New destination for Saratoga Springs visitors	Lack of targeted economic development marketing
Crossroads from Vermont	Unsupportive zoning
Empire State Trail designation	Short window for rehabilitation
Reopen OCC and Turning Basin to small boats	No boat pass through at Lock 5 Island Road
Reinvestment by local business/property owners	OCC Lock is not workable

New and enhanced access to the Hudson River and multiple historic sites and landmarks	Trail segment needs building between Fish Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Towpath Road
Multi-generational recreational opportunities	Weak connections into downtown
New business development on Canal Street	No passable OCC route for watercraft

Project Implementation

The vision for revitalization is cannot proceed until the OCC is restored to a functioning and safe condition. In its current state, the canal is impassible, unattractive, and unwelcoming due to contamination, obstruction from vegetation, sediments, and foul smelling anaerobic decay. The feasible development of the OCC can only advance once these limitations have been addressed and removed.

The immediate project goal is therefore to secure sufficient funds to complete the repair, replacement, clean-up and upgrading of the various components of the Old Champlain Canal and Schuyler Harbor. This will result in re-establishing the water’s unobstructed flow from the Hudson River at Lock 5 to Fish Creek. This activity involves excavating the old canal prism to a depth of a minimum of four feet along the entire 1.5-mile stretch, which ranges from 28 to 40 feet wide. The cost is preliminarily estimated at approximately \$1 million dollars.

Specific tasks related to completing the cleanup of and completing improvements to this area include the following:

1. Complete testing and assessment of the contamination present within the canal as well as an estimate of the costs associated with removing such contaminations.
2. A formal engineering plan that identifies the bridge work, lock work and earth work required to rebuild and repair this lock to allow for water to properly flow through the canal.
3. A formal landscape design plan that identifies how property on both sides of the canal will be restored and improved to allow for the multiple year-round recreational uses identified in the economic vision.
4. The preparation of an Environmental Assessment Long Form and the selection of a SQRA Lead Agency on this project.
5. The creation of a design-build request for proposals to secure qualified bids to perform the design and construction work which would include cost-estimates and schedules for the various work contemplated in this proposal as well as any required contingencies.

Summary

The vision for the Restoration of the Old Champlain Canal in Schuylerville is a perfect “fit” into the wider goal established for *Old Saratoga on the Hudson*: to unite the communities along both sides of the Hudson River in the historic region known as “Old Saratoga” in one revolutionary, regional effort to protect the area’s extraordinary beauty, history, and heritage while enhancing the quality of life and economic stability of the people who live here today and for those who will follow. The projects, opportunities and uses that will be developed as OCC is being restored will attract year-round tourist related recreational activities and special events sufficient to expand and strengthen the economies of the Village of Schuylerville, the Town of Saratoga and Saratoga County.

Insets



A: Visitor's Center (In Development)



B: Potential Bridge Relocation



C: Adjacent Land and Water Trails (Photo Example)



D: Passable Bridge Location (Photo Example)

Legend

- Canal Trail Loop - Land (Year Round Multi-Use)
- Canal Trail Loop - Water (Seasonal Small Craft)
- Streetscape Improvement Opportunities
- Development, Public Space, and Infrastructure Opportunities
- Added Land Value, Select Redevelopment Opportunities
- Water Trail Development Pre-Requisite: Passable Bridge Location
- Hudson Crossing Park Interface Improvements
- Potential Small Craft Launch Site
- Potential Camping Development
- Potential Recreation Development
- Potential Bridge Restoration
- Existing Parking
- Existing Restrooms
- Existing Picnic
- Existing Sports
- Existing Rowing
- Existing Fishing
- Existing Beach
- Existing Hiking Trails
- Existing Biking Trails
- Existing Nature Viewing
- Existing Kayak Launch
- Existing Boat Launch
- Existing Restaurant
- Existing Yacht Basin
- Visitor's Center (In Development)
- Saratoga Town Hall
- Schuylerville C. S. D.
- Schuyler House
- Post Office
- Stewart's Shop
- Water Treatment

