



December 2021

Dear Friends,

I took great inspiration this year from how you dedicated yourselves in these unpredictable times. You demonstrated care for one another and the trail in so many ways. Each one of you is essential as we confront challenges, craft novel solutions, and leverage our power to complete the trail and ensure it continues to be a restorative resource for us all.

Your support of the trail has propelled us forward this year, including:

- Groundbreaking – finally – for completing the final part of the trail in New Haven from the current paved end to the Canal's historic origin at Long Wharf on the edge of Long Island Sound.
- Creating a native plant nursery and greenhouse adjacent to the trail in New Haven that will help to maintain and expand butterfly and pollinator gardens along the trail in the historic Newhallville neighborhood.
- The continued popularity of the trail, as shown by census numbers – 170,000 trips on the trail in New Haven alone in 2020, blowing away all previous records.
- Well-attended bike rides, including along the trail's southern stretches in October with Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Commissioner Katie Dykes to promote biking instead of driving to help solve the climate crisis.

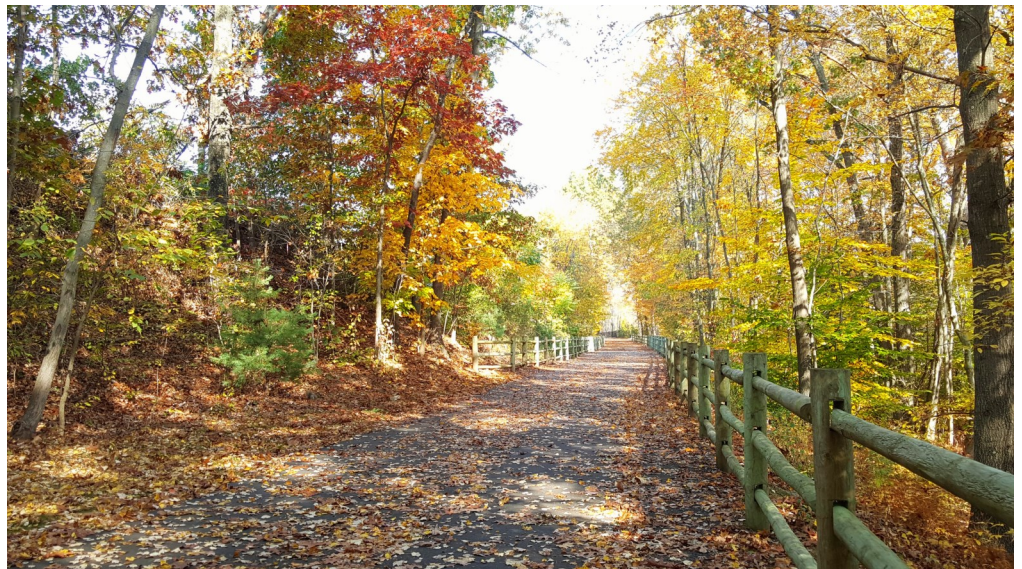
So much more remains to be done. Your gift will help:

- Finish the protected, signed route to get around the gap in the trail in Plainville.
- Build more bike repair stations and other amenities to meet the growing demand as the trail continues to attract more visitors.
- Continue to maintain and improve the 47 miles now built.

Thank you, as always, for being on "team trail" and for your continued support.

Yours,

Lisa Fernandez, President



Growing a heritage greenway for open space, biking and walking
from the Long Island Sound into Massachusetts. fchtrail.org

Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Updates

One Trail Initiative: As more of the 82 mile trail from New Haven to Northampton is completed, it makes sense to consider it a whole, and an effort by the New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway Alliance is underway to present it as such. The proposed name "New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway" will not replace the local names of the trail, but will build broader awareness and advocacy for the trail as a regional, multi-state asset. Please visit nhnccg.org

New Haven: (1.6/3.4 miles; 47% complete) Construction began in September on Phase IV, extending the trail 1.8 miles from where it ends now below grade at Hillhouse Avenue to Grove Street, then along surface streets to the Long Island Sound near Long Wharf and the Canal Dock Boat House. Expected completion in 2022. The total cost is more than \$10 million. CT's Lt. Governor and other public officials attended the groundbreaking in September (pictured). CT Congressional Representatives Rosa DeLauro and Jim Himes held a press conference on the trail at the Hamden-New Haven border to call attention to the importance of infrastructure, trail infrastructure in particular, in creating jobs and mitigating climate change.



Hamden: (9.5 miles; 100% complete) As in other towns, the story in Hamden this past year for the trail has been one of a huge increase in trail users. Some minor repairs have been made to the trail. Public Works allocated \$50k for trail paving in 2022.

Cheshire: (7.5 miles; 100% complete) State grant received for a chicane (a gate system) installation on West Main Street. A memorial bench honoring the many Irish workers who dug the trenches for the canal two centuries ago was installed near the trail where it crosses West Main St.

Southington: (7.1/9.4 miles; 75% complete) CT DOT approved the design of the remaining 2.3 miles by BL Consultants from Lazy Lane north to Townline Road on the Plainville border. Most of the route will be along the abandoned rail line until the extreme north end where the rail is still active. There, the trail will be built as a side path alongside existing streets. The design is 100% completed, and it will go to bid this year for completion in 2023.

Plainville: (0/5.1 miles; 0% complete) Town Council approved the community-led gap closure study three years ago, and selected CTDOT to design and engineer the trail along the chosen route. CTDOT divided the project into three sections. **(1) Southern Section:** from the junction of the Southington trail with Townline Road to Norton Park. This 0.8 section is in preliminary design and public involvement is mostly complete, and moving into final design. The rights-of-way process will start soon. Regulatory agency talks have occurred and have been favorable. Mitigation for environmental impacts are anticipated. A 50-space trail parking lot is planned off Red Stone Hill in Plainville with construction starting in 2023. **(2) Northern Section:** from the current terminus of the FCHT at Northwest Dr. south toward Plainville Center; these 3 miles will involve a new tunnel under a limited access highway. Possible completion in 2024. **(3) Central Section:** a challenging, densely settled 1.3 miles involving either on-road routing or other approaches. This will be the final phase of the gap closure, with a projected completion date of 2026. For details about the possible routes through Plainville, visit gapclosurestudy.com. For current alternate travel routes visit greenway.org/states/connecticut and ridewithgps.com/routes/28983216.

Farmington and towns northward in Connecticut: (24.6 miles; 100% complete) These towns are largely finished.

More than 47 miles of trail in Connecticut are complete. Your renewed support will help us close the remaining gaps. Beyond needed dollars, we welcome your volunteer service, your membership, and as a possible board member.

Farmington Canal Rail-to-Trail Association Board

Lisa Fernandez, President; Douglas Noble, Vice President; Norm Berg, Acting Secretary; Bill Horowitz, Treasurer; Barbara Collins, Ex-Officio (President, Farmington Valley Trails Council); John Paturel; Aaron Goode; Nicole Davison; Bruce Donald, Ex-Officio (Tri-State Coordinator, East Coast Greenway Alliance)

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