

2. OTHER TRAIL PROJECTS

New Hampshire’s State-owned abandoned rail corridors, described in detail in the last chapter, have the potential to form the backbone of New Hampshire’s off-road multi-use trail system. However, these State-owned abandoned rail corridors are not the only off-road corridors that have been improved as multi-use trails, or have the potential to be improved in such a manner. There are many other off-street trail projects that are proposed, designed, or complete throughout New Hampshire. This chapter briefly describes other types of off-street trail projects, and the data gathering and mapping effort that has been undertaken for this study.

These other multi-use trails encompass a variety of different types of facilities, including the following:

- Abandoned or inactive railroad corridors owned by entities other than the state (such as a municipality or a private owner)
- Trails or informal paths that have been improved to accommodate a range of transportation and recreational users
- Right-of-way adjacent to roadways, but separate from the roadway
- Bridges dedicated for non-motorized use, or vehicular bridges that have been enhanced to provide dedicated non-motorized accessibility

The majority of these trail projects have been developed using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds that are made available by NHDOT through two specific funding programs: Transportation Enhancements (TE) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ).

The TE program is designed to fund transportation-related projects that improve quality of life and community livability. A large portion of TE funding is used for bicycle and pedestrian projects, although the TE program funds transportation-related scenic, educational, historic, and cultural projects as well. The CMAQ program is intended to reduce automobile travel, congestion, and air pollution by funding a range of projects that includes bicycle and pedestrian improvements, traffic and roadway improvements that reduce congestion without encouraging increased traffic, travel demand management measures, and public transit operational improvements. Most of the off-road bicycle and pedestrian projects included in the state trail database have been developed through the TE program. The TE program is a more typical source of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects, and CMAQ funding is typically used for other types of projects.

The State Trails Plan process developed a database of off-street trail projects by researching and soliciting input from a variety of sources. The NHDOT database of TE and CMAQ projects was reviewed, and all projects that include an off-street component were identified. Then, input was solicited from state agency representatives, regional planning commission (RPC) representatives, and municipal representatives about these projects and any other critical off-street trail projects. These representatives provided information about project characteristics,

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trail ownership and management, trail locations and connections, universal access, surface type, trail condition, and project status.

Once the appropriate database of projects was identified, geographic information for these projects was obtained from many different sources, including NHDOT, the RPCs, and municipalities. If geographic information was not readily available for a given project, that project was researched, and the location of the trail project was approximated. The geographic information for each project was linked to that project record, and all of the projects were mapped in a Geographic Information System (GIS) that was submitted to NHDOT.

A total of approximately 200 projects are included in the non-rail corridor database. These projects are shown in the map in Figure 2-1. Most of these projects are relatively small-scale projects that do not create a trail of significant length to be visible in the statewide map; other projects are not shown yet in the statewide map because they are still in the planning or design stage. Some of the projects, however, are of a significant length. Table 2-1 summarizes the characteristics of some of the major off-street trails that have been completed in the state. This is not a comprehensive list, but instead offers a sampling of some of the major off-street facilities.

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Table 2-1 Sample of Trail Improvement Projects

State #	Town	Description	LOCATION	Status	Owner	Surface Type	Maintenance	RPC
11918	Nashua	Pedestrian bike path on Nashua Branch RR corridor [93-36TE]	Pedestrian/ Bike path	Construction complete				Nashua
NRPC_4	Milford	Shared-use trail connecting Milford and Brookline (3 miles)	Granite Town Rail Trail	Construction Complete, Improvements Needed	Town of Milford	Gravel	Conservation Commission	Nashua
NRPC_4 B	Brookline	Shared-use trail connecting Milford and Brookline (6 miles)	Granite Town Rail Trail Ext	1.5 miles of easements in place	Town of Brookline / Various	Gravel	Conservation Commission	Nashua
12641	Wolfeboro	Trail along the Wolfeboro branch line railroad from Fernald Station to Cotton Valley. This is a portion of a larger project to connect Wolfeboro, Brookfield and Wakefield [96-34TE]	Multi-use Path		State of New Hampshire	Unpaved	Town of Wolfeboro	Lakes
12273	Wolfeboro	Alternative transportation path along abandoned RR corridor from Whitten Neck Rd to NH 109 [94-14TE]	Multi-use Trail		State of New Hampshire	Unpaved	Town of Wolfeboro	Lakes
12140	Laconia	3600' of 5' wide sidewalk along Union Ave and 1300' of 8' wide bike path on abandoned RR corridor [94-46TE]	Union Avenue	Construction complete	City of Laconia	Paved	City of Laconia	Lakes Region
12138	Bath	13.5 mile bike / ped transportation corridor connecting 5 villages, residential and commercial areas [94-23TE]						North Country
12652	Manchester	Acquisition of abandoned RR corridor in Manchester, part of Manchester – Lawrence Branch for recreational purposes [96-02TE]						Southern NH
13093	Goffstown	Purchase approximately 5.0 miles of abandoned B&M RR corridor [98-48TE]						Southern NH
13103	Manchester	2.0 miles of 8' wide path within RR corridor owned by NHDOT [98-47TE]	Pedestrian/ Bike path	Under construction				Southern NH
13493	Manchester	Refurbish utility bridge for trail connection [00-59TE]						Southern NH
12133 B	Fitzwilliam to Walpole	Cheshire Branch Railroad corridor acquisition from Fitzwilliam through Troy, Marlborough, Swanzey, Keene & Surrey to Walpole - 43.2 miles [94-03TE]		Acquisition complete	State of New Hampshire	unpaved	State of New Hampshire	Southwest
12133 C	Keene to Hinsdale	Ashuelot Railroad corridor acquisition from Hinsdale through Winchester & Swanzey to Keene [94-03TE]		Acquisition complete	State of New Hampshire	unpaved	State of New Hampshire	Southwest
12166	Keene	Bike / ped path through downtown Keene [94-02TE]	Gilbo Avenue	Construction complete	City of Keene	paved	City of Keene	Southwest
12680	Peterborough	Construct Riverwalk to be used as multi-use transportation pathway connecting businesses to outlying areas [96-67TE]		Construction complete	Town of Peterborough	paved / unpaved	Town of Peterborough	Southwest
11922	Rochester	Construct bike / ped path on acquired B&M RR corridor [93-11TE]						Strafford
12296	Portsmouth	Construct bike / ped bridge spanning Spaulding Turnpike from Ashland Road Ramp [94-62TE]	Rockingham Bridge	Completed in 1998				Rockingham Planning Commission