



rails-to-trails
conservancy

TRAILS AND UTILITIES: A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

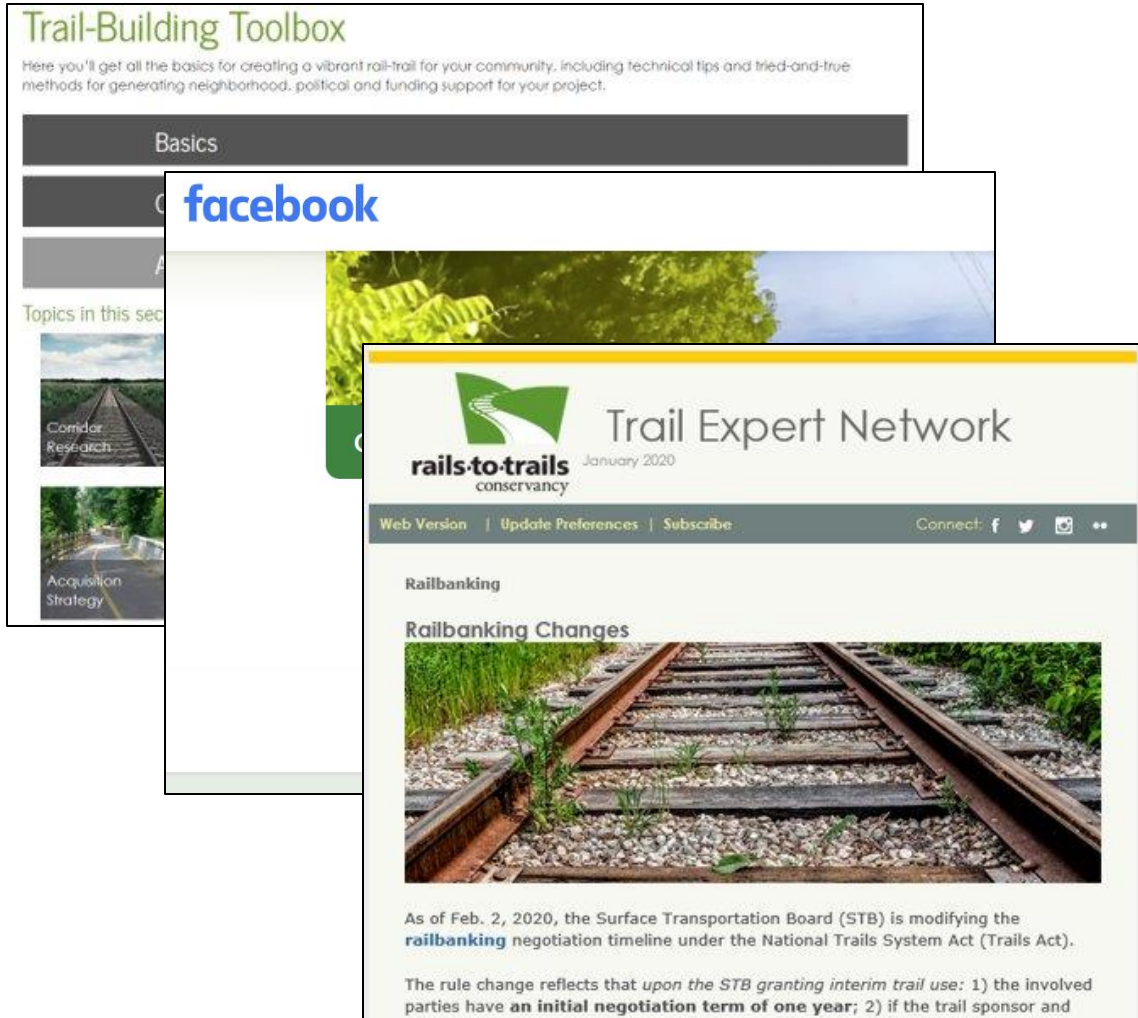
NOV. 1, 2022 WEBINAR

CYNWYD HERITAGE TRAIL | PHOTO BY THOM CARROLL

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Mary Moore

Mary Moore is currently the Forest Supervisor of the Hiawatha National Forest in Gladstone, MI in the Eastern Region (Region 9), where she has been since June 2021. Prior to joining the Hiawatha NF, Mary worked in Wyoming on the Bridger-Teton NF, in Colorado on the Pike & San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands, and in California on the Stanislaus National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. She received her M.S. from Johns Hopkins University in Environmental Science and Policy Making with a focus in Hydrology, and her B.A. from the University of Virginia in Environmental Science with a focus in Ecology.



Silas Chamberlin, PhD

Silas Chamberlin, is vice president for economic development at the York County Economic Alliance, where he oversees a variety of economic development initiatives, including York County's YoCo Fiber Broadband Task Force and the York County Trail Towns program, which is now active in 7 communities. In addition to his roles in economic development, Silas holds a PhD in environmental history and is author of *On the Trail: A History of American Hiking*, which was published by Yale University Press in 2016.



Dawn Neuy

Dawn Neuy SR/WA, RW-NAC, is the Director of Real Estate Services for WEC Energy Group and oversees all real estate, right of way and surveying functions for 7 utilities covering 4 states. Dawn and her team are responsible for the acquisition of easements, purchases of properties, management of leases, licenses and permits, management of fee owned property and selling of real estate assets to meet the strategic initiative for the corporation



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United States Department of Agriculture

Hiawatha National Forest

Saint Ignace to Trout Lake Trail

Mackinac County, Michigan



Forest Service

Eastern Region

Hiawatha National Forest



- The trail begins in downtown Saint Ignace Michigan and travels north to the village of Trout Lake.
- This section of trail is 26 miles in length.
- Uses include motorized (snowmobiles, ATV's, OHVs) and non-motorized (North Country National Scenic Trail).



Hiawatha National Forest

Michigan
Department of
Natural Resources
Snowmobile Trails
Mackinac County

Updated: 3/7/2022



0 1 2
Miles

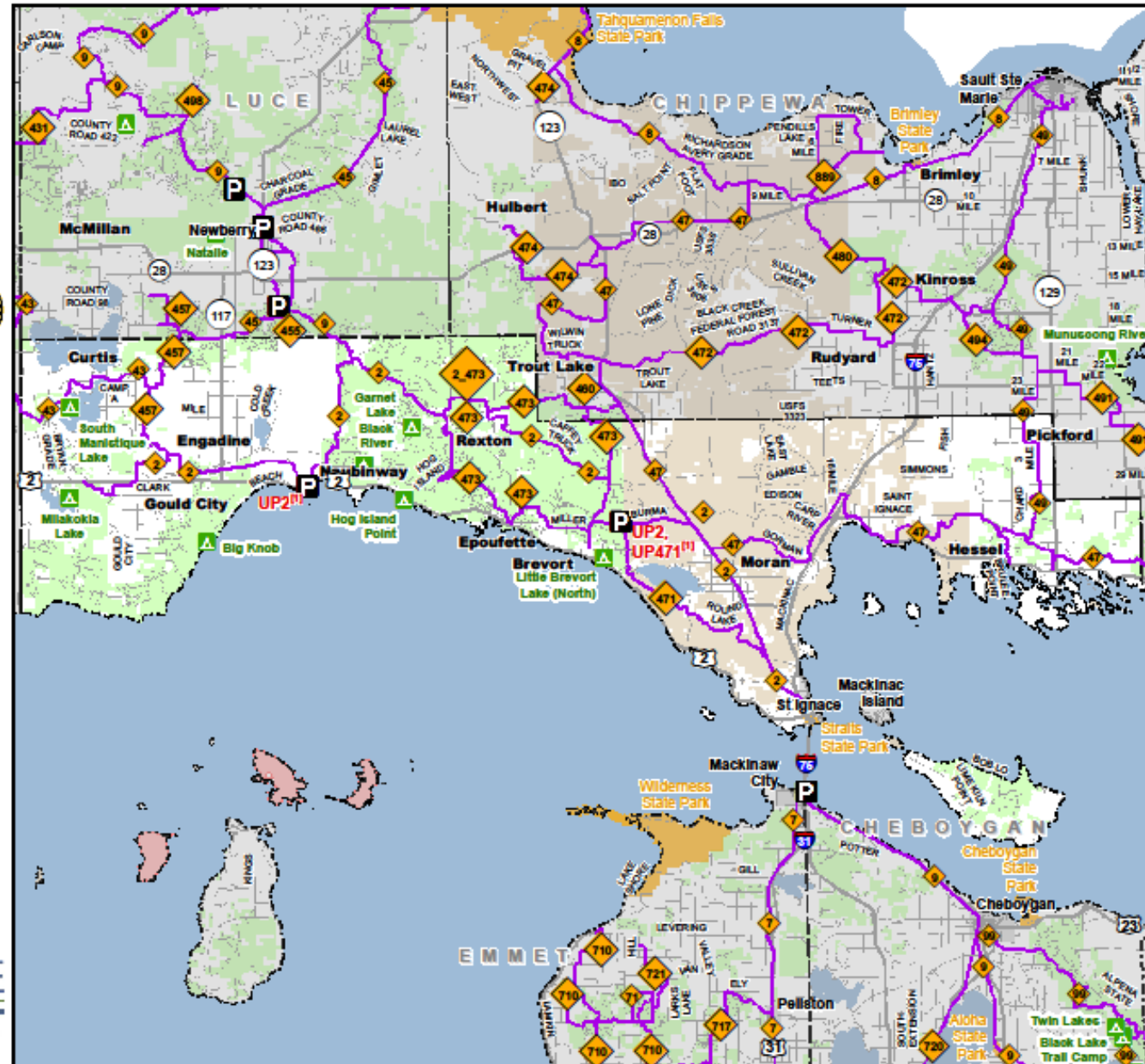
- P** Parking lot
A State forest campground
— Snowmobile trail
— State park boundary
— State forest land
— State game area
— Federal land
— Lakes and rivers
— City or village
— County boundary

Parking
UP2⁽¹⁾ NE of Int of Tutty St and US 2
UP2, UP471⁽²⁾ NE of Int of Burma and
 Tow Line Rds



RIDE
— of —
RIGHT

Michigan.gov/Snowmobiling



- The trail follows an abandoned rail corridor and was converted from a railroad (Soo Line) to a utility corridor (Michigan Bell) to a trail circa 1980's.
- It is listed on the National Rails to Trails Conservancy.



Hiawatha National Forest

- In the case of the St. Ignace to Trout Lake trail, Michigan Bell was willing to work with trail supporters at the state and local levels when the railroad was not. The Soo Line denied the idea of railbanking their line when approached and instead sold the 26-mile corridor in a single transaction to the telephone company.
- Michigan Bell delayed laying fiber optic cables in order to organize the transfer of their property to the Forest Service. Michigan Bell would retain a perpetual easement.



Hiawatha National Forest

- The trail is located almost entirely within the Hiawatha National Forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It passes among woodlands, wetlands and open green spaces along a corridor that is remote in many places.



- A Memorandum of Understanding exists between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Three Michigan National Forests that provides for co-management.
- Straits Area Snowmobile Club works with local district to groom and maintain during on and off snow season.



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Rail Trails + Broadband

Silas Chamberlin, PhD

Vice President, Economic Development

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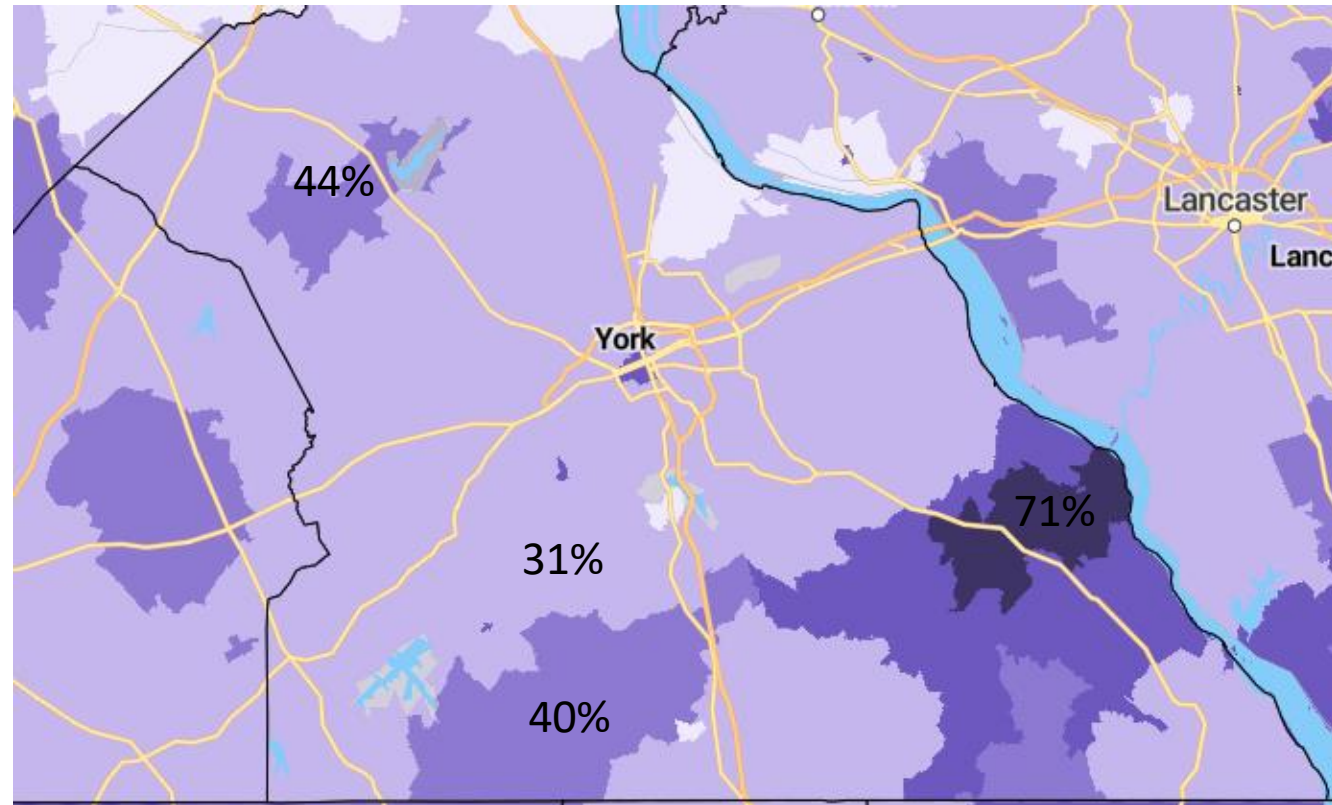
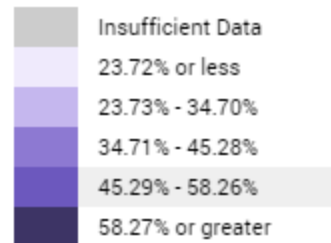


York County
Economic
Alliance

York County's Digital Divide

Estimated percent of households without broadband internet such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL, between 2015-2019. ⓘ ☆

Source: [Census](#)



York County's Digital Divide

"I need fast fiber internet in order to take my business to the next level."

"[Current Provider] is the only provider in the area and has horrible upload max speed and bad reliability."

"Cell service throughout southcentral York County is spotty and unreliable. I would not trust it in making a 911 call."

"Fiber optic internet would be great with no caps."

"It should not cost rural homeowners thousands of dollars to connect to internet service. [Current Provider] will not provide me internet service, because they state I live too far from the main road."

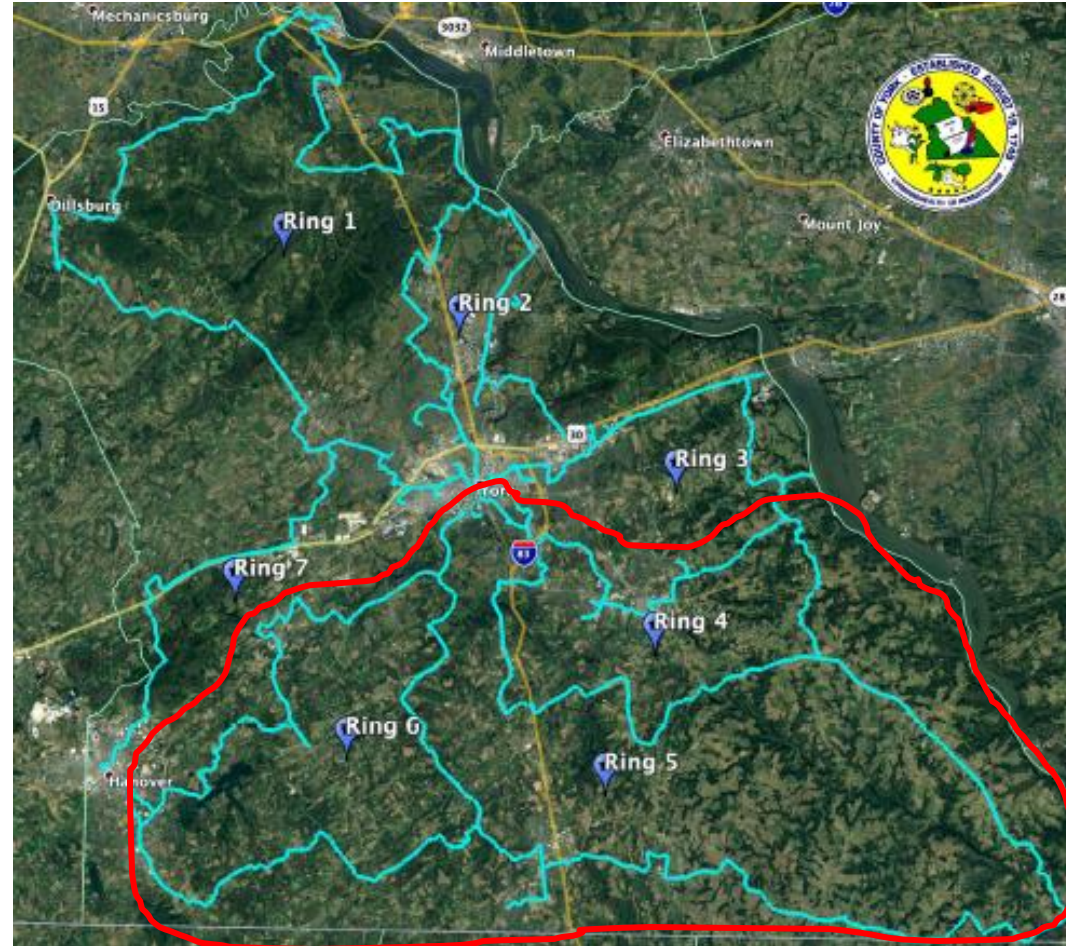
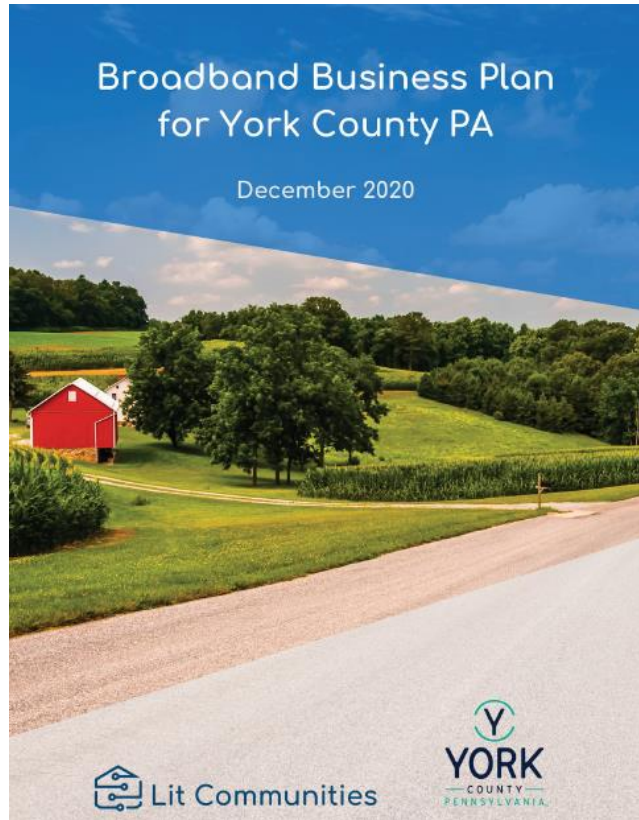
"Our area is desperate for basic internet service, let alone high-speed internet. I'm willing to participate in any way needed to move this effort along."

"If rural homeowners had internet service, they could apply for telecommuting positions. We need affordable internet access to provide more job opportunities for all."



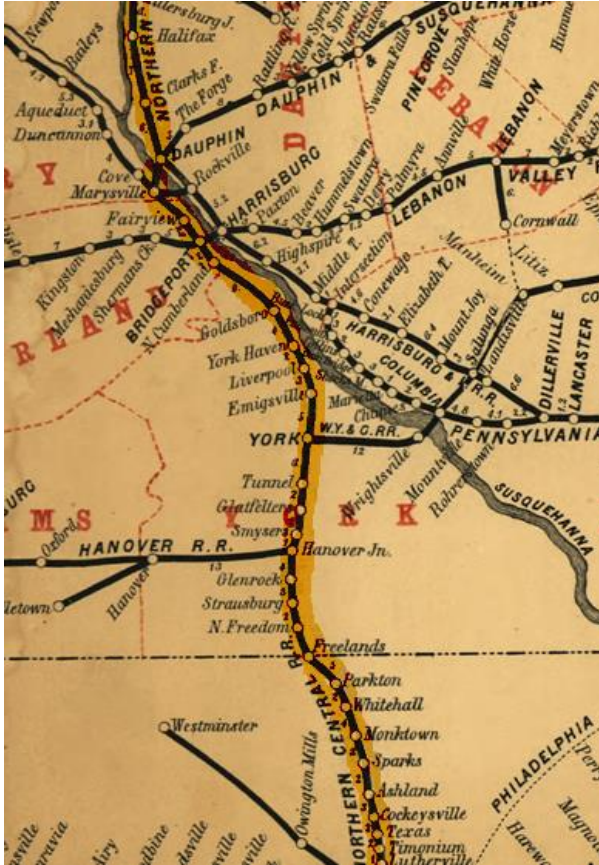
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Digital Divide





York Heritage Rail Trail



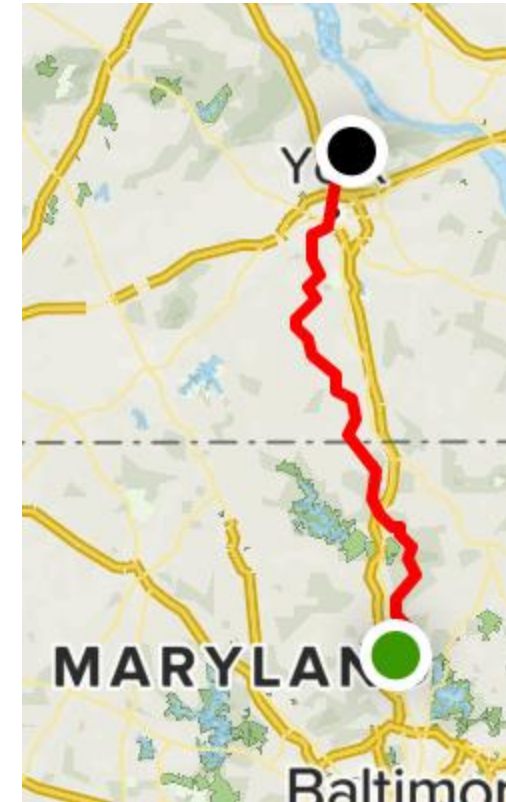
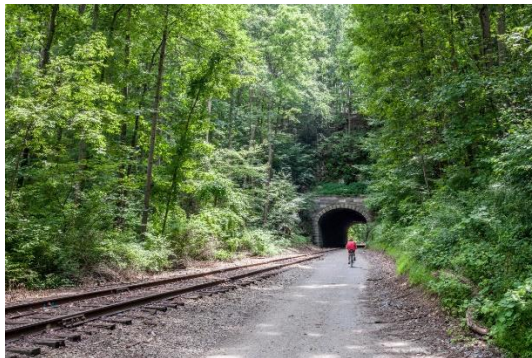
1863 – Northern Central Railway





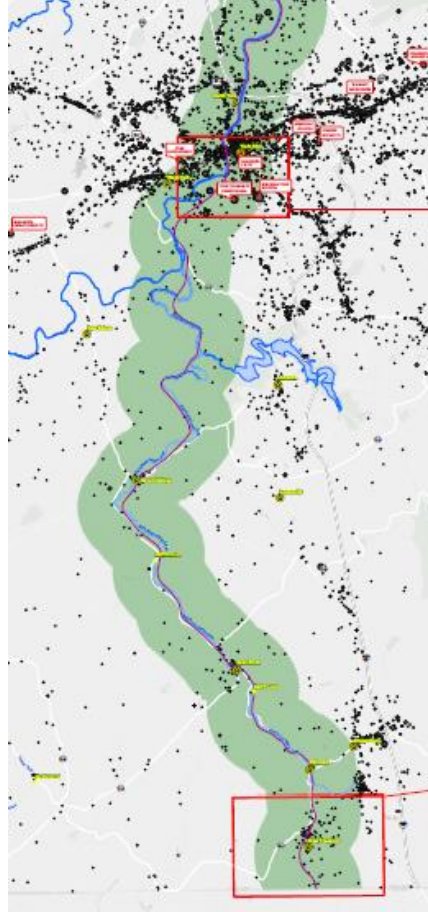
York Heritage Rail Trail

- 26-mile multi-use rail trail connecting passing through southern York County and connecting to the outskirts of Baltimore via the NCR Trail
- Owned and maintained by the County of York's Parks Department; constructed by the York County Rail Trail Authority over a period of 30+ years
- 2015 Pennsylvania Trail of the Year





York Heritage Rail Trail

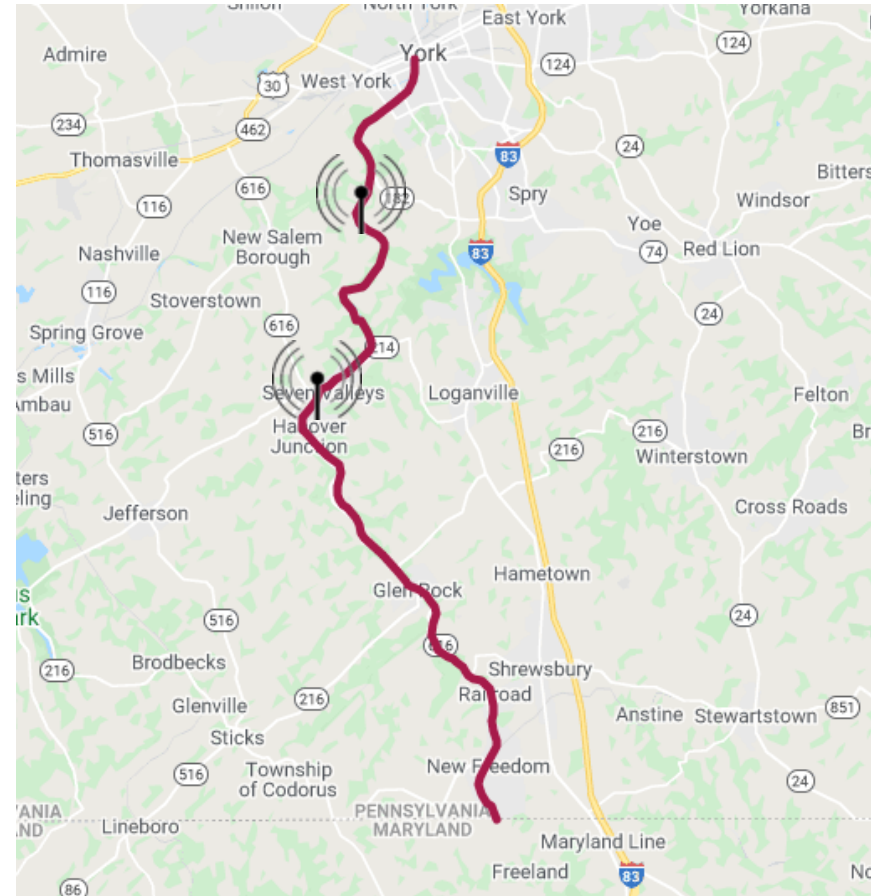


30% of York
County's businesses
and **17%** of all jobs
are located within a
one-mile bike ride of
the York Heritage
Rail Trail



YoCo Fiber Context

- Create a 16-mile dark fiber backbone from York City to New Freedom, with wireless antennas in Brillhart Station and Hanover Junction.
- Extending access for broadband connections in southern York County and leading to the construction of a significant portion of two, priority middle-mile rings
- Wireless antenna provides immediate access to a county facility and an underserved area of the county
- Conduit underneath trail already in place



YoCo Fiber



YoCo Fiber



YoCo Fiber

Estimated savings of \$4-6 million in engineering and construction costs, by avoiding directional drilling and rail plowing.

No acquisition or easement costs.

Publicly Bid Items	Construction (H&M)	\$772,322.46
	Materials (Millenium)	\$191,721.50
Subtotal		\$964,043.96
Professional Services	Engineering (Lit/Katapult)	\$240,578.78
Total Contracted Costs		\$1,204,622.74



York County Trail Towns



Lessons Learned

- Decisions made during trail development saved significant funding in the future.
 - Explore opportunities to install conduit and/or fiber as part of the trail project and/or otherwise encourage a “dig once” culture for utilities in your community.
 - Maintaining or negotiating utility ROW opportunities during acquisition is crucial, even if it only applies to municipal-owned utilities.
- Using the trail as a utility corridor changed the way our County Commissioners viewed the trail.
 - \$2 million in County and local funding secured during this time for our *next* trail project.
 - Trails tend to connect urban and rural areas, and the communities that tend to be underserved by broadband.
 - Work with your planning organizations to identify synergies between broadband expansion and trail development
- Installing fiber under the trail has potentially transformational impact on Trail Towns, which can be served with fiber to the home and/or wireless networks.



Rail Trails + Broadband

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We Energies

A partnership with the communities we serve



Location

- Southeast Wisconsin
- Fox Valley







MAP OF ELECTRIC RAILWAY SYSTEM
T. M. E. R. & L. CO.

This is a detailed historical map of the state of Wisconsin. The map shows the state's borders with Minnesota to the north, Illinois to the east, and Iowa to the south. Major cities and towns are labeled, including Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Janesville, and Port Washington. The map also depicts numerous lakes, such as Koshong Lake, Kegonsa Lake, and Kegonsa Lake, and rivers like the Koshong River and Kegonsa River. The map is oriented with North at the top. The title "WISCONSIN" is written vertically along the right edge. The map is a monochrome print, likely from a historical atlas or gazetteer.

In addition to the clean, dustless, cinderless ride—itsself a delight—there is boating, fishing, camping, cottaging, bathing, country

Other pages of this folder suggest a few of the many pleasant one-day trips that can be made over these lines on which several

There is no better way to become acquainted with the beauties of the country surrounding Milwaukee than by making these one-day trips.



History of the company

- ❖ The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company founded in 1896
- ❖ Interurban Railway Corridors owned in fee
- ❖ Total of 190 miles of corridors
- ❖ Merged into Wisconsin Electric Power Company in 1938
- ❖ The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company was operated until 1951



Public Service Building



History of trails on our property

- ❖ Unique position due to the land we own
- ❖ Started in mid 1970's and first licenses by late 1970's
- ❖ Saw the value in co-occupying with recreational trails to give back to the communities we serve
- ❖ Currently have over 122 miles of existing and planned trails throughout WI & MI
- ❖ Exciting trend we have seen is the connectivity of these trails into a “super highway” for biking, waking and cross country skiing





Process for granting licenses

- ❖ Contacted by municipalities/counties
- ❖ Due diligence with our engineering groups for both gas and electric
- ❖ Agreement is cost neutral for the company
- ❖ Route of the Badger sometimes acts as the conduit between us and the municipalities/counties



Route of the Badger Trail Locations

We Energies Recorded Rec Trails





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Questions?



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