

Connecting Patterns

Since the essence of Greenways is connections, a key task is building a regional web of walkways and connecting routes through the county. Transportation policies of the past fifty years emphasized automobiles almost exclusively. This tends to disassemble communities, allowing random and scattered construction into the countryside. A more balanced Greenway network of streets and roads, bus and bike routes, regional rail corridors, and interconnected trails and sidewalks will also help tie together parklands and traditional centers. The Connecting Patterns Map shows the growing network of trails and scenic roads, while Section V describes specific road, trail, rail and waterway projects.

Streets and Roads in Dutchess County need to be treated as our most prominent open spaces. Streets are the circulation system that organizes buildings into neighborhoods. The view from the road is the primary means by which residents visualize their communities and visitors decide whether to slow down and stop or drive on by. The difference is how we design our streets and immediate roadsides - as wide blacktop surfaces built strictly for higher speeds and quick stops, or as scenic roads, parkways, and boulevards that continue to accommodate the auto, while allowing people to bike or walk along and across in relative comfort.

Attractive roadscapes could be designated as Greenway routes, from the Taconic State Parkway and locally designated scenic roads to tree-lined streets in historic centers. A growing countywide system of Greenway routes will demonstrate our commitment to roads which are both visually enticing and valuable assets, rather than just unpleasant experiences on the way to somewhere else.

Trails are expanding all over Dutchess County, but more importantly, the typical conception of trails as contained loops within a specific property has given way to longer regional routes that connect natural systems and nearby settlement centers. The original inspiration is the interstate Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine, first proposed by Benton MacKaye in 1921, that passes through southern Dutchess. An ongoing Greenway challenge is to link existing trails, bikeways, and sidewalks into continuous systems, with the east - west connections being the most difficult because of the prevailing patterns of north to south valleys and ridgelines.



Old Post Road through Staatsburg in Hyde Park has been designated as a state scenic byway.



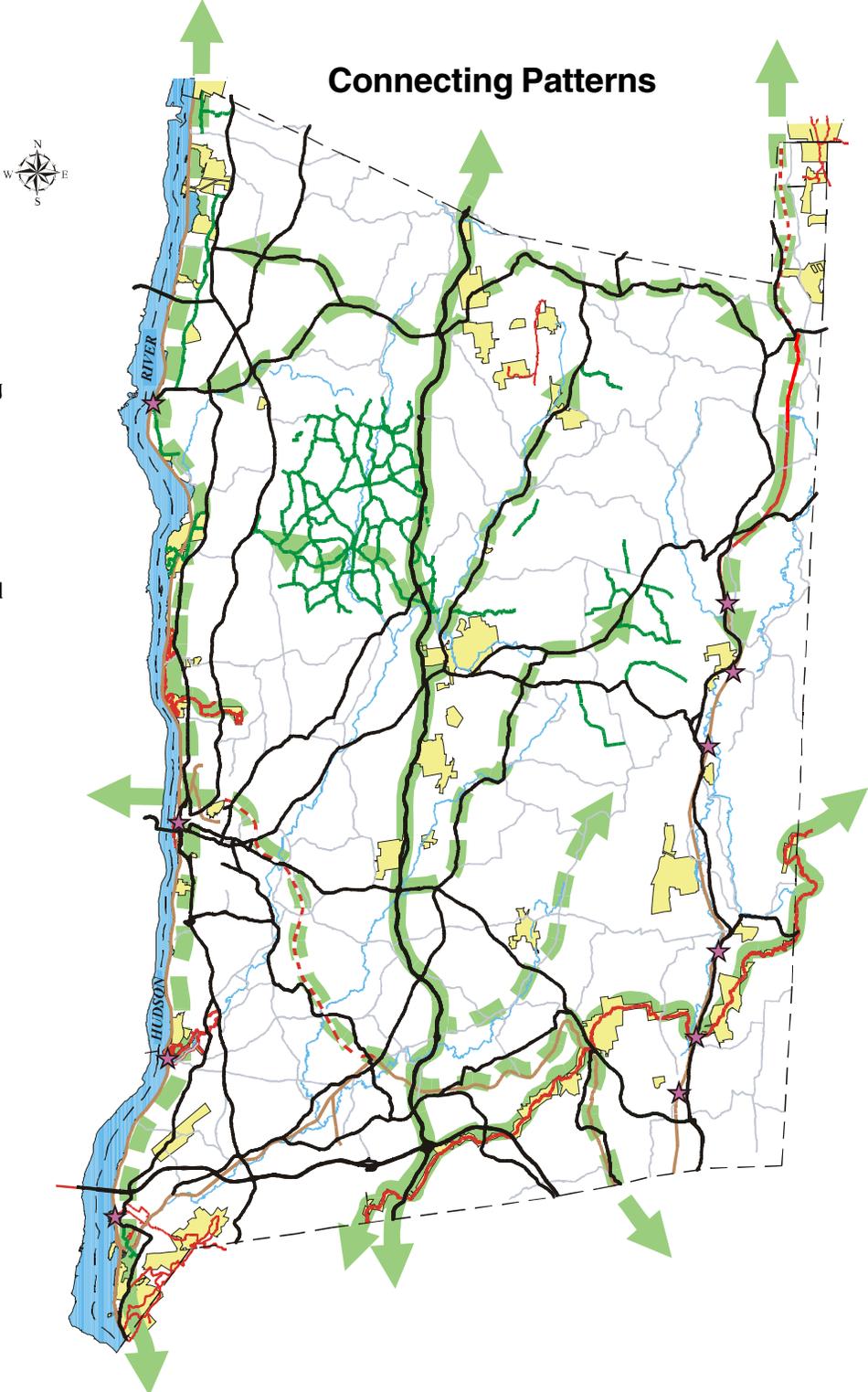
The Harlem Valley Rail Trail in eastern Dutchess, now partially constructed, will run from the Metro-North rail stop north of Wassaic into Columbia County.

The Mid-Hudson Bridge walkway provides an essential cross-river connection.



The key connecting principle is to create an integrated system of scenic roads and streets, bike and transit routes, open space corridors, waterways, and sidewalks linked to trails throughout Dutchess County and the region.

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The Connecting Patterns Map shows existing parks, major trails, and designated scenic roads, as well as an emerging regional Greenway system that touches every town in Dutchess County. This includes the Appalachian Trail, the Hudson River Greenway Trail, the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and proposed Dutchess Rail Trail, and potential scenic Greenway routes branching off from the Taconic State Parkway.

- LEGEND:**
- Major Trail Systems
 - - - Proposed Trails
 - Parklands
 - Major Waterways
 - Designated Scenic Roads
 - Main Roads
 - County Routes
 - Rail Lines
 - ★ Train Stations
- Regional Greenway System**
- Existing
 - Proposed