

Beacon Hopewell Rail Trail Feasibility Study

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DUTCHESS COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Better ways from here to there

Today's Presentation

- Study Background & Context
- Outreach
- Key Challenges
- Trail Concepts
- Estimated Costs & Phasing
- Key Takeaways



Who is the DCTC?

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Dutchess County
- Required by federal law for Urban Areas of 50,000+ population
- Established in 1982 as the PDCTC
- Forum for establishing transportation policies & priorities
- Programs federal funds through a locally driven planning process

What do we do?

Core Products

- **Transportation Plan:** our Plan serves as the strategic guiding document for improving transportation in Dutchess County over the next 25 years.
- **Capital Program:** our 5-year capital program assigns federal funding to highway, bridge, walking, bicycling, & transit projects.
- **Planning Program:** our annual work plan identifies upcoming planning studies and tasks.

Regional Planning

We work with Ulster and Orange Counties to address:

- Congestion, Freight, & Transit

County-wide Planning

We work on studies to understand key issues:

- Walking and Biking
- Climate Vulnerability
- Speeding
- Traffic Trends
- Pavement Condition
- Human Services Transportation

Local Planning

We work with communities on:

- Parking Studies
- Complete Streets
- Corridor Studies
- Pedestrian Plans
- Safety Assessments
- Data Collection & Analysis

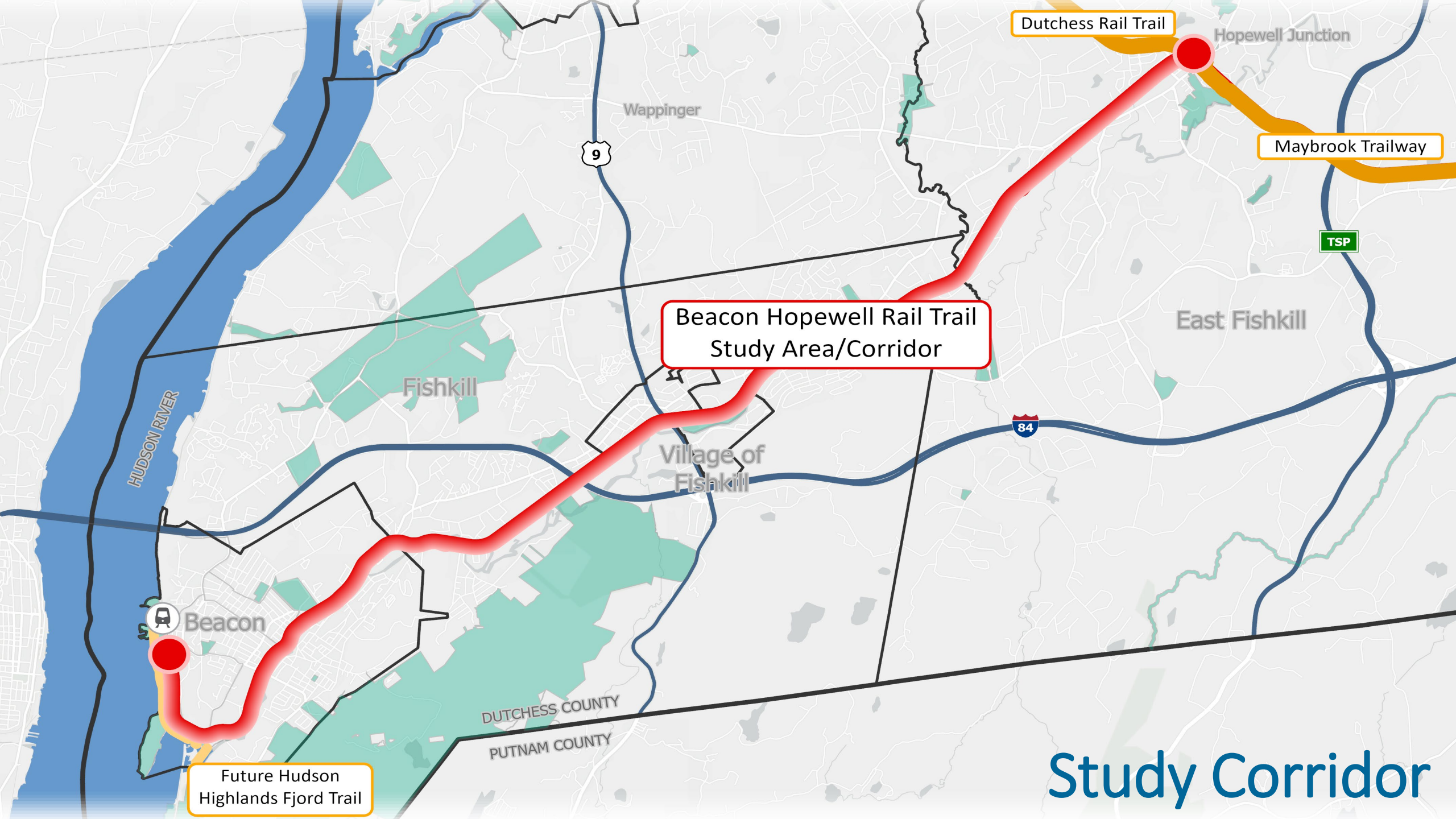
**Moving
Dutchess
Forward**



Resilient Ways Forward
Transportation Planning for our Changing Climate



**ARLINGTON MAIN STREET
REDESIGN INITIATIVE**



Dutchess Rail Trail

Hopewell Junction

Maybrook Trailway

TSP

East Fishkill

Beacon Hopewell Rail Trail
Study Area/Corridor

Fishkill

Village of
Fishkill

84

Beacon

DUTCHESS COUNTY
PUTNAM COUNTY

Future Hudson
Highlands Fjord Trail

Study Corridor

Study Goals

Evaluate the infrastructure needs and priorities for a potential Rail Trail along a 13-mile section of the Beacon Line

- ✓ **Task 1: Inventory & assess existing conditions**
- ✓ **Task 2: Draft design concepts** – Trail concepts, Access & Trailhead Locations, Road Crossing Alternatives, Identification of Challenges, Trail Amenities, Public Engagement
- ✓ **Task 3: Final Report** – Design Recommendations, Cost Estimates, Phasing Recommendations, & Potential Funding Sources

Study Timeline

- ✓ Fieldwork (Apr 2024)
- ✓ Public Survey (Apr-Jul 2024)
- ✓ Utility Coordination (Jul 2024)
- ✓ Traffic Assessment (Oct 2024)
- ✓ Existing Conditions Report (Oct 2024)
- ✓ Municipal Presentations (Feb/Mar 2025)
- ✓ Recommendations Report (Oct 2025)



Public Outreach

- Study Advisory Committee

- 5 meetings
- Discussed existing conditions, challenges within the corridor, recommended concepts, costs, & phasing

- In-person (May 2024)

- Pop-up events – Beacon & East Fishkill

- Online

- Website: www.beaconhopewellrailtrail.com
- Survey (1,350 responses)

- Virtual Public Meetings (March & August 2025)

- Presentations: Municipal Board meetings, Hopewell Depot



Study Advisory Committee

- Dutchess County (Public Works & Planning)
- NYSDOT Region 8 (Planning)
- MTA/Metro-North Railroad
- City of Beacon
- Town of East Fishkill
- Town of Fishkill
- Village of Fishkill
- Scenic Hudson/Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail



BEACON-HOPEWELL
RAIL TRAIL
STUDY

Consultant Team:

- Barton & Loguidice
- AKRF
- FHI Studio

Study Website: beaconhopewellrailtrail.com

Join us on March 20, 2025 at 12 pm for a virtual public meeting about our work to date!
[Register here](#)



BEACON-HOPEWELL
RAIL TRAIL
STUDY

[About](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Resource Library](#)

 [English](#) ▾

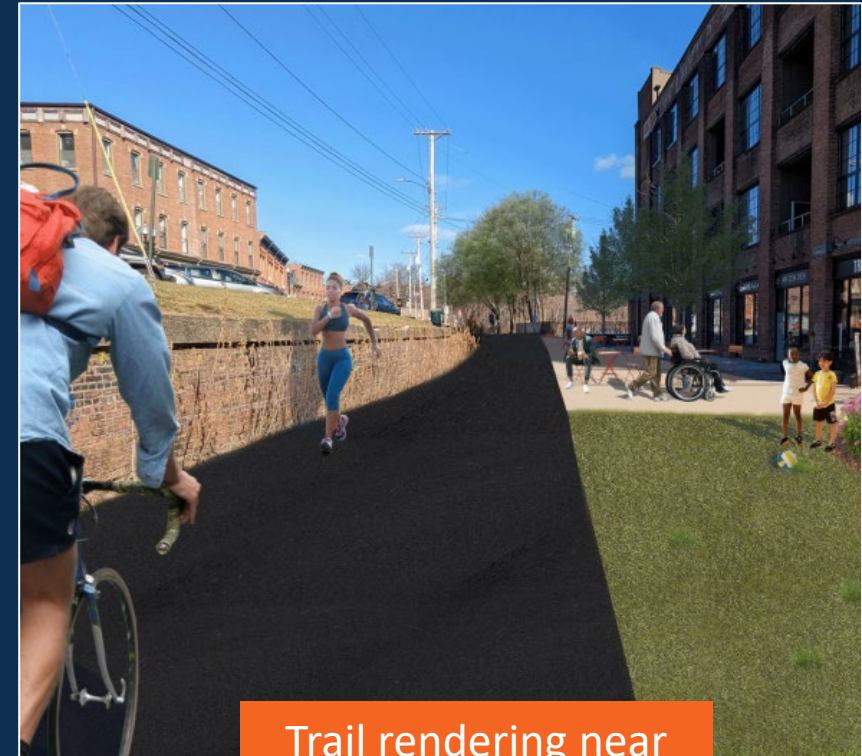
[Contact Us](#)

Welcome to the

Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail Feasibility Study

Key Opportunities

- Connections to key destinations (Hudson River Waterfront, Beacon Main St., etc.)
- Connections to other trails (Empire State Trail, Fjord Trail, & Junction Loop)
- Connections to local neighborhoods
- Community support
- Logical trailheads and access points
- Accessible (flat, stable surface)
- Positive health and physical activities
- Corridor has one owner; no major property acquisitions needed



Trail rendering near
Main St in Beacon

Key Challenges

1. Narrow, single-track corridor
2. Major at-grade road crossings (NYS Route 9, 52, & 82)
3. Industrial area in Village of Fishkill
4. Potential floodplain impacts to Fishkill Creek
5. Six existing bridge structures to rehabilitate
6. Utilities

Challenge #1: Constrained Sections



City of Beacon: Fishkill Creek & Building



Downtown Beacon: Main Street & Fishkill Creek



Challenge #2: Major Road Crossings

- Safety is the major concern
- At grade crossings - challenging
- Traffic & safety impacts



NYS Route 52
(Town of Fishkill)



NYS Route 82
(Town of East Fishkill)



US Route 9
(Village of Fishkill)

Challenge #2: Major Road Crossings

- Bridge recommended for Route 9; evaluated for Routes 52 & 82
- Highest level of safety but most complex to build
- Cost estimate includes trail bridges at all three locations

Overpass / Grade Separation

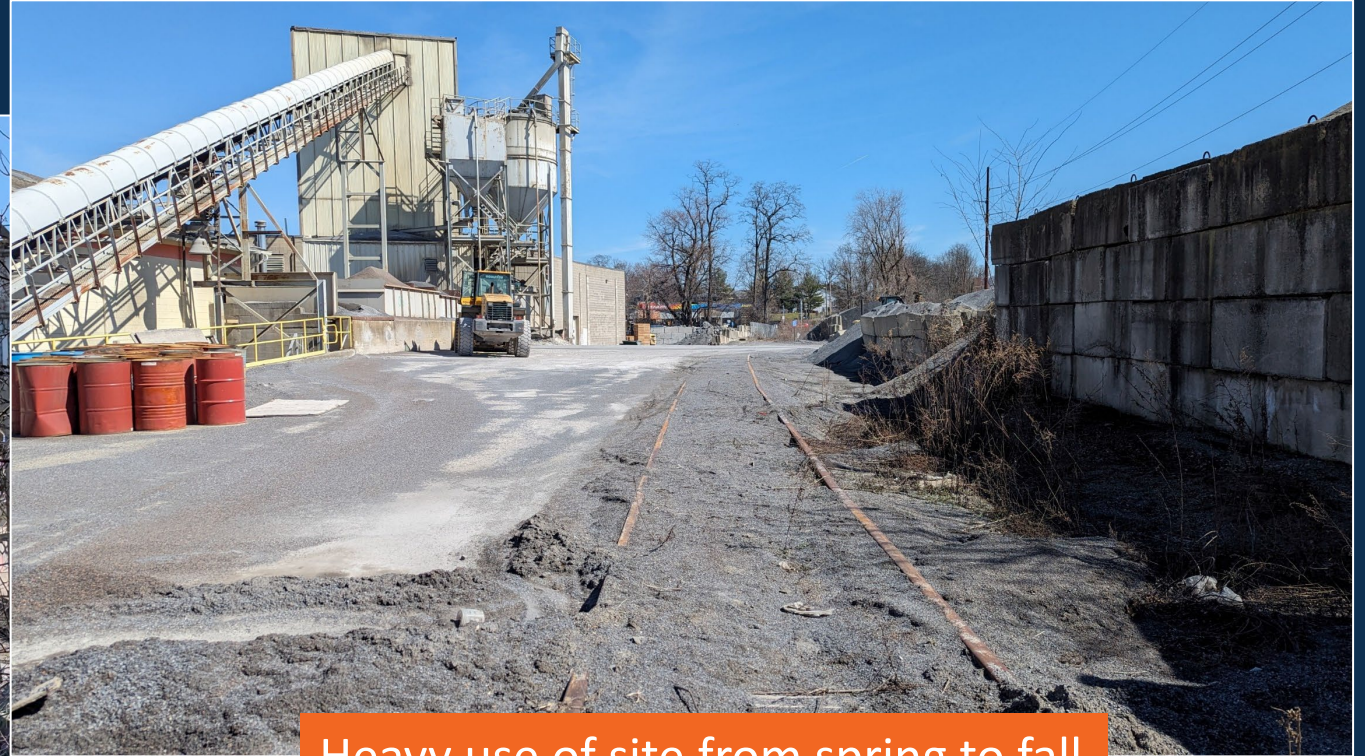


Example – WRS Dutchess Rail Trail over Route 55

Challenge #3: Industrial Area



Industrial area owned by Montfort Bros., Inc.



Heavy use of site from spring to fall

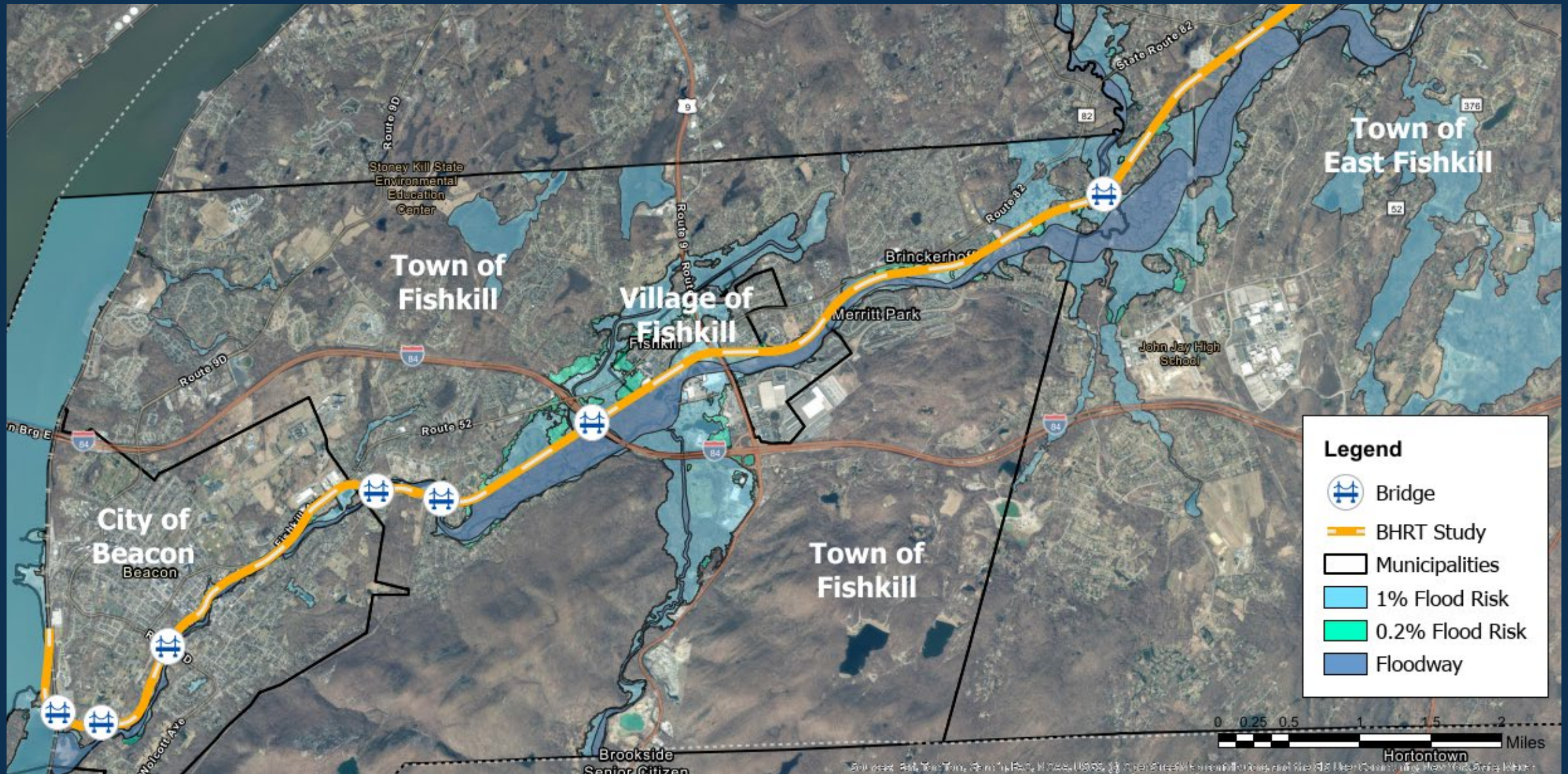
Challenge #3: Industrial Area



Options:

1. Bridge/underpass on current alignment
2. Avoid area - use existing roadways to the north
3. Avoid area - use southern edge of property (preferred)

Challenge #4: Floodplains



Challenge #5: Existing Bridges

Bridge 1 (Mile 0.63) - City of Beacon



Bridge 3 (Mile 3.74) - Town of Fishkill



Bridge 4 (Mile 4.21) - Town of Fishkill

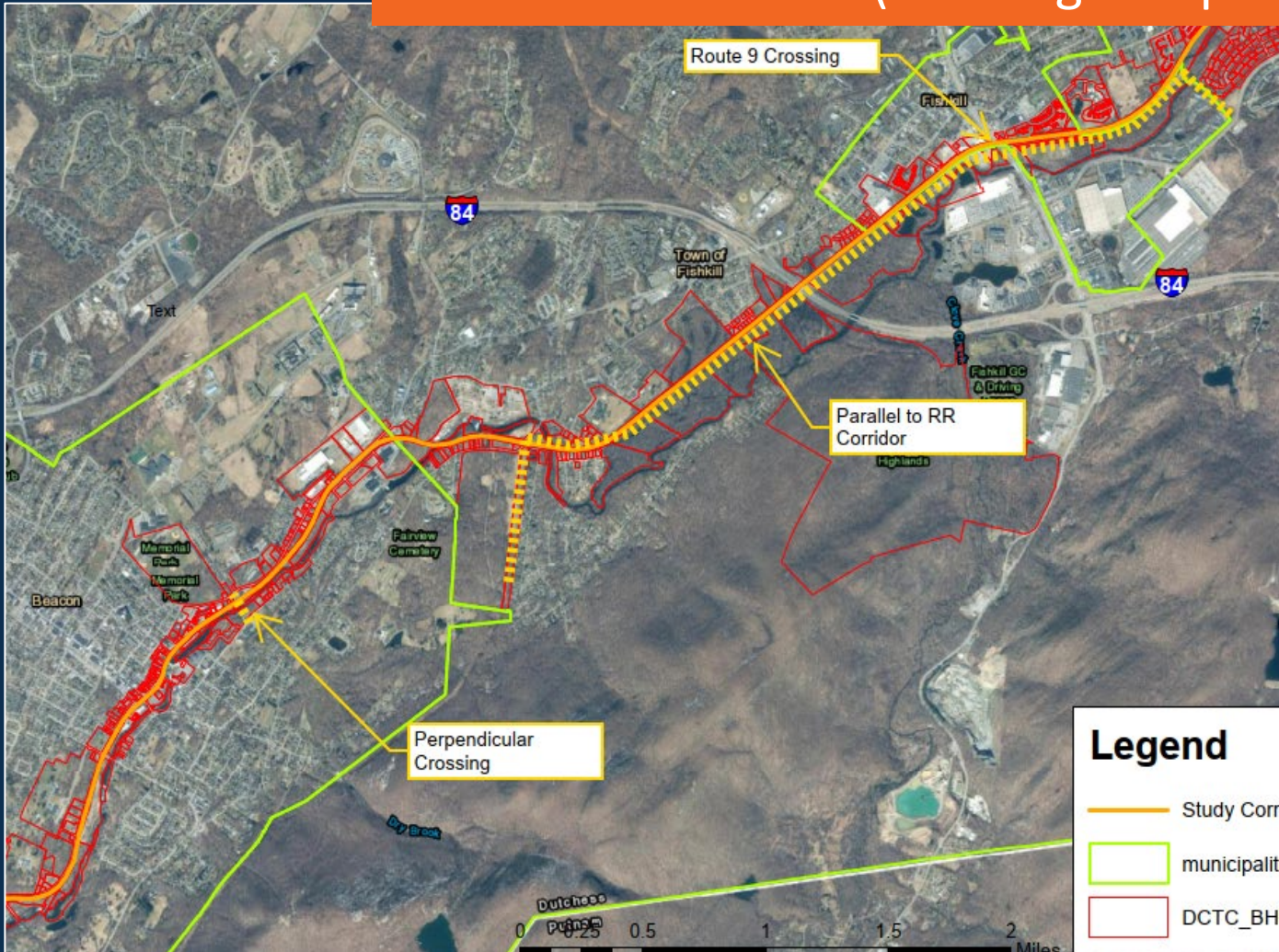


Bridge 5 (Mile 9.51) - Town of East Fishkill



Challenge #6: Utilities

Central Hudson Gas & Electric transmission and distribution lines (crossing and parallel to corridor).



Design Concepts: Rail **To** Trail or Rail **With** Trail?



O&W Connector Trail



Maybrook Trail

Concept A: Rail To Trail

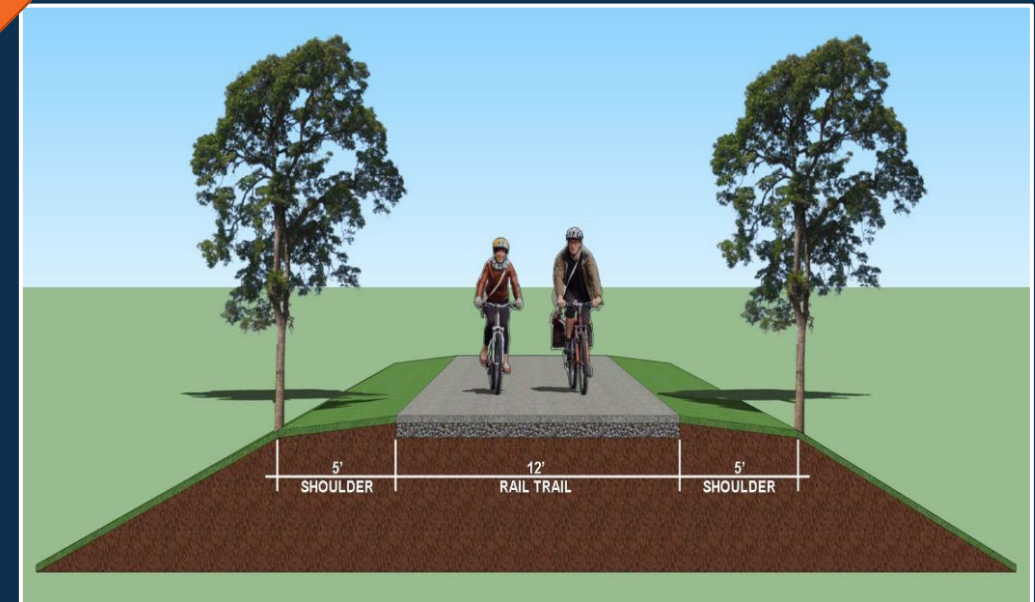
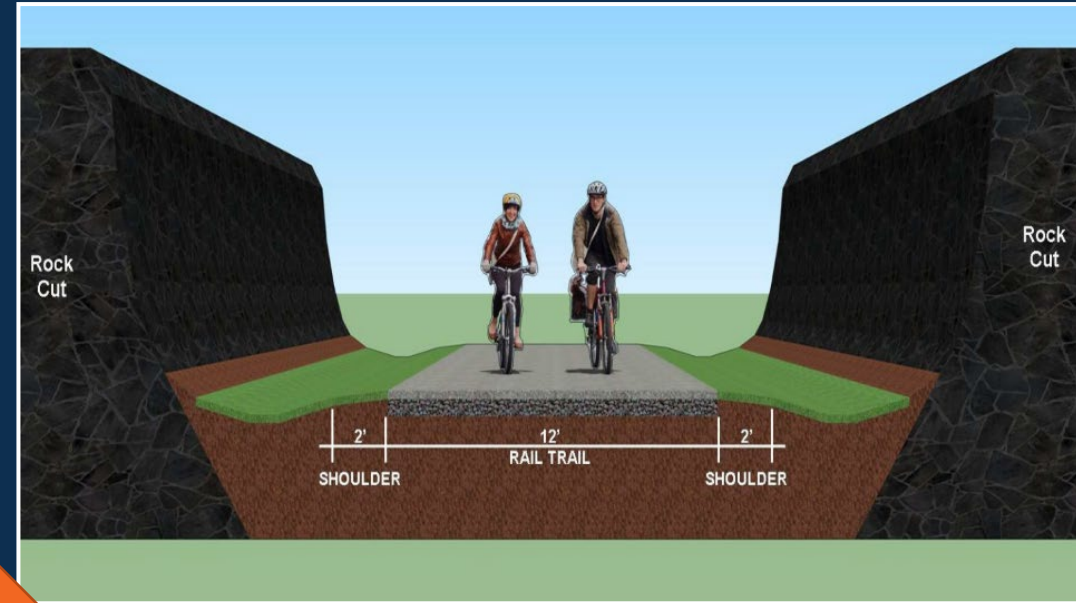


Rock cut near Beacon City line



Looking east of McGrath Terr

Re-use
Existing Railroad
Corridor



Concept A - Rail To Trail

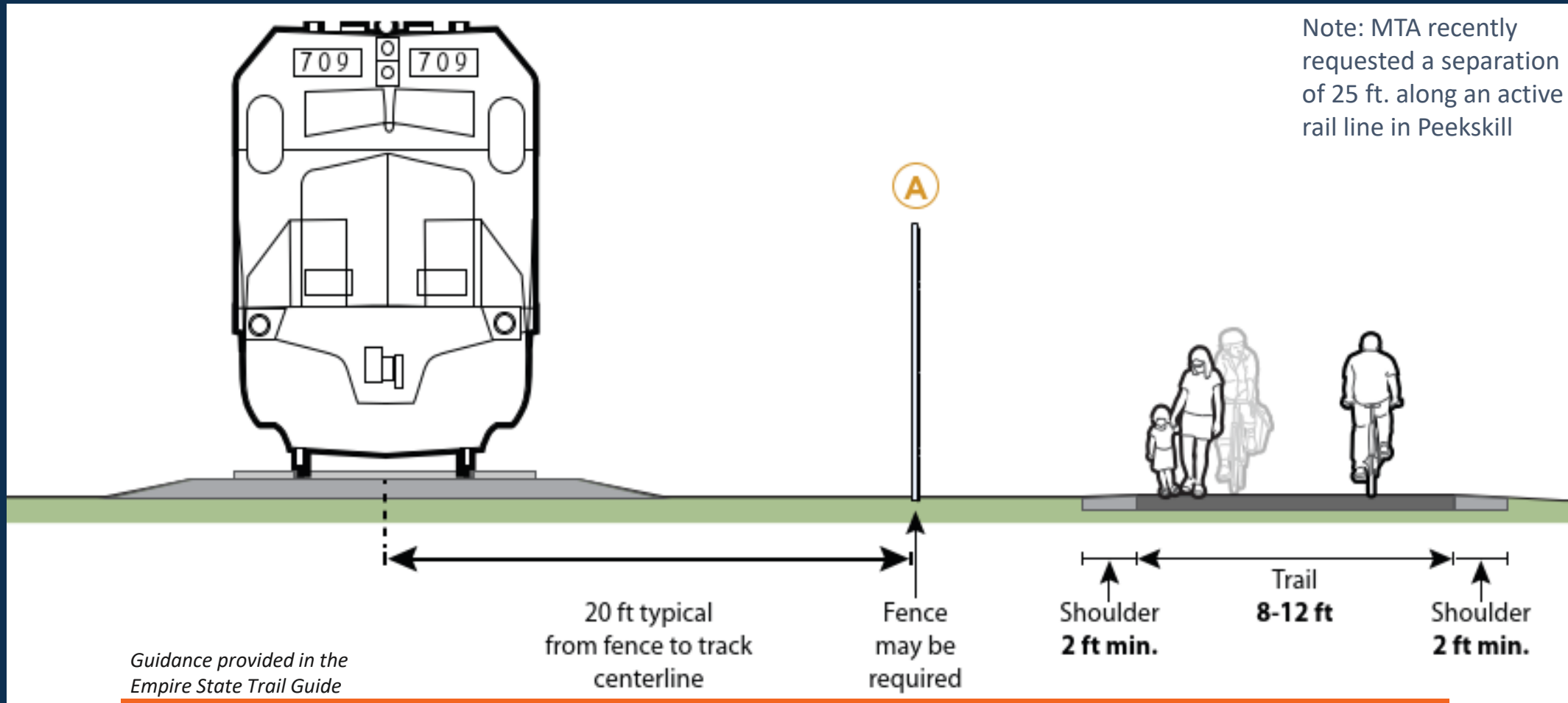
Benefits:

- Reuse existing footprint of the railroad tracks
- Minimal to no Right of Way impacts or acquisitions
- Majority of the corridor is in good condition
- Most ballast stone is in very good or excellent condition
- Re-purpose existing bridges/structures
- Re-use existing culverts under railroad
- Minimal construction footprint
- Minimal to no impacts to utilities
- Lower cost to build than Rail With Trail option (estimate: ~ \$50 million)

Challenges:

- Removing the existing railroad ties requires special handling and disposal requirements
- Communications conduit within the ballast stone must remain functional after construction; may be challenging to build around
- Eight existing culverts would need to be rehabilitated or replaced

Concept B: Rail **with** Trail - Typical Cross Section



MTA has no intention of running trains on this corridor.
However, the Trail should be built to 'Rail with Trail' standards under this concept.

Rail **with** Trail: Constrained Sections



City of Beacon: Fishkill Creek & Building



Downtown Beacon: Main Street & Fishkill Creek



Concept B - Rail **With** Trail

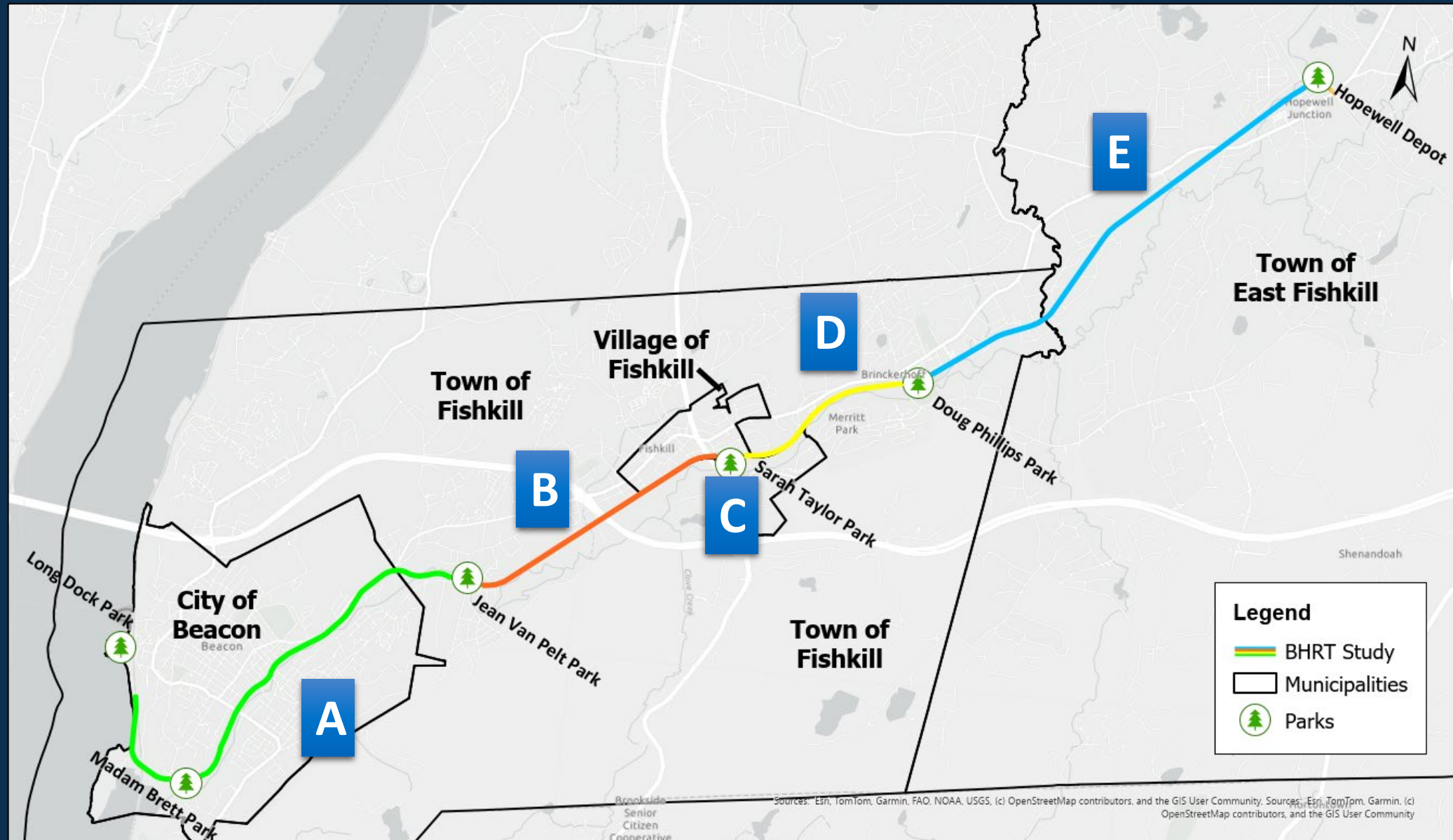
Benefits:

- Railroad tracks and bridges would remain
- Conduit within the ballast stone would be undisturbed
- Simpler process to re-integrate potential future train/track use into the corridor

Challenges:

- Large construction footprint with significant impacts
- Several large property acquisitions
- No re-use of existing materials or footprint of railroad
- 27 culverts under the railroad would require extensions
- Construction of 5 new bridges (over 550 ft. in length)
- Potential impacts to the adjacent electric utilities
- Significant environmental impacts
- Significant disturbance to the floodplain and Fishkill Creek
- Timber railroad ties would remain within the corridor
- Large area of tree clearing
- Potential for significant areas of rock removal
- Some segments would have to be re-routed
- Estimated cost: ~ \$140 million

Phasing/Segment Options



Key Takeaways

- Manage expectations: study, not (yet) a project
- Engage partners: Industrial site owners, NYSDOT re road crossings, Central Hudson re utilities, MTA/Metro-North
- Address Rail With Trail concept: feasibility, cost
- Provide flexibility for future design & construction phases
- Keep momentum moving forward

Questions?
Comments?

Thank you!

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