



**Community
Action Plan**

RECREATION ECONOMY
for
RURAL COMMUNITIES

**Cambridge,
New York**

September 2020



**Northern Border
Regional Commission**



CONTACT INFORMATION

Cambridge, New York

September 2020

For more information about RERC, please visit:
<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities>

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<https://outdoorfuncambridgeny.org/>

COMMUNITY STORY

Founded in 1761, the historic Village of Cambridge is a picturesque rural community nestled among the rolling hills of the Adirondacks and Green Mountains in Washington County of upstate New York.¹ With a population of 2,000 residents, Cambridge is a small community yet has a variety of unique assets, including an arts and culture center, brew pub, independent bookstore, antique stores, and farmer's market and cafes. In addition to the inviting variety of businesses within the commercial areas, the Village is also home to many working farms and has one the highest ranked school districts in the region. While the Village has several assets, the population has seen a 6% population decrease since 2010. In addition, it is estimated that 57.48% of the households are living on less than 80% of the County median income of \$51,573. However, the population is becoming younger at an average age of 42.2 compared to 44.1 in 2010. Many of the downtown storefronts are also vacant. Investing in the ample amount of outdoor recreation assets can bolster the Village's economy and spur sustainable economic growth and revitalize Main Street.

The Village of Cambridge hosts many popular outdoor recreation events and sites. The Battenkill River is a world-renowned trout fishing stream and is also home to the famous national bike race, Tour of the Battenkill. With its lush scenery, the Village could improve connections to many of its trails, parks, and natural areas to make the outdoors more accessible. In the commercial and residential areas of the Village there are several pocket parks, a community garden, and wetland trails. The Cambridge Central School is creating an educational environmental experience including a biomass energy plantation, arboretum, wetland boardwalk, walking trails, and restoration of wildlife habitat. Recently, a historic Victorian Bridge was removed due to unsafe conditions, leaving the underlying stream in need of renovation. This area is a prime location for improvement. There are also two closed institutional campuses that could be ripe for re-use or development into recreation areas.

A local land trust, Agricultural Stewardship Association (ASA), acquired a 145-acre property to establish the Cambridge



Covered footbridge over Owl Kill Creek

STEERING COMMITTEE

Sarah Ashton, President, The Cambridge Valley Community Development and Preservation Partnership, Inc.

Renee Bouplon, Associate Director, Agricultural Stewardship Association

Alex Dery Snider, Trustee, Village of Cambridge

Brian Harrington, Board Member, Town of Cambridge

Sara Kelly, President, Cambridge Valley Chamber of Commerce

Barbra Kingsley, Board Member, Town of White Creek

Douglas Silvernell, Superintendent, Cambridge Central School

Jared Woodcock, Resident

Figure 1 - Local steering committee

¹ Village of Cambridge. "Village of Cambridge, NY." <https://v3.cambridgeny.gov/>. Accessed Nov. 8, 2019.

Community Forest. The Forest is planned to be used for hiking, mountain biking, fishing, and gathering.² The ASA is dedicated to the preservation of agricultural lands and they have conserved thousands of acres of farmland using agricultural easements and other conservation tools. The Cambridge Community Forest is the first property that ASA has purchased explicitly for public recreation and conservation. The Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) program can best support the ASA's first public land acquisition by supporting ongoing planning efforts to identify challenges and opportunities and connecting this land to a broader regional recreation plan.

In 2019, the Village of Cambridge applied for the Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program and was one of ten finalists selected out of 170 applications nationwide. RERC planning assistance will help the Village improve upon its outdoor access, support priorities for the Cambridge Community Forest, develop underutilized sites into valuable outdoor recreation centers, and create a connected vision for the future of the outdoor recreation assets. This can help improve quality of life for residents through greater access to outdoor resources and increase economic development by attracting more visitors and business owners. Cambridge can serve as a model as efforts and strategies identified here can be replicated in other area small towns.

PLANNING ASSISTANCE TEAM

- Stephanie Bertaina**, U.S. EPA Office of Community Revitalization
- Lance Caldwell**, U.S. EPA Region 2
- Rabi Kieber**, U.S. EPA Region 2
- Nausheen Iqbal**, USDA Forest Service
- Scott Stewart**, USDA Forest Service
- Rachel Riemann**, USDA Forest Service
- Jim Walfrand**, USDA Rural Development
- Chris Hunsinger**, USDA Rural Development
- Gretchen Pinkel**, USDA Rural Development
- Rich Grogan**, Northern Border Regional Commission
- Jason Espie**, EPR, PC (Facilitator)
- Katie Allen**, Conservation Leadership Network, The Conservation Fund (Facilitator)

Figure 2 - Several Federal and State Agency Partners joined consultants to comprise the planning assistance team.



Concert at the Memorial Park gazebo



Hiking in the Cambridge Community Forest

² Agricultural Stewardship Association. "Land Conservation Cambridge Community Forest." <https://www.agstewardship.org/land-conservation/Cambridge-Community-Forest-92-pg.htm>. Accessed Nov. 12, 2019.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The planning assistance engagement process for Recreation Economy for Rural Communities has three phases of plan, convene, and act, illustrated in the diagram below. The **plan** phase consists of three preparation conference calls with the local steering committee and the planning assistance team to clarify goals and arrange workshop logistics. The **convene** phase includes the effort’s capstone event—a workshop in the community. The **act** phase includes three follow up conference calls to finalize a community action plan and strategize on how to implement the plan and maintain momentum generated during the workshop. Due to the impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the community workshop was reformatted for a virtual platform. Seven sessions took place over six days from September 21-29, 2020 and activities during those days are described below. Workshop exercise results are summarized in **Appendix A**, a list of workshop attendees are provided in **Appendix B**.

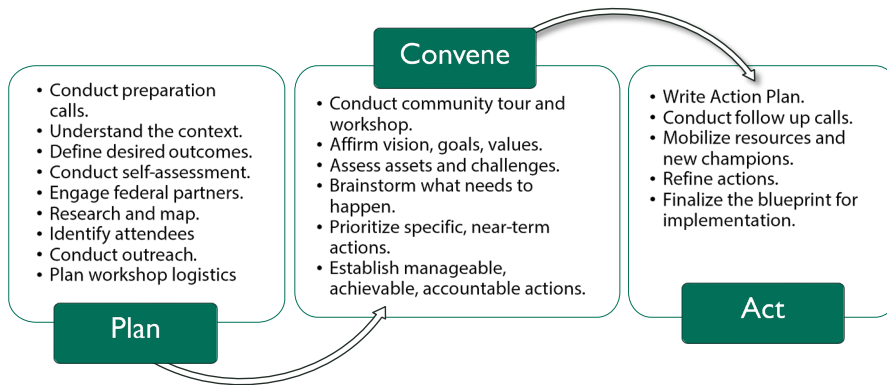


Figure 3 - Planning Assistance Process Diagram

VISION AND VALUES SESSION ONE

Over 60 Cambridge residents and community stakeholders convened virtually for the first public session of the workshop on the evening of September 21, 2020. Each participant was asked to introduce themselves and provide one word that represents Cambridge or outdoor recreation. Their responses were captured and turned into word clouds (Figures 4 and 5). Following introductions, Stephanie Bertaina of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided a brief overview of the RERC program purpose and process. Although a physical community tour was not possible, Alex Dery Snider, Village of Cambridge Trustee, provided the community context and background for Cambridge’s motivation to apply to the RERC planning assistance program through a virtual tour of assets.



Cambridge Community Garden

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Village Trustee, Alex Dery Snider, provided a virtual tour of Cambridge's assets to orient the planning assistance team, federal and state agency partners, and workshop attendees to the key locations and opportunities that may be enhanced and supported by the goals of this planning assistance program.

She provided a review of the website with a map and list of outdoor recreation assets in and around Cambridge created by the steering committee.

Alex highlighted the Woodland Cemetery and Park, which is a popular walking and running spot. The park has a dog walking station and is one of the few hilly places in the area and provides opportunity for exercise.

Alex also highlighted the community garden in downtown Cambridge and several pocket parks, including VARAK park. Alex shared a vision for connecting the parks together with trails, including a connection from VARAK park to the former hospital site and its surrounding trails.

There are several waterways in the area that provide opportunities for tubing and kayaking, including the Owl Kill and Battenkill River, as well as other lakes and creeks. These places are popular with locals and feature prominently in photos posted on social media platforms. Following the review of the website, Alex played a video from the Agricultural Stewardship Association that gave an overview of a new outdoor asset, the Cambridge Community Forest. Community members interested in expanding outdoor recreation opportunities approached the Agricultural Stewardship Association who then purchased a wooded property along the White Creek that is within walking distance from the Village of Cambridge. The community's vision for the forest is a place where people of all ages can go to engage the outdoors. Activities include hiking, bird watching, fishing, and outdoor education. The Forest is maintained by volunteers and is open during all seasons.

The community context set the stage for the following discussion, led by the planning assistance team, to start creating connections to Cambridge's vision and goals for this program and the recreation economy to maximize the potential of these individual assets.

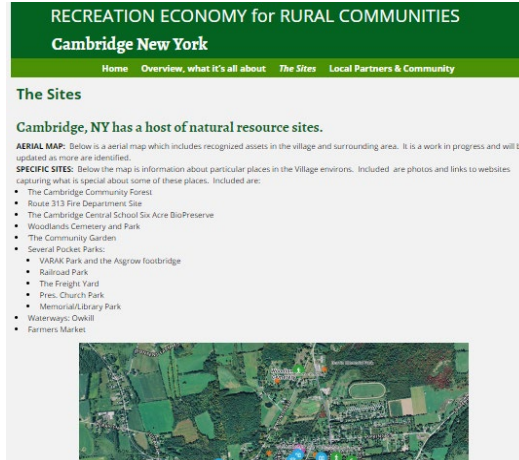


Figure 6 - Virtual tour website created by the steering committee
Credit: <https://outdoorfuncambridgeny.org/index.php/the-sites/>



Figure 7 - Video introducing the Cambridge Community Forest.
Credit: <https://fb.watch/27DeVjmbFr/>

RECREATION ECONOMY

The planning assistance team provided an overview of opportunities and benefits related to the recreation economy. Presentations detailed how supporting and growing the outdoor recreation economy can be part of a community's overall economic development strategy and can be mutually supportive of other economic development efforts. Outlining how the recreation economy benefits from a comprehensive approach that connects across sectors, the planning assistance team discussed three areas of focus to build the recreation economy: 1) enhancing access to outdoor recreation, 2) revitalizing main streets, and 3) ensuring that equity is an intentional part of the conversation. The team spoke to the growing interest and importance of the outdoor recreation economy both nationally and in the State of New York, and shared state and regional data demonstrating outdoor recreation as an economic driver.

WORKSHOP GOALS

The primary purpose of the evening meeting was to hear from workshop participants about their vision for growing the area's recreation economy and revitalizing downtown Cambridge. The planning assistance team introduced the draft workshop goals which were formulated by the local steering committee in conference calls leading up to the workshop, and asked participants to review and provide any comments for improvement. When polled, the majority of participants felt they were right on track and very little changes were needed. The workshop goals were:

1. Physical Connections: Support physical improvements to streets and sidewalks and provide wayfinding signs to safely connect Main Street to walkable and bikeable natural amenities, including the new Community Forest, Woodlands Cemetery, community gardens, trails, and pocket parks, complementing and building on Main Street redevelopment projects.

2. Priorities for the Community Forest: Identify next steps for development of the Community Forest that engages the community in planning, infrastructure development, and community-supported programming and activities, capitalizing on the forest's proximity to Main Street and to existing and planned civic uses such as the school and fire department.

3. Community Identity and Opportunities for All: Celebrate what makes Cambridge unique, bringing all outdoor recreation assets together, assessing what exists and what is missing, building on business and service opportunities,

IN NEW YORK OUTDOOR RECREATION GENERATES:

**\$41.8
BILLION**
IN CONSUMER
SPENDING ANNUALLY



313,000
DIRECT
JOBS



**\$14.0
BILLION**
IN WAGES AND
SALARIES



**\$3.6
BILLION**
IN STATE AND LOCAL
TAX REVENUE



Figure 8 – Recreation Economy in New York. Credit: <https://outdoorindustry.org/state/new-york/>



Woodland Cemetery and Park

and developing an identity and brand for a community that is connected, inclusive, equitable, understandable, and exciting for all residents and visitors.

4. Regional Connectivity: Develop an understanding of the regional context of recreational assets, connection to other communities, and alignment of regional priorities for leveraging the unique outdoor recreation amenities in the area.

To help define and describe the community's vision and values related to the outdoor recreation economy, the planning assistance team asked participants to dream about something good that has happened in Cambridge on the topics of outdoor recreation and main street revitalization and to work in small groups to draft aspirational headlines for 3-5 years from now. Participants were asked to think about what has happened in Cambridge that had a significant impact and what made it possible. Some of the responses that participants shared is shown in Figure 9. A transcript of all of the headlines collected is available in Appendix A.

PEER INSPIRATION

SESSION TWO

About 40 people attended the second session of the virtual workshop held on the morning of September 22, 2020. The purpose of this session was to explore strategies and solutions, ideas and initiatives that may be sparked by learning from other communities. The planning assistance team presented a series of case studies, illustrating stories, lessons learned, and possible models from other communities engaged in leveraging their outdoor recreation economy and community vitality. The facilitation team highlighted the Pennsylvania Wilds Initiative, a 12 ½ county regional partnership to develop outdoor recreation destinations, support local businesses and entrepreneurs, and celebrate communities through marketing and branding. The team also shared a business development initiative in the rural community of Marion, Virginia linking downtown revitalization and entrepreneur training to fill vacant storefronts with new businesses.

To connect to efforts of the Cambridge Community Forest, the case story of the McSEED Community Forest in the coastal flatwoods of Georgia illustrated how creating the state's first community forest led to the development of a masterplan that blends community economic development, cultural preservation, landowner education, environmental protection and restoration, and community-based recreation. The facilitation team also presented a survey of quick examples related on the themes of trail towns, natural resource stewardship, and coordinating the

MAKING HEADLINES

- *A tiny village in the historic Cambridge Valley is experiencing an economic boom through year-round outdoor recreation.*
- *Community assets like Hospital Hill, the Community Forest have become interconnected and have proven to be the key to this small town's turnaround.*
- *Small businesses have been drawn to this gem of a village.*
- *New families and elders have arrived and launched a real estate boom.*
- *The sky seems to be the limit for this gorgeous little town.*
- *Cambridge recognized nationally for its community spirit and its revitalization and sustainability, creating more jobs for residents while maintaining balance and the landscapes that make us special.*
- *Cambridge has become a mecca for outdoor recreation.*
- *Cambridge is Really Moving, Join Us in the Great Outdoors!*
- *Cambridge wins comprehensive lifestyle award for a healthy community; cited as the best village in NY state.*
- *Cambridge Valley Recreational Loop Completed! Leads to regional economic connectivity.*

Figure 9 - Results of the visioning exercise called "Making Headlines"

business community. After each presentation, the facilitators provided time for discussion with workshop participants. Federal and state agency partners also introduced their roles in outdoor recreation and the types of assistance their programs can offer to support implementation of community goals.

ASSET MAPPING & ASSESSMENT

SESSION THREE

On the afternoon of September 22, 2020, about 40 Cambridge participants reconvened for the third session of the virtual workshop. The purpose of this session was to begin to identify opportunities through small group exercises focused on asset mapping and asset assessment. The goal was for each group to have the time to exchange ideas on topics of interest to prepare for the action brainstorming in the next session. Three breakout groups were formed with one group working on a Social Pinpoint Asset Mapping exercise and two groups working on an Asset Assessment exercise.

SOCIAL PINPOINT MAPPING

One group worked with a shared online mapping tool called Social Pinpoint to place virtual pins on a map of Cambridge identifying favorite places, outdoor recreation assets, community assets, areas needing improvement, opportunities and big ideas, and the location of partners or organizations. The interactive RERC Cambridge map can be viewed here:

<https://eprpc.mysocialpinpoint.com/lerc-cambridge/>. This website (Figure 10) will remain open for comment and input by the community until the end of March 2021. A summary of the content generated as of December 2020 is available in Appendix A.

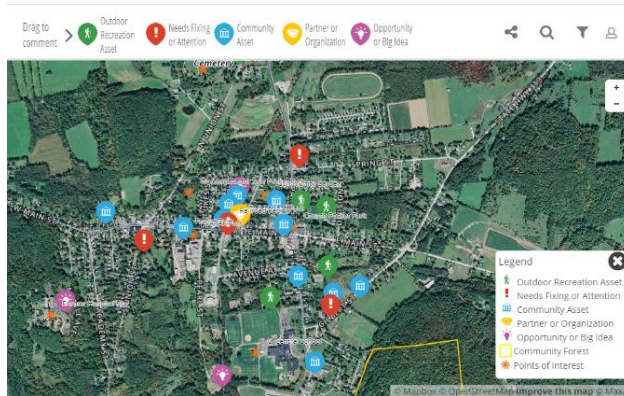


Figure 10 - Cambridge Social Pinpoint Map can be viewed at <https://eprpc.mysocialpinpoint.com/lerc-cambridge/>. This map will remain open for comment and input until the end of March 2021. A map and legend as of December 2020 is available in Appendix A.

Goal 1: Physical Connections: Support physical improvements to streets and sidewalks and provide wayfinding signs to safely connect Main Street to walkable and bikeable natural amenities, including the new Community Forest, Woodlands Cemetery, community gardens, trails, and pocket parks, complementing and building on Main Street redevelopment projects.

Assets / Working well		Challenges / Barriers	
Sidewalks in village	Scale of village. Village buildings are concentrated in small area - easy to make impact	Strong arts center in the middle of the community (historic rd)	Safe Parkland/like areas from CCS to CC. Look to the house it acts for parking and paths
Street safety and structure has been improved	Signage has been approved and is more available	Most of the Village has walkable sidewalks, including in the areas where they are present	Lack of bike path/route: Safe bike lanes on Main and other streets or designated alternate bike routes. Disrupting to travel with on-street parking.
Community street is easily walkable to the downtown community	Well-defined "Main Street"	Fire department project is moving forward	Lack of bike parking, signage may not feel safe in the area for pedestrians and/or bikes. Community Forest is a possibility. Main Street for needs to be designated.
Proximity of community forest to schools, daycare - access to outdoor nature resources education	Main rd available from one end to the other	Lots of recycling opportunities	Signage for recreational activities not yet done
The community garden is visible from the street	Lighting has been improved	Lighting has been improved	Improve access to Hospital Hill - recycling "freely access" can access be opened to public?
Local ownership of businesses	North courts newly renovated room and outdoor classroom at CCS	Weekly Farmers Market	No wayfinding signs exist
Wayfinding are added	Charging stations are added	Historic nature of architecture	Vertical businesses, lack of landmarks, outdoor spaces etc.
			Lack of cultural activities such as music pieces for park/CCS

Figure 11 - Sample of an assets & challenges exercise slide; a complete set of exercise results are in Appendix A

ASSET ASSESSMENT

Two small breakout groups worked with the facilitator team to consider opportunities/assets and challenges/barriers around the four workshop goals. Working

virtually in a shared document, groups identified what is working well in Cambridge to build on the outdoor recreation economy and revitalize downtown. In addressing challenges, each group was asked to identify what barriers exist to achieving goals around outdoor recreation and downtown revitalization, and what needs to happen to overcome those barriers. Each group answered these questions for each goal. The outputs of this exercise are summarized Appendix A. An example of the assets and challenges identified for Goal 1 related to physical connections is provided below in Figure 11.

ACTION PLANNING

The action planning process during the workshop consisted of four phases of work, each phase a virtual working session. Below is a summary of this process and outcomes at the Cambridge workshop. Overall, group participation by the community in Cambridge was exceptional, and the workshop managed to maintain a good level of energy throughout. Below is a Zoom group picture that is emblematic of the participation and energy, and in many cases more than one family member, or pet, was in attendance.



Figure 12 - Group Photo from the Zoom Meeting

Once completed, the facilitation team reviewed the actions with the most votes with the participants. The facilitation team worked with workshop participants to confirm priorities based on those votes and to select actions to move forward in the planning process. The actions ranked for Goal 2 are shown below in Figure 8, with the full transcript of actions and ranks collected in Appendix A.

ACTION PLANNING SESSION SIX

The final phase of the action planning process culminated on the afternoon of September 25, 2020 with an action detailing exercise. About 40 participants worked in small groups assigned to each goal. These working groups assessed the prioritization voting and fleshed out the details of the top actions for each goal, such as importance, timeframe, lead role, etc. For each goal four-five priority actions were detailed during the allotted time. Each group prepared to report on their actions for the final session.

WORKSHOP CLOSE SESSION SEVEN

Cambridge turned out for the final session, with over 50 participants joining for the seventh and final session of the virtual workshop on the evening of September 29, 2020. This final session was all about making it happen. Each of the session six working groups were asked to present the results of the action planning session. Participants were then asked to provide feedback, and together they discussed next steps. In this final phase, the resulting action plan tables that follow provide additional background information and detail for each goal and action. The workshop ended with a call to action, each participant offering what they will do to advance the action plan and what they hope from the process moving forward.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN | Village of Cambridge

The action planning process during the workshop consisted of a few phases of work. First, there was a brainstorming session, where workshop facilitators asked participants to write down potential actions to help advance one or more goals. The next phase was a voting exercise where workshop facilitators asked participants and to vote on a google form which ten actions either were most important or needed immediate attention. In the third phase, small working groups assessed the voting results, agreed to work on a subset of those actions, and outlined the details for how to accomplish the top two to five actions for each goal. In the final phase, each small working group reported back its progress and shared any questions they encountered. The tables that follow provide the background information and details for each goal and action.

Goal 1 – Physical Connections: Support physical improvements to streets and sidewalks and provide wayfinding signs to safely connect Main Street to walkable and bikeable natural amenities, including the new Community Forest, Woodlands Cemetery, community gardens, trails, and pocket parks, complementing and building on Main Street redevelopment projects.

- *Action 1.1: Initiate a comprehensive sidewalk audit and community survey of the Village to identify where there needs to be sidewalks installed, repaired, or improved for better access to community assets and safe walking and biking.*
- *Action 1.2: Create a sitemap of existing and proposed physical connections based on the audit completed in Action 1.1.*

- *Action 1.3: Begin implementation process of projects determined by Audit (1.1) and Site Map (1.2).*
- *Action 1.4: Identify funding sources that leverage the Firehouse Bond Referendum for a multi-benefit project to include sidewalk and trail installation and a safe crossing of Rt 22 (near Cambridge Central School) and up Rt. 313. Funding should be used to offset payment of the bond while also incorporating priority infrastructure needs around the Firehouse.*
- *Action 1.5: Reinstall the Victorian Footbridge and develop an engineered plan to seek funding for the rehabilitation of the streambed of the Owlkill in VARAK park along Main Street.*

Goal 2 – Priorities for the Community Forest: Identify next steps for development of the Community Forest that engages the community in planning, infrastructure development, and community-supported programming and activities, capitalizing on the forest’s proximity to Main Street and to existing and planned civic uses such as the school and fire department.

- *Action 2.1: Foster the formation of a “Friends Group” for the Community Forest, with committees tasked with trail building/maintenance programs, connecting to other community projects, and organizing events and meeting needs.*
- *Action 2.2: Identify existing trails, secure funding for building new trails, and create a maintenance plan for all trails.*
- *Action 2.3: Identify existing or create new dedicated or shared public parking for the Community Forest.*
- *Action 2.4: Secure additional land connecting the Community Forest to nearby public and private land.*

Goal 3 – Community Identity and Opportunities for All: Celebrate what makes Cambridge unique, bringing all outdoor recreation assets together, assessing what exists and what is missing, building on business and service opportunities, and developing an identity and brand for a community that is connected, inclusive, equitable, understandable, and exciting for all residents and visitors.

- *Action 3.1: Continue to engage with owners of the Hospital and look for a way to create an accessible amenity for all.*
- *Action 3.2: Work to improve inclusion and more voices represented in recreation economy planning efforts.*
- *Action 3.3: Identify underused properties (buildings/lots) as opportunity areas for a future visitor welcome center (e.g., Wilds Center) or public space (e.g., pocket park, trail head, disc golf course).*
- *Action 3.4: Form a work group to initiate an effort to assess what is authentic and unique about the Cambridge Valley and to identify a brand identity for the Village/Towns.*
- *Action 3.5: Build partners (“Trails and Sign Team”) to develop and implement historical and nature walks with a signage (much like the NYS historical markers), within reach of downtown.*
- *Action 3.6: Work with neighbors to address the need for wastewater treatment to ensure public health and allow for viability and growth of existing and future businesses; identify needs of current and prospective businesses and residents (including sewage, wifi) and work to make progress toward them.*

Goal 4 – Regional Connectivity: Develop an understanding of the regional context of recreational assets, connection to other communities, and alignment of regional priorities for leveraging the unique outdoor recreation amenities in the area.

- *Action 4.1: Work with area municipalities White Creek and Cambridge to collaborate around sidewalks, rural transit connections, wastewater, and broadband (including creating a regional wastewater system).*
- *Action 4.2: Gather inventory of cultural, historic, and natural resource assets in the region and convene stakeholders to discuss projects.*

- *Action 4.3: Convene a planning group to conduct an inventory of priority assets in the region; use Battenkill watershed as a starting point to define the region.*
- *Action 4.4 – Develop a professionally made map to highlight regional recreation opportunities.*

Goal 1: Physical Connections: Support physical improvements to streets and sidewalks and provide wayfinding signs to safely connect Main Street to walkable and bikeable natural amenities, including the new Community Forest, Woodlands Cemetery, community gardens, trails, and pocket parks, complementing and building on Main Street redevelopment projects.

Physical connections are the key to a livable community. Providing safe travel options for pedestrians and bicyclists increases physical activity among residents and visitors, reduces the reliance on motor vehicles, increases equitable access to community amenities, and reduces transportation and infrastructure costs (such as parking) and carbon footprints. Cambridge is taking a serious look at their physical connections to serve the recreation economy. By supporting improvements to streets, sidewalks, and access to the recreation amenities of the community, Cambridge is elevating their identity as a community that also supports equitable access to physical activity – making it easier for folks to walk, bike, and enjoy the amenities of Cambridge without concerns for safety or limited mobility.

Action 1.1: Initiate a comprehensive sidewalk audit and community survey of the Village to identify where there needs to be sidewalks installed, repaired, or improved for better access to community assets and safe walking and biking.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Conducting a sidewalk audit and community survey of sidewalk improvement needs (and then making those improvements) can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase safety and mobility of Cambridge residents and visitors; • Increase equity and inclusion of all community members by providing access to multiple transportation modes and access to Cambridge amenities; • Ensure the community is in compliance with ADA requirements for seniors and mobility-limited individuals; and • Include additional infrastructure needs that should also be addressed including street lighting, bike lanes, and wayfinding signage to take a comprehensive look at related public safety needs for the community.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse participation in audit • Implementation of change (increased access and mobility of residents and visitors)
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Now, complete in three months (before winter 2020/2021) - but also to address seasonal concerns • Thanksgiving 2020: Hold a “Turkey Trot” event to get folks out, socially distanced, to complete the audit.
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion from RERC with Village Board member • Ad Hoc Planning Committee, current volunteers include: David Bayne, Linda Salzer, and David Snider • Village Dept Public Works (to provide existing map and current plan for sidewalk/road improvements)

Action 1.1: Initiate a comprehensive sidewalk audit and community survey of the Village to identify where there needs to be sidewalks installed, repaired, or improved for better access to community assets and safe walking and biking.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rick Lederer-Barnes (can compile/map)
Supporting cast	<p>A diverse representation of the community to include representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools – School Students/Families (Sunshine Nursery) • Mrs. Green Care Facility • Headstart • Main Street Program • Shea Imhof (reach out to biking husband, David) • Cambridge Valley Cycling • Hubbard Hall • Lions/Knights of Columbus • Legion and Masons (to be reached out to) • Chamber of Commerce • The wider business community • Senior Centers • Library • Cambridge Urgent Care • Main Street Pediatrics • Kate Kotfila – Seasonal Farmworkers • Cambridge for Social Justice (Chis Nolan-Parker/Diane Nolan) • Twelve Tribes – owner of property on main street & along Owlkill/adjacent to Woodlands
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Social Pinpoint or App Development to use to capture audit data (Jason Espie and Rick Lederer-Barnes to support) • NEED: Review of DOT Study for Main Street and Union Street to inform audit • NEED: Additional plans and audits done at the Village/County level to inform audit (Matt Toleman with Department of Public Works identified as resource) • NEED: To complete research to find comprehensive audit template • NEED: Identification of cost to get this done – will mostly rely on volunteers but may have funding needs for development/hosting of a website/app for the audit, review and synthesizing data, marketing of audit as event, special event needs like coffee or treats for volunteers • Planning Resource: Mark Fenton (www.markfenton.com); see Tips for a Sidewalk Audit; The Power of the Walk Audit (video) • Case Story: Adirondack Health Institute (Chris Hunsinger from USDA Rural Development can provide more information)

Action 1.2 – Create a sitemap of existing and proposed physical connections, i.e. bike paths, trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, rail trails - and Village highlights or proposed wayfinding locations.

<p>What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?</p>	<p>Creating a sitemap of existing and proposed physical connections can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps and opportunities to create regional connectors to Cambridge trails; • Be used as a tool to discuss with adjacent landowners how they can contribute to connections by providing access for trail development; • Provide an opportunity to connect local amenities and existing trails such the Owlkill, Community Forest, and Hospital Hill; • Include a comprehensive look at public safety needs and infrastructure to support the recreation economy and “bigger vision” livability needs such as parking lots, charging stations, wayfinding, and street lights; • Increase safety and mobility of Cambridge residents and visitors; • Increase equity and inclusion of all community members in providing access to multiple transportation modes and access to Cambridge amenities; • Ensure the community is in compliance with ADA requirements for seniors and mobility-limited individuals; • Include in audit additional infrastructure needs that should also be addressed including street lighting, bike lanes, and wayfinding signage to take a comprehensive look at related public safety needs for the community; • Provide definition to the extent/scope of trail/sidewalk/bike lane installation and improvement projects; • Become a tool to measure implementation success; • Become a communication tool to present/share with stakeholders; and • Become the beginning of prioritization tool for supporting economic development related to outdoor recreation that can connect to businesses/main street to opportunities.
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map is completed • Enthusiasm/energy generated – level of participation in development is diverse and large
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start after completion of audit (Action 1.1) • Spring 2021 – complete task (reach out to funders by summer)
<p>Lead Roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnership (site map and initial coordination) • Champion from RERC with Village Board member • Ad Hoc Committee created in Action 1.1. and additional leaders that join
<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the groups involved in action 1.1 • Additional stakeholders to support trail site mapping, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (Hannah Blake) • Rick Lederer- Barnes • Main Street Program • Snowmobile Groups (Tammy Taber)

Action 1.2 – Create a sitemap of existing and proposed physical connections, i.e. bike paths, trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, rail trails - and Village highlights or proposed wayfinding locations.

Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Funding for map development • NEED: Technical mapping expertise • NEED: Coordinated public review process • NEED: Research/identification of trail development skill set and resources • RESOURCE: National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program identified as a potential funding opportunity for planning assistance (Hannah Blake can assist) • RESOURCE: GIS mapping skill set (Rick Lederer – Barnes identified to support)
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Action 1.3 – Begin the implementation process with prioritization of outcomes determined by Audit (1.1) and Site Map (1.2).

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Implementing projects consistent with the findings from Actions 1.1 and 1.2 can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase safety and mobility of Cambridge residents and visitors; • Increase equity and inclusion of all community members in providing access to multiple transportation modes and access to Cambridge amenities; • Ensure the community is in compliance with ADA requirements for seniors and mobility-limited individuals; and • Include in audit additional infrastructure needs that should also be addressed including street lighting, bike lanes, and wayfinding signage to take a comprehensive look at related public safety needs for the community.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects are implemented – additional projects developed as a result of the opportunities identified during this process
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To begin as soon as Action 1.1 and 1.2 are completed and become an iterative process of prioritizing projects for completion followed by implementation • See the two initial projects identified to move forward as time sensitive priorities (see details in 1.4 & 1.5).
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad Hoc Committee developed in Action 1.2
Supporting cast	<p>In addition to those listed in Actions 1.1. and 1.2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York State and National Main Street Program • DEC • EPA • DOT/FHWA • USDA RD • Private Landowners (faith based/private) • Cambridge Valley Community Development and Preservation Partnership (CVCDPP, the Community Partnership)
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RESOURCE: USDA Rural Development Low Interest Loans • RESOURCE: Safe Routes to School

Action 1.4 – Identify funding sources that leverage the Firehouse Bond Referendum for a multi-benefit project to include sidewalk and trail installation and a safe crossing of Rt 22 (near Cambridge Central School) and up Rt. 313. Funding should be used to offset payment of the bond while also incorporating priority infrastructure needs around the Firehouse.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Building on the success of the Firehouse Bond Referendum and identifying additional funding sources for sidewalk and trail installation and safe roadway crossings can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address equity and inclusion for all community members, improve safety and mobility, and enhance access; • Ensure compliance with ADA; and • Provide safe crossing for children.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk and safe crossing built
Timeframe	<p>Immediately, first steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with NY Department of Transportation (DOT); Paul Beyer, NY State Smart Growth Director and Rabi Kieber (US EPA) • Discuss if the repaving of a section of Rte. 313 slated for summer 2021 could include pedestrian and biking facilities (no sidewalk is currently planned)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion from RERC (Melissa Spiezio as Fire Department liaison) with Village Board member • Develop ad hoc committee or committee formed for Action 1.1) • Firehouse (first priority is to engage on sidewalk)
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOT • Paul Beyer, NY State Smart Growth Director • Rabi Kieber, US EPA • School (Douglas Silvernell) • Village • Community Partnership • Washington County (Laura Oswald and/or Deborah Donohue, P.E.Superintendent, Department of Public Works, ddonohue@washingtoncountyny.gov) • White Creek
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RESOURCE: Regional Economic Development Council grant (for Washington County) ▪ RESOURCE: Safe Routes To School

Action 1.5 – Reinstall the Victorian Footbridge and develop an engineered plan to seek funding for the rehabilitation of the streambed of the Owlkill in VARAK park along Main Street.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Reinstalling the Victorian Footbridge and rehabilitating the streambed can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve safety, health and management of natural resources; • Improve community character and scenic beauty; • Foster destination development; and • Boost tourism.
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Action 1.5 – Reinstall the Victorian Footbridge and develop an engineered plan to seek funding for the rehabilitation of the streambed of the Owlkill in VARAK park along Main Street.

	See concept plan: https://outdoorfuncambridgeny.org/index.php/the-sites/#jp-carousel-85)
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved streambed is created
Timeframe	Time to take to find resources for engineered plans
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnership • Landowner • NY Main Street Program to install foot bridge
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA • Village of Cambridge • Community involvement for fundraising
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RESOURCE: USDA Rural Development (low interest loan or grant) ▪ https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants • RESOURCE: Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership (future application potential) • NEED: Marketing of concept • NEED: Approvals from agencies • NEED: Funding for developing an engineer drawing • NEED: Estimate costs for implementation

Goal 2: Priorities for the Community Forest: Identify next steps for development of the Community Forest that engages the community in planning, infrastructure development, and community-supported programming and activities, capitalizing on the forest’s proximity to Main Street and to existing and planned civic uses such as the school and fire department.

The Cambridge Community Forest is a tremendous asset for Cambridge and the surrounding region. Key next steps to build on this centrally-located community asset include taking the time to engage the community in planning for the Forest, development of infrastructure to and on the Forest, and in developing programs and activities that meet the needs of community members and that will serve to draw visitors to the community. Further, the Cambridge Community Forest can provide connections to trails and recreation opportunities throughout the region – so thinking “big” about how this property can be the beginning of a true regional approach to conservation and recreation is something the community of Cambridge can tackle next!

Action 2.1 – Foster the formation of a “Friends Group” for the Community Forest, with committees tasked with trail building/maintenance programs, connecting to other community projects, and organizing events and meeting needs.

<p>What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?</p>	<p>Creating a “Friends” group for the Community Forest can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an opportunity to bring the community into the management and ownership of the Community Forest; • Involve more people, preventing volunteer burnout; • Enhance opportunities for inclusivity; • Provide a fundraising arm, boosting fundraising potential; • Include expansion of education opportunities on the Community Forest; • To educate private landowners on forest management and also educate school-aged kids on broader environmental and sustainability concepts; and • Enhance, organize, and prioritize many facets of work to be done.
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subgroups are meeting and accomplishing the actions in this goal • Friends Group is reporting out and engaging new people • Members are joining the organization • Size of the trust fund they create (and how much FUN they have) • Volunteer hours and work days completed • Grants secured (think about the fiscal sponsor)
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 months: Establish the purpose of and name for the group • 3 months: Determine the nature of the group – what kind of organization will this group be, who will be the fiscal sponsor/agent • First quarter 2021: Create a video with interviews from the community; followed by virtual walking tour to kick off the group – join the Friends Group! • Identify the subcommittees that will be part of this group • Develop a trails subcommittee to help with implementing Action 2.2 to do items • Think about different user groups (mountain biking, ADA compliant uses, educational, cross country skiing, equestrian, others) and making the trails and the forest relevant to those user groups • Develop list of education outreach projects that can include building benches, kiosks, pavilion, bike racks to improve the approachability/accessibility of Community Forest
<p>Lead Roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RERC Steering Committee as a start • ASA (Renee Bouplon)
<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone representing the Town • Someone representing the Village • Someone representing the Neighborhood • Cambridge Central School (Doug Silvernell) • Check with the ASA’s smaller group of 8-10 people they have been working with as they have developed the Community Forest so far – start with this group, build in the RERC participants as well

Action 2.1 – Foster the formation of a “Friends Group” for the Community Forest, with committees tasked with trail building/maintenance programs, connecting to other community projects, and organizing events and meeting needs.

<p>Needed resources and possible sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Time for people to participate in the committee • NEED: Funding for printing costs • NEED: Funding for videographer • RESOURCE: http://www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grant-solicitation-notice
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Action 2.2 – Identify existing trails, secure funding for building new trails, and create a maintenance plan for all trails.

<p>What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?</p>	<p>Identifying existing trails and opportunities to build new trails can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable greater access and use of the Community Forest; • Enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, helping to implement the towns’ plans; Help tie to funding opportunities; • Attract people who are wanting to move to areas that have these amenities; and • Improve public health, local economy, and quality of life; • Building an awareness of environmental constraints and costs and the balance to keep things wild at the Community Forest; • Support equitable access to the outdoors with ADA accessible trails and sensory trails for kid.
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails are built, including ADA accessible trails and a sensory trail • We have a map that shows where the trails are • Community Forest is opened! • Increased use of the forest (sign in/sign out books)
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2020: Begin initial trail audit – find out what’s already there and existing gaps (initial mapping of what trails are there and potential for expanding and building new), including assessment of ADA accessible trail opportunities and sensory trails for kids • Fall 2020/Winter 2021: Trails designed • Spring 2021: New trail built based on those findings • Summer 2021: Community Forest opened • Summer 2021: Trail Maintenance Teams identified (both for everyday clean up/maintenance and more intense maintenance day events); with a goal of developing a supported and trained volunteer trail maintenance group (those willing to maintain trails can help with planning and constructing trails); including Game of Logging training
<p>Lead Roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASA (Renee Bouplon) • Friends of the Forest
<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Woodcock (help with some of the trail design) • Rick Lederer-Barnes (for mapping)

Action 2.2 – Identify existing trails, secure funding for building new trails, and create a maintenance plan for all trails.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Kelly (graphics/brochures) • Trails Maintenance Crew Leader • Secondary Students (Environmental Club – for trail maintenance) – Doug Silvernell • Scouting Troops (for help with projects) – Clint Walizer; Michael Raffel
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Equipment for trails maintenance activities • NEED: Insurance needs • NEED: Local contractors for trail building projects to boost local economy • NEED: Funding for consultants to design and assist with installation • NEED: Funding for trail improvements (i.e. culverts, small stream crossings, equipment rental, signage, etc.) • NEED: Volunteers for trail installation and maintenance • RESOURCE: One example of an ADA trail recently built at the Poestenkill Community Forest by the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance (Rachel Riemann is a contact) – https://www.rensselaerplateau.org/community-forest

Action 2.3 – Identify existing or create new dedicated or shared public parking for the Community Forest.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Identifying or creating public parking for the Community Forest can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance access and supporting the economic component of this project (to bring people from the outside into the community); and • Foster inclusivity, allowing those who have limited mobility to access and use the Forest.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors of the forest are satisfied about the parking impacts to their neighborhood • Anyone who comes to use the Community Forest can easily find and use parking (for cars and bikes!) • Parking is clearly identified, well-marked and used • If a partnership between the Village and Fire Department emerges to have public parking on Village land, then success will be a pedestrian bridge is built connecting parking to Community Forest • Locally-owned in the Village and state-owned parking lots are coordinated to provide greater community benefit • A new map or updated existing maps include where parking currently exists
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2020/Winter 2021: Assess parking needs (both interim and also permanent parking) and who needs to be part of the conversation for creating interim and permanent solutions (zoning, etc.). Additionally, feasibility of creating a pedestrian connection between the fire department's private landholding and the Community Forest (specifically the feasibility to install a pedestrian bridge with an easement). • Spring 2021: Identify possible locations for interim parking

Action 2.3 – Identify existing or create new dedicated or shared public parking for the Community Forest.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2021: Identify possible options for permanent parking • Interim options might include: School; Town of White Creek; 21/13; private land • Permanent parking options might include the Fire House property (referendum opens up the conversation about shared parking); the property at 41 South Park Street; Youth Center location (possible location for visitor center as well) • Engage with neighboring landowners to bridge gaps between permanent parking options and the Forest to ensure connectivity (relates to Goal 1 also)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASA (Renee Bouplon) • Friends of the Forest
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village leadership (Mayor, etc.) • Town(s) leadership • Shea Imhof (to start conversation about 41 South Park Street property)
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Fundraising for purchase of more permanent parking options (depending on what location would be determined) • NEED: Funding for easements to create connection from parking lots to Community Forest • NEED: Funding to build a pedestrian bridge • RESOURCE: Research/contact with State to learn more about where they are installing upgrades parking areas (contact Jared for details on where improvements will be made)

Action 2.4 – Secure additional land connecting the Community Forest to nearby public and private land.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Securing additional land can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By thinking beyond the 140 acres of the Community Forest itself allows for broader connections and expanded public recreation opportunities through a potential link to surrounding state lands. • Could contribute to broader climate change/carbon sequestration goals.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public gains comfort with the concept of “privately owned and publicly accessed” lands as a way to expand public recreation opportunities • Expansion of easements and land purchases that serve to connect state land with Community Forest
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date TBD: Expand the conserved area beyond the Community Forest itself (through donated or purchased trail easements, or land acquisition)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RERC Steering Committee as a start • ASA (Renee Bouplon)
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD

Action 2.4 – Secure additional land connecting the Community Forest to nearby public and private land.

Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Resources for easement purchase, land acquisition and transaction-related expenses <p>The Community Forest Program is a land acquisition program https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/community-forest</p>
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Additional Actions:

- *Construct a natural playground in the community forest or on Hospital Hill. Natural playgrounds make use of aspects of the landscape and use natural or living materials for a variety of play and physical or artistic experiences. Examples of NP: <https://pin.it/1bmEpPP>*

Goal 3: Community Identity and Opportunities for All: Celebrate what makes Cambridge unique, bringing all outdoor recreation assets together, assessing what exists and what is missing, building on business and service opportunities, and developing an identity and brand for a community that is connected, inclusive, equitable, understandable, and exciting for all residents and visitors.

The recreation economy is connected to various industry sectors such as tourism that support and cater to attracting visitors to join in recreational activities, and also seek out unique opportunities to explore in downtowns at restaurants, shops, community gathering places, and cultural amenities. As such, it is important that communities safeguard and steward the unique attributes of their community and showcase those to residents and visitors. Cambridge can take the initial steps of elevating their community's identity and values through communication tools, stewardship of a diversity of assets, and connecting residents and businesses in celebrating what makes Cambridge unique. This unique identity will set the tenor for what it means to live, work, and play in Cambridge, engaging tourists to seek out a visit.

Action 3.1 – Continue to engage with owners of the Hospital and look for a way to create an accessible amenity for all.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Engaging in a series of conversations with Hospital owner is important because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a huge untapped resource and there is a strong community desire for this place to be accessible; • There may be the need for an environmental assessment to identify any underlying issues to creating a usable space; and • If a collaborative approach could be developed on a shared vision or master plan for the property, an agreement would present multiple benefits for the landowners and the community.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had "20 cup of tea" on the subject. • Have some agreement on possibilities.
Timeframe	Start conversations as soon as possible, and hopefully a few before early 2021.
Lead Roles	Carman Bogle is suggested as a great liaison, supported by Alex Dery Snider

Action 3.1 – Continue to engage with owners of the Hospital and look for a way to create an accessible amenity for all.

Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Board • Amy Walsh • Steve Hallock
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Time • RESOURCE: EPA guidance if brownfields assessment are needed (Rabi Kieber and Lance Caldwell to identify EPA regional contacts and resources)

Action 3.2 – Work to improve inclusion and more voices represented in the recreation economy planning process.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Improving inclusion and expanding the conversation to include more diverse voices is important because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are voices in Cambridge that are not part of this conversation, therefore we need to consciously, as a group, reach out, interview, and do what’s necessary to reach unheard groups and involve them in the goals and actions of the RERC plan; • There have been some existing efforts, and progress is being made, but we need to keep the momentum up; • An approach that is intentional in outreach should target all community members, such as youth and schools, neighborhoods including mobile home parks, businesses, local government, and media to determine the best ways to communicate and break down barriers to engagement. • Utilize RERC community action plan as a conversation tool, to further engage additional people and get reactions and input.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies are identified that explore who is not currently engaged, how to engage them, and how best to be inclusive of their values and needs • Meetings with and outreach to key groups and constituencies take place • When there are no complaints (never!)
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start right away and keep at it always
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambridge Central School (Doug Silvernell), • Town of White Creek (Jimmy Griffith) • Chamber of Commerce (Sara Kelly) • Barbra Kingsley • Brian Harrington
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex Dery Snider • Naomi Marsh
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Time and dedication • NEED: Summary materials/website

Action 3.3 – Identify underused properties (buildings/lots) as opportunity areas for a future visitor welcome center (e.g., Wilds Center) or public space (e.g., pocket park, trail head, disc golf course).

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Cambridge currently does not have a “welcome to the region” center. Creating a visitor welcome center could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a central space for information, a great public space, and an opportunity to promote local places, restaurants, recreation opportunities, and places to stay; • Include Taste of NY vending machines, restrooms, charging stations, a small exterior area with space for picnics, and signs directing people to various resources; • Include history of the region in its design, in addition to highlighting recreation assets (including, but beyond the Cambridge Forest); and • Capture traffic from 22, which is a major corridor, creating the opportunity to draw in seasonal traffic.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee formed to work on this action (same Committee as Action 3.4?), has met with themselves and others to work towards a larger shared understanding about what Cambridge has, what makes it special, etc. to be included in welcome center • List of criteria for what is needed in terms of the welcome center is created • List of possible properties is identified (41 South Park Street; Youth Center location are possibilities) • Owners are contacted • Welcome center is built and open • Signs for the welcome center are created and posted; published in paper and other resource lists
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 2021: Committee formed, list of criteria development, list of possible properties identified • Owners are contacted • Welcome center is built and open • Signs created and posted
Lead Roles	Amy to work with assessor
Supporting cast	RERC Steering Committee, plus new additions
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Access to Public records • NEED: Time to meet, evaluate, draft criteria, and contact owners • NEED: Funds to purchase, rehabilitate, or build center

Action 3.4 – Form a work group to initiate an effort to assess what is authentic and unique about the Cambridge Valley and to identify a brand identity for the Village/Towns.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Forming a group comprised of tourism organizations, local businesses, Chamber of Commerce, elected officials, and members of the RERC process to assess what makes Cambridge authentic and unique can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand existing and past efforts to minimize duplicative work • Expand Cambridge’s brand as outdoor exploring/rec area
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Action 3.4 – Form a work group to initiate an effort to assess what is authentic and unique about the Cambridge Valley and to identify a brand identity for the Village/Towns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify metrics (and sources) for visitors, lodging, etc. Establish goals and identify barriers Work on a communications and marketing plan, building on the other actions taken Would form a structure to support so many other actions in this plan
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants identified Committee formed and has met a few times (same Committee as Action 3.3?). with themselves and others to work towards a larger shared understanding about what Cambridge has, what makes it special, etc. to be included in branding conversations
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 months: Identify people for committee 3-6 months: Conduct meetings 5+ months: Summary of and publicize findings
Lead Roles	Calling for volunteers for this!
Supporting cast	RERC Steering Committee
Needed resources and possible sources	

Action 3.5 – Build partners (“Trails and Sign Team”) to develop and implement historical and nature walks with a signage (much like the NYS historical markers), within reach of downtown.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Building partners to develop and implement historical and nature walks can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities for visitors to understand the history and natural assets that Cambridge has to offer; and Build on the ‘branding work’ of Action 3.4; and Be a visible win, low-hanging fruit.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants identified to be involved Nature walks and signs are created
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a team focused on the pursuit of design, funding, and implementation, and eventually research and hire production shop to produce signs. Add a series of thematic tours of special places and experiences centered on art (sculpture, poetry, fairy houses, photography, nature, Native American history, exercise, etc.)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Snider Ken Gottry Sara Kelly And welcome anyone else!
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Society Artists TBD

Action 3.5 – Build partners (“Trails and Sign Team”) to develop and implement historical and nature walks with a signage (much like the NYS historical markers), within reach of downtown.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jared Woodcock • Sue Van Hook • Kerry Woods • Howard Romack • Steering committee
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: Information (much exists) • NEED: Funding for signs (?) • NEED: Print materials to guide (and funding for that) • Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership (see special programs \$40k; pre proposal due Nov 2, 2020) consider here or elsewhere • RESOURCE: Connect to SBA or USDA for feasibility planning to use plan to leverage Market NY funding for implementation

Action 3.6 – Work with neighbors to address the need for wastewater treatment to ensure public health and allow for viability and growth of existing and future businesses; identify needs of current and prospective businesses and residents (including sewage, wifi) and work to make progress toward them.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	Meeting residents’ and businesses’ needs for infrastructure such as wastewater and broadband access can help ensure that Cambridge can grow and sustain itself as it expands recreation businesses and the amenities needed to support both residents’ and visitors’ needs.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased commercial and real estate development • New unique or anchor destinations, like restaurants, gathering spaces, etc. draw in visitors
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review decentralized system feasibility plan • Explore the need for wastewater treatment, including alternative systems (Presby-style system?)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carman Bogle • Sarah Ashton • Sue Van Hook • Chris Callahan
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Board • Tetrattech (for technical assistance on wastewater issues)
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED: information/research • NEED: Funding • NEED: Community community-buy in • RESOURCE: EPA/EDA/State/Northern Border Regional Commission for funding • RESOURCE: Business Improvement districts as tool

Action 3.6 – Work with neighbors to address the need for wastewater treatment to ensure public health and allow for viability and growth of existing and future businesses; identify needs of current and prospective businesses and residents (including sewage, wifi) and work to make progress toward them.

- RESOURCE: Connect with Chris Hunsinger on Yates County on their journey to get a countywide water system

Goal 4: Regional Connectivity: Develop an understanding of the regional context of recreational assets, connection to other communities, and alignment of regional priorities for leveraging the unique outdoor recreation amenities in the area.

The region in which Cambridge sits has tremendous natural, recreational, agricultural, and historical assets. Tying Cambridge’s assets into the broader context can help create a richer set of recreational and place-based opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy. A regional approach requires coordination and communication, and this goal outlines actions that will help move Cambridge forward in developing strong regional connections.

Action 4.1 – Work with area municipalities White Creek and Cambridge to collaborate around sidewalks, rural transit connections, wastewater, and broadband (including creating a regional wastewater system).

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	Coordinating among area municipalities on issues around can help ensure that the services needed to live, run a business, and visit Cambridge are met efficiently and consistently and can help attract people to the community.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a meeting with key stakeholder groups and setting a plan in place. • Better sidewalks structure is implemented.
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-6 months: Individual stakeholder meeting held (ideally an in-person meeting, but start planning process); initial meeting between municipalities will focus on collaboration, getting all local stakeholders involved, and in the procurement of broadband in rural communities • 8-12 months: Regional stakeholders to meet (COVID permitting) • Further out: Infrastructure changes are made, including updates and repairs to sidewalks to increase safety and walkability of the community (See Actions in Goal 1)
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steve Hallock – to reach out to mayors and gather the group
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jason Deno, Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) ▪ Village of Cambridge ▪ White Creek ▪ Salem ▪ DEC ▪ EPA ▪ USDA

Action 4.1 – Work with area municipalities White Creek and Cambridge to collaborate around sidewalks, rural transit connections, wastewater, and broadband (including creating a regional wastewater system).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New York Department of State (Paul Beyer) – shared services work best practices
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding through Regional Economic Development Councils (Robert Hank)

Action 4.2 – Gather inventory of cultural, historic, and natural resource assets in the region and convene stakeholders to discuss projects.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	A comprehensive inventory will support the understanding of the regional context and allow for prioritization of recreational assets and projects.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory is drafted
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9 months
Lead Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jared Woodcock ▪ Laura Oswald
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ben Thomas ▪ Katherine Roome ▪ Washington County Planners ▪ Town Officials
Needed resources and possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BOAA Funding ▪ Lake Champlain – Lake George Regional Planning Board

Commented [JE1]: Could use a little more description of what the action is.

Action 4.3 – Convene a planning group to conduct an inventory of priority assets in the region; use Battenkill watershed as a starting point to define the region.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Convening a planning group can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure inclusion and understand how best to inventory assets. • Improve accountability through the process
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target assets are identified and prioritized by stakeholder groups.
Timeframe	3-6 months: Create list of stakeholders to be involved in the planning group and convene planning group
Lead Roles	Steve Hallock
Supporting cast	Battenkill Watershed Alliance Battenkill Conservancy

Action 4.3 – Convene a planning group to conduct an inventory of priority assets in the region; use Battenkill watershed as a starting point to define the region.

Needed resources and possible sources	RESOURCE: Connect to SBA or USDA for feasibility planning to use plan to leverage Market NY funding for implementation
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Action 4.4 – Develop a professionally made map to highlight regional recreation opportunities.

What this is. Why it is important. Who benefits?	<p>Developing a map can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build off of the data collected in Action 4.3; • Create enhanced awareness of recreation opportunities in and around Cambridge for residents and visitors; • Improve wayfinding guidance; • Elevate the presence of lesser known resources; • Spur stewardship, access, and/or connection initiatives; and • Generate publicity across region for all assets and connections to towns.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map is developed that captures regional connectivity of recreation opportunities, trails, towns, and parking options • Cambridge community level map is created as well to highlight more community-level assets
Timeframe	To begin after completion of the asset inventory in Action 4.3
Lead Roles	Those involved in the completion of Action 4.3 Village of Cambridge
Supporting cast	Battenkill Watershed Alliance Battenkill Conservancy
Needed resources and possible sources	NEED: Funds for a professionally designed map

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Following the workshop, starting in mid-October, the local steering committee and additional interested stakeholders who participated in the workshop continued to meet. Three video conference calls were held on October 20th, December 9th, and January 22nd, 2021, during which the group refined the action plan, discussed progress made post-workshop, and planned for implementation next steps. In between the first and second post-workshop call, on November 10th, a subcommittee of the local steering committee met via Zoom video conference to add detail to the actions in Goal 2, focused on the Community Forest. For all four workshop goals, the local team in Cambridge has made progress on beginning to implement actions and next steps, despite the post workshop era being constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic, closures, and

reopening main street efforts. Listed below are some key post-workshop implementation steps the local team in Cambridge has made since the workshop.

- Action 1.2: Sarah Ashton reported that the Community Partnership Board met and is comfortable in taking on Action 1.2 (creation of a site map of existing and proposed physical connections and backstopping on the sidewalk audit, which could come next) – have a landscape architect on the Community Partnership Board who can help
- Action 1.4: There have been ongoing conversations about decreasing speed limit on 313, but specific pedestrian and bicycle improvements are still under discussion.
- Action 1.5: Sarah Ashton reported that the Victorian Footbridge project was approved by the state.
- Action 1.5: Chris Hunsinger mentioned that USDA’s Rural Business Development Grants are becoming available soon to do community and economic development projects, might be a source of funding for the bridge project.
- Action 2.1: Renee Bouplon reported that the Cambridge Community Forest Friends Group is planning a kick off meeting in early January, Renee has a new hire coming on board in January who can help staff these efforts.
- Action 2.2: Renee Bouplon from ASA applied for the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable grant for trail design and implementation work on behalf of the RERC team.
- Action 2.2: Chris Hunsinger from USDA RD shared trail examples from Vermont and would be willing to talk about additional funding sources for possible trails work.
- Action 3.3: Barbra Kingsley reported that at the Town of White Creek Board meeting they discussed that there may be an opportunity to put in an EV charging station at the Town Hall but some of the Board members are concerned with it.
- Action 3.5: Sarah Ashton reported out that Hubbard Hall applied for a Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership grant to support interpretive heritage signage (that would meld history with the environment) – learning from Saratoga and other places.
- Action 3.6: Chris Hunsinger from USDA RD talked with members of the local steering committee to discuss possible sewer updates; an engineering firm volunteered to take a look at some things and get back to us (\$19 million was the estimate for a village-wide system, but more targeted options could be available for higher risk areas or Main Street businesses).

APPENDICES

- *Appendix A – Workshop Mapping Exercise Results*
- *Appendix B – Workshop Attendee List*