



Albany Bicycle Coalition Comments on the Town of Colonie Comprehensive Draft Plan – March 2019 –

SOURCE: <http://coloniepedd.org/attachments/comprehensive-plan/Town-of-Colonie-Comprehensive-Plan-Update-02-11-19-Draft.pdf>

#1 – Our recommendation is for the Town of Colonie to have a Complete Streets refresher and implementation training for their entire staff. This would include Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) members and Town Board members. This effort is a follow-up to the Complete Streets symposium conducted for town leaders by the Albany County Department of Health in fall 2016.

#2 – The Comprehensive Plan needs to reflect the Siena College survey desires from 2,000 Town of Colonie residents, which relate directly to Complete Streets for pedestrians, people on bicycles, and the mobility challenged.

- 85% Engage in physical activity
- 65% Support installing bicycle lanes on existing through roads
- 85% Support constructing new sidewalks along main roads
- 66% Support installing additional off road recreation trails



#3 – Recently published Capital Trails NY plan incorporates a four-county Capital Region core and supporting trail network for both pedestrians and bicyclists with a planned 289 miles of trails. The Capital District Transportation Committee identified two of these critical trails as "Core Trails" and five as "Supporting Trails." These are in Albany County *and the Town of Colonie* as well other adjoining communities. The Town of Colonie is perfectly situated to make these trails available to its residents and visitors simply by building safe connections to them. With an effective trail network, more people might be inclined to use the trails for communing and running errands and not just for recreation. The relevant trails are the following:

A. Core Trails

- 1) **Albany Loop** (Rt 155 Connector which also includes Albany Shaker Road corridor) on road – 15.2 Miles (Capital Trail "C")
- 2) **Mohawk - Hudson Bike-Hike Trail** on road, mostly off road – 41.1 Miles (Capital Trail "C" and part of the 700-mile Empire State Trail)

B. Supporting Trail Network

- 1) **Shaker Trail** – off road – 2.8 Miles (Capital Trail #13)
- 2) **Albany-Colonie Connector** – off road 4.5 Miles, on road – 4.5 Miles (Capital Trail #14)
- 3) **The Crossings Connection** – off road – 3.6 Miles (Capital Trail #9)
- 4) **Bike Route 9** – on road, off road – 11.5 Miles (Capital Trail #8)
- 5) **Consaul Road Bike Route** – on road – 4.5 Miles (2.9 Miles in Albany County) (Capital Trail #7)

#4 – The Albany Bicycle Coalition recommends that the Town of Colonie establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to assist in implementation of Complete Streets transportation/safety initiatives. This advisory committee would consist of Town residents, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, Town of Colonie police, parks and recreation staff, Villages of Colonie and Menands representatives, traffic engineer, etc.

Specific Section Comments

Pg. 59 and 66 - *Improve mobility throughout the Town. This includes thoughtful investments in roads and highways to relieve significant impacts of traffic congestion and to enhance the safety and attractiveness of active transportation modes (walking and biking). Continue to expand and improve access to public transportation. Coordinate with our partners at Albany County, CDTC, CDTA, and NYSDOT in addressing these mobility issues.*

RESPONSE: Should include neighbor and citizen groups and pedestrian/cycling advocate organizations.

RESPONSE: In the "Implementation Table," we agree that this effort should have top priority for nothing is more important to the Town that safe and direct movement through and within it.

RESPONSE: As in the 2008 Pathways Plan, the Town of Colonie should include specific pedestrian and bicycle pathways either from the 2008 plan or from newer recommendations. This should include reference to the Capital District Transportation Committee's Capital District Trails Plan - 2019 to ensure that the Town takes advantage of this growing network of trails/multiuse paths.

Pg. 59 - *Establish a point person at the Town for transportation issues – this person would be responsible for coordinating with partners at CDTC, CDTA, Albany County, and NYSDOT.*

RESPONSE: The Town of Colonie should designate this person as responsible for the Complete Streets implementation.

Pg. 59 - *Utilizing the Albany Shaker Road Corridor Study as a model, undertake land use / transportation studies for targeted corridors – especially those where neighborhood quality of life and thru traffic concerns appear to conflict.*

RESPONSE: The Albany-Shaker Rd. study is not a desirable model as it seemingly ignores that this route is a major thoroughfare for people on bicycles and on foot.

Pg. 59 - *Work with CDTC to develop and disseminate information about "Complete Streets" and the benefits that this approach provides for all users of the transportation system, including automobiles. As one of the core features of New Visions 2040, the region's long-range transportation plan, complete streets will continue to be a focus of the region's transportation investments in the coming years; and therefore, more dialogue about this approach and how it can be applied in Colonie would be beneficial.*

RESPONSE: Why are motor vehicles singled out and an inclusion when it is clear that most roads in the Town of Colonie are already car-centric? All modes should be listed as "included" or none.

Pg. 59 - *Incorporate "Complete Streets" design concepts and guidelines into the next Zoning Code update.*

RESPONSE: Yes, Complete Streets should be include in the Zoning Code but progress on Complete Streets should commence immediately for any roadway treatment including resurfacing or re-striping.

Pg. 64 - *Cooperate with the Villages of Colonie and Menands, the school districts, and other neighboring and regional municipalities, agencies, and organizations on issues of mutual concern. Look for opportunities to share services when appropriate.*

RESPONSE: Within this objective should be provision for safe and direct movement for people on bicycles and on foot from one municipality to another to enhance the attractiveness of the Town of Colonie and to encourage non-motor vehicle commuting/recreation.