

***Bike New York  
Bike South Brooklyn  
Bike Tarrytown  
Bronx River Alliance  
Brooklyn Greenway Initiative  
CIVITAS  
Community Greenways  
Collaborative  
East Coast Greenway  
Eastern Queens Greenway  
Friends of East River Esplanade  
Friends of the Hutchison River  
Greenway  
Gowanus Canal Conservancy  
The Harbor Ring Committee  
Harlem River Working Group***

***Jamaica Bay-Rockaway Parks  
Conservancy  
New Yorkers for Parks  
Natural Areas Conservancy  
New Yorkers for Parks  
Open Plans  
Parks & Trails New York  
Randall's Island Park Alliance  
REI Co-op  
Regional Plan Association  
RETI Center  
StreetsPAC  
Street Plans  
Transportation Alternatives  
Trust for Public Land  
Van Cortlandt Park Alliance  
Waterfront Alliance***

Hon. Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NY State State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

December 23, 2021

**Re 2022-2023 budget request: Capital allocation for downstate Greenway development**

Dear Governor Hochul:

We write to request a \$200 million capital budget allocation for a special program to accelerate greenway and trail development in the downstate metropolitan region.

That amount would match the investment made by NY State in the Empire State Trail program in the 2017 budget. While we strongly support and applaud the Empire State Trail, we note that the \$200 million invested in its creation was overwhelmingly devoted to rural areas outside the downstate NY Metropolitan region.

\$200 million for urban and suburban greenway projects would leverage far more trail and greenway development and resources thanks to local funding and the

opportunity to use state dollars as matching funds for newly available federal funds. It will serve far more people and generate many more bike and walking trips than the 2017 Empire Trail investment.

The need and opportunity are both very strong. Greenways can create and extend healthy open spaces into every corner of the metropolitan region and aid with social distancing. Greenway construction and upgrades will create jobs that can take advantage of new federal infrastructure funding, and they will safely support booming bike use, for many types for trips and for people of all ages and abilities.

The majority of the capital budget provision should be allocated as local aid to New York City and Nassau, Suffolk, Orange, Rockland and Westchester Counties to ensure that the funds are devoted to key rights of way and projects under these jurisdictions. New York City has significant unbuilt greenway segments in its anticipated network, and many older greenways are in need of repair and upgrade. Detailed, popular plans have been developed for a Long Island greenway system, and the NY State Greenway Plan points to significant needs in the lower Hudson Valley.

This funding would mark a strong step toward an integrated regional network of safe, climate-friendly, job-creating cycling and walking infrastructure. Thank you for your attention. We look forward to working with you to advance this proposal.

Sincerely,

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