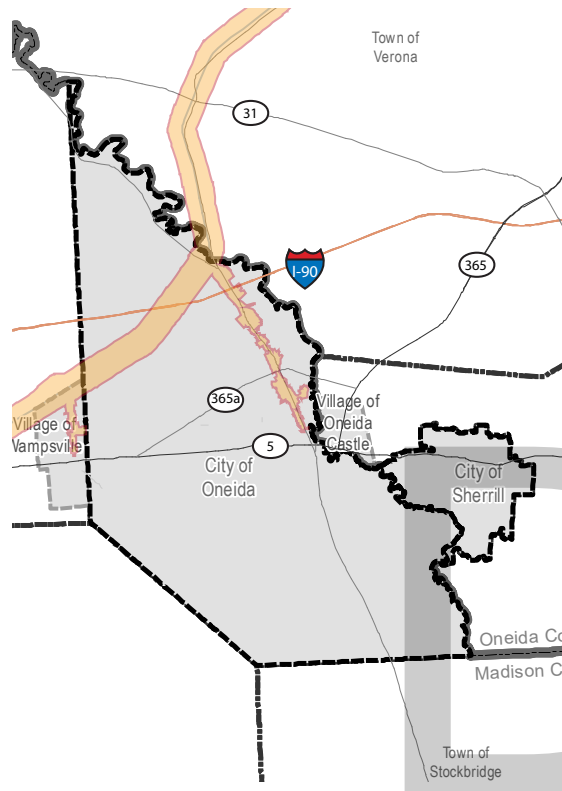


CITY OF ONEIDA



LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The WRA passes through the northern corner of the City of Oneida's outer district for 2.5 miles. The Erie Canalway Trail (ECT) runs 1.5 miles north of the City's downtown commercial center. With just over 11,000 people, Oneida is one of two cities in the WRA. For trail users heading east it represents the last significant population center for 15 miles, however access to the city is challenged by the distance and quality of the travel experience to the city center. At present, trail users wishing to enter the city center must either travel south for 1.5 miles on Route 46/Main Street, or connect to the Oneida Rail

Trail in the Village of Wampsville and head east into the city center from there. This section contains two of five aqueducts in the Old Erie Canal system: the Cowaleson Creek Aqueduct and the Oneida Creek Aqueduct. Technically, the Oneida Creek Aqueduct is located in both the City of Oneida and Town of Verona, as the Creek is the boundary between the two.

HISTORY

The City of Oneida in Madison County is bounded on the east by Oneida Creek. It originally encompassed a portion of the Oneida Reservation. Settlement began in 1818 with the establishment of a small store, which heralded subsequent development. Oneida incorporated as a village in 1848, as a town in 1896, and finally as a city in 1901 (Helmer, 2005e; City of Oneida, 2019).

Following the opening of the Erie Canal, a feeder canal was constructed in 1835 to provide localized transportation of goods. The construction of the canal and feeder brought men and their families to the area for work, prompting a prominent land owner and business man, Sands Higinbotham, to sell lots from his estate on low terms to keep these workers in Oneida. Higinbotham proved to be a resourceful developer. In exchange for right-of-way across his property, Higinbotham negotiated with the newly completed Syracuse and Utica Railroad to establish a station at the Oneida Depot. The Ontario and Western (1863) and the West Shore (1883) Railroads also provided service to Oneida (Smith, 1880; Helmer, 2005e; City of Oneida, 2019).

Numerous business ventures benefited from the

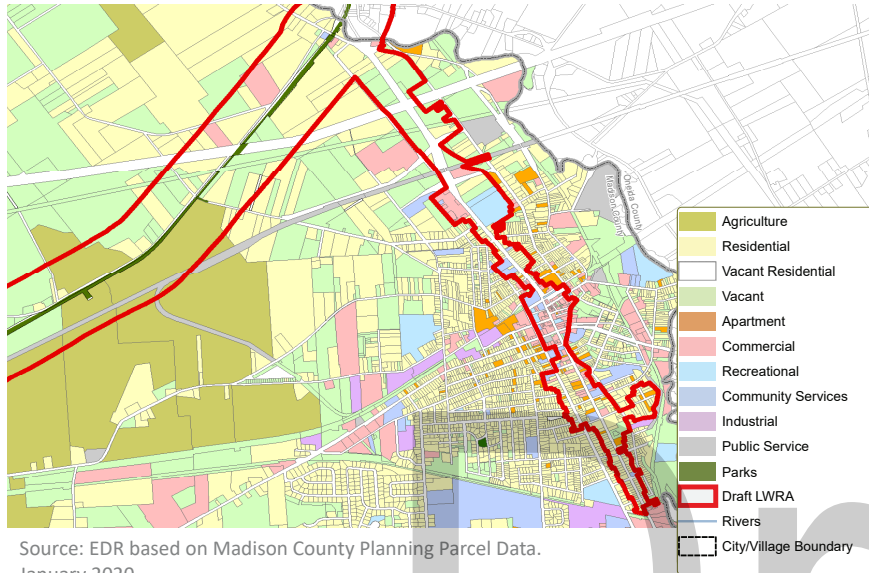
Erie Canal, feeder canal, and railroads, including a foundry and machine shop, grocery store, tannery, and the well-known silverware company Oneida Limited. The market supported an increasingly diverse range of manufacturers throughout the late nineteenth century from the Hard Bros.' Spring Bed and Cot Factory (1876) and Chappell, Chase, Maxwell & Co (1879, burial caskets) to Powell & Goldstein, J.M. Bennet, Kenny Brothers, Bennett & Hard (1870s, cigars) and Oneida Electric Light and Power Co. Plant (1897) (Smith, 1880; Smith, 1899).

Oneida's economy boomed from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries as a regional manufacturing and trading center. The New York Central Railroad and New York Barge Canal supplanted the canal system in Oneida; however, construction of the New York State Thruway in the 1950s deprived the city of direct access to key water and rail transportation routes (City of Oneida, 2019).

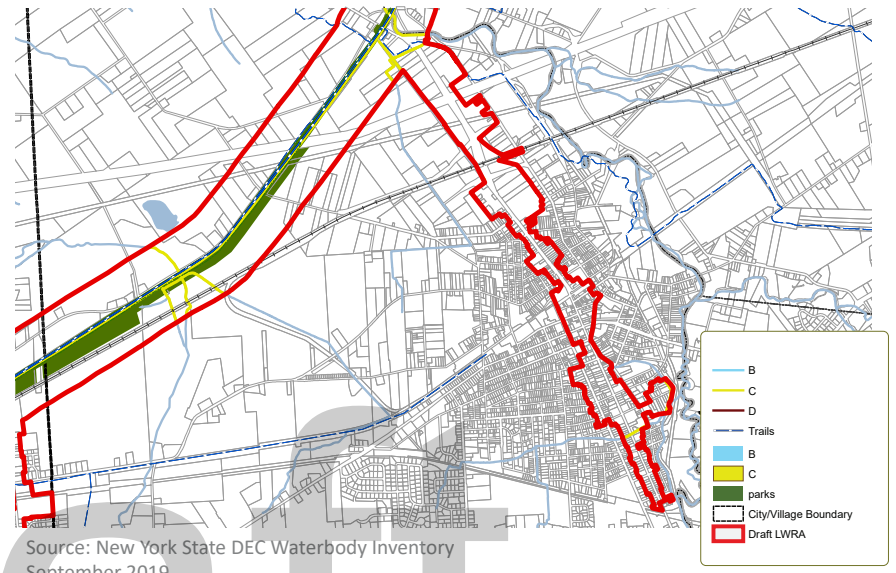
LAND USE AND ZONING

The LWRP Boundary enters the City of Oneida along Canal Rd from the west in a primarily rural setting, with a few scattered houses and some vacant land. There is a large vacant parcel owned by New York State here between the Canal itself and the CSX railroad. Though only a portion of the project falls within the LWRP boundary, there is a large greenhouse being developed in Oneida in this area that is growing fruits and vegetables year-round for distribution to markets in the northeast. Other than the greenhouse project, the rural trend in land use continues as the canal crosses the NYS Thruway and heads to the eastern boundary of the City of Oneida and Madison County at Oneida Creek. The

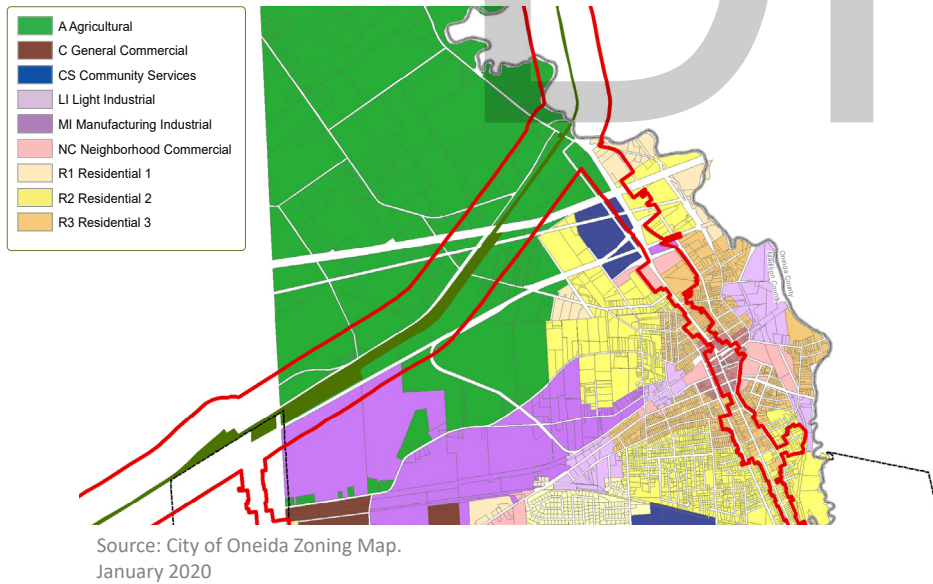
LAND USE



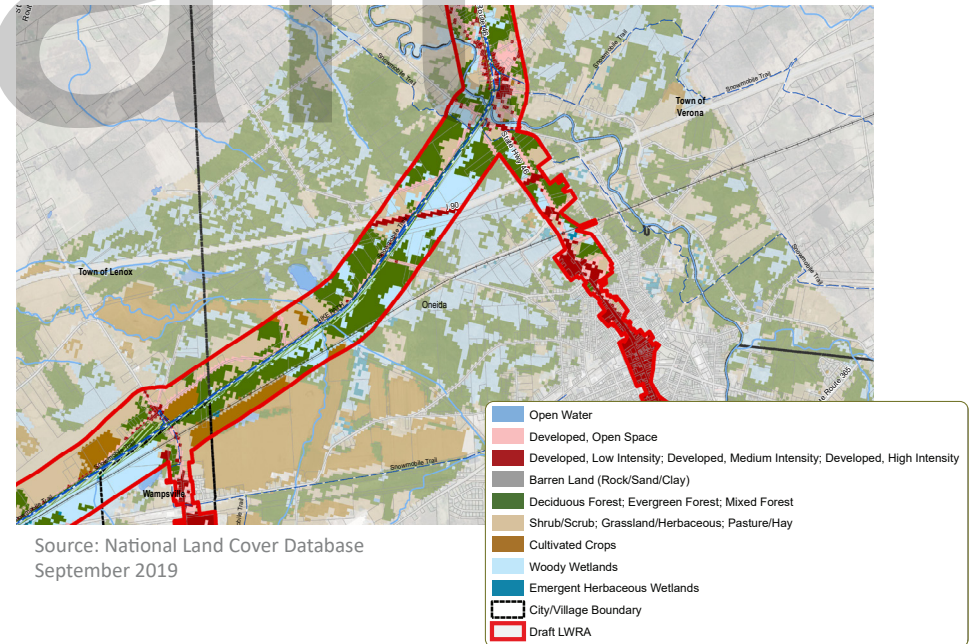
WATER QUALITY



ZONING



LAND COVER



CITY OF ONEIDA LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

ZONING WITHIN THE WRA	
OVERLAY DISTRICTS	YES
SUBDIVISION REVIEW	YES
SITE PLAN REVIEW	YES
DESIGN STANDARDS	NO
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ALLOWED?	YES
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	YES(2005)
SUGGESTIONS	

LWRP Boundary turns south along Main Street (State Route 46) and heads toward the inner district of the City of Oneida. As the WRA heads south from the Canal along 46, the area between the Canal and the railroad tracks generally consists of wooded vacant land. Once the tracks are crossed heading south, the boundary encompasses the Northside Shopping Plaza (mostly retail, but some service agencies as well), an American Legion, the City of Oneida’s Veterans Memorial Park which includes fields and a pool, and a dense residential area with a small playground. City Hall, an elementary school, and a church are also present before the area changes to primarily commercial with a wide array of older downtown buildings, city parks, healthcare facilities, banks, restaurants, and more. This section includes the new historic district in downtown Oneida that encompasses much of the City’s historic building stock in the center of downtown. Despite the

collection of 19th century architecture, there has been limited economic activity in the downtown, including amenities such as food and restrooms available to trail users. However recent investments in the Oneida Rail Trail, including a pedestrian plaza and streetscape enhancements, are starting to bring renewed economic energy to the downtown. The remaining portion of the WRA extends down Main Street to Dodge Street and primarily encompasses the City’s longstanding Historic District, the Main-Broad-Grove Streets Historic District. It is primarily a residential area but includes a few other uses such as the future home of the Oneida Library, private offices, parks, and more.

The Old Erie Canal State Historic Park is adjacent to the “Agricultural” zone through the City of Oneida. In addition, the parcels within the Old Erie Canal Corridor that extend south into the City of Oneida along Main Street are within many zones including “Residential-2,” “Residential-3,” “Manufacturing-Industrial,” “General Commercial,” and “Downtown Commercial.”

WATER QUALITY AND LAND COVER

The Old Erie Canal retains its Class C designation as it flows through the City of Oneida, signifying that fish and wildlife habitat are considered as the best use. Recreational uses are also to be supported in Class C waterways, although factors such as water depth and access may be limiting. Water depth and velocity decrease as the canal flows toward its terminus with the Barge Canal. Masses of aquatic plants and algal blooms impair recreational uses in this segment. Downed trees further restrict navigational access.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The City of Oneida includes two national register listed historic districts and five additional listed or eligible properties. The two districts have a combined total of 231 intact, architecturally significant historic resources from the Mid 19th Century, Late Victorian, Late 19th and 20th Century, Colonial Federal and Greek Revival, Bungalow, Italianate, Queen Anne, English Tudor, and Modern styles. This varied architectural palette reflects Oneida’s rapid development from it’s initial settlement in the 1830s to its heyday as a railroad and canal shipping center in the late 1860s.

In addition to the formally listed resources, Oneida’s Main Street Corridor contains some remnants of

Circa [DATE]



Today



MAIN STREET IN DOWNTOWN ONEIDA

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES LISTED AND ELIGIBLE SITES

①	District (Listed)	Main-Broad-Grove Streets Historic District
②	435 Main Street (Listed)	Cottage Lawn
③	133 Farrer Ave (Listed)	US Post Office
④	District (Listed)	Oneida Downtown Commercial Historic District
⑤	117 St. Joseph's (Eligible)	St. Joseph's Church
⑥	121 St. Joseph's (Eligible)	St. Joseph's Church Complex
⑦	230 North Broad (Eligible)	North Broad Street Elementary School

a historic feeder canal which connected the city center to the Erie Canal via a 1 mile long water channel. This canal was filled in during the 1930s. Calling attention to or enhancing these remnants is a potential strategy to recall Oneida's Erie Canal History.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

The City of Oneida hosts 2.5 miles of trail and water trail on a rural route with relatively few formal access points. In the east part of the city, the trail runs parallel to Canal Road which provides visual access but no parking areas. The Erie Canalway Trail passes 1.5 miles north of downtown Oneida; connectivity (e.g., proper infrastructure to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians) is lacking to facilitate visitation to the downtown. Potential connections are discussed on pages __ and __. The trail separates from the canal briefly on the County Route 76 bridge over the NYS Thruway; the bridge has inadequate bike and pedestrian accommodations. At this point the water also separates from the trail, going through a culvert under the NYS Thruway. The trail crosses Lake Road before passing over the Oneida Creek Aqueduct via a narrow, concrete pathway. The trail

then crosses Route 46 and enters Durhamville in Oneida County. A state-owned parcel of land on Lake Street has potential to serve as a trailhead with parking and kayak launch opportunities. Features of interest include the aqueduct, Doran dry dock, Oneida Canal and remnants of the Oneida Feeder Canal. There may be other launch opportunities at different points along Canal Street. A narrow culvert restricts kayak access at Route 46, so a launch around this location would provide a natural start or end point for paddlers.



Historical location of the Doran dry dock

TRANSPORTATION + UTILITY CROSSINGS

STRUCTURE NAME	TYPE	OWNER	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
Cowaselon Creek Aqueduct	Aqueduct	Canal Corporation	Canal Corporation
County Rd 13/Cobb Street	Bridge	NYSDOT	NYSDOT
Canal Rd/ Bridge over Thruway	Bridge	NYS Thruway Authority	NYS Thruway Authority
Route 90	Road/Box Culvert	NYS Thruway Authority	NYS Thruway Authority
NYS Rt 316/Lake Road	Bridge	NYSDOT	NYSDOT
Oneida Creek Aqueduct	Aqueduct	Canal Corporation	Canal Corporation



The bridge that carries County Route 76 over the NYS Thruway has inadequate infrastructure to accommodate Erie Canalway Trail users.

SPOTLIGHT: Trail Connection to Oneida

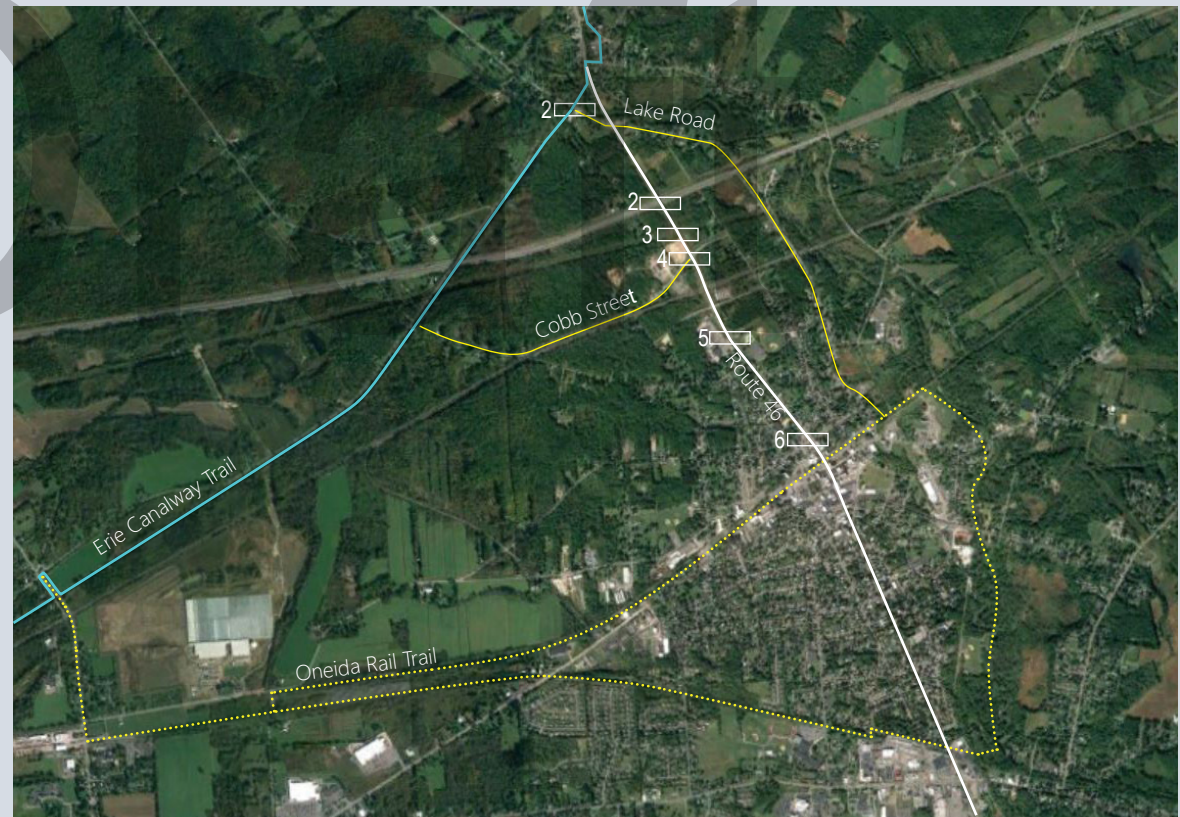
The City of Oneida is the largest population center on the Old Erie Canal and its businesses, history, and attractions are assets to the trail system. However, Oneida's greatest challenge within this system is the distance and travel conditions between the Old Erie Canal and the City Center. The trail crosses Lake Road and Route 46 about 1.5 miles north of downtown Oneida. From here, the most obvious route to the City is south on Lake Road and Route 46. Although a wide shoulder accommodates cyclists fairly well, the overall road width creates wide open spaces with little tree cover and a considerable volume of fast moving traffic. The road also crosses the New York State Thruway and a set of CSX railroad tracks, and in both instances the road presents a laborious incline to a bridge which is narrower than the regular road. The route is also challenged by a lack of awareness. As the trail approaches Lake Road and Route 46, there is little indication of the presence of a City just a mile away. Through-travelers who do not have prior knowledge of Oneida are likely to pass by without even knowing it is there. A community wayfinding sign was installed the summer of 2019 as one way to help welcome and direct trail visitors into Oneida.



Trail Crossing at Lake Road



Oneida Creek Aqueduct from Oneida Creek



New signage points trail users to downtown Oneida





1- Trail Crossing at Lake Road - 0.0 miles



2- Route 46 over NYS Thruway - 0.5 miles



3- Route 46 at Cobb Street - 0.7 miles



4- Route 46 over CSX Railroad - 0.9 miles



5- Route 46 at Vetrans Memorial Park - 1.2 miles



6- Route 46 City Center - 1.5 miles

The images to the left demonstrate the conditions of the 1.5 mile route between the Erie Canalway Trail and Oneida City Center. This auto-oriented route is not only a deterrent for trail users who may want to explore Oneida, it is also unappealing for city residents who may want to access the Old Erie Canal by foot or bicycle.

Three alternative routes to consider are highlighted on the map. These include Cobb Street, Lake Road, and the Oneida Rail Trail; the pros and cons of each are discussed below. The viability of these routes could be improved with a variety of investments to enhance the environment for cyclists and pedestrians.

Cobb Street

Cobb Street is a quiet on-road alternative route that could eliminate the need for trail users heading toward the City Center to cross the NYS Thruway via the Route 46 Bridge. This alternative alleviates about 0.7 miles of travel on Route 46. It would require wayfinding signage indicating the alternate route to Downtown. It would be more effective for travelers heading east, as they would come to the junction of Cobb Street and the trail before reaching Lake Road.

Lake Road

Utilizing Lake Road would add an additional mile when compared with Route 46; but takes riders on a quieter, less traffic-intensive road. It also eliminates one incline, as the road passes under, rather than over the NYS Thruway. Challenges include the additional distance, the narrowness of the road, and



the less obvious approach to downtown Oneida. This route would also potentially bypass some of the commercial downtown, as the natural re-entry point to Main Street is through Madison Street, although this could be addressed with wayfinding signage and painted bike lanes or sharrows.

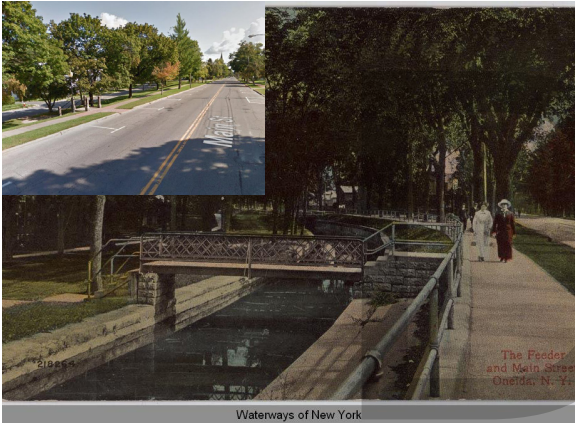
The Oneida Rail Trail

This new trail system is partially constructed in the City of Oneida and offers a hybrid alternative route which is off-road in some places and on-road in others. This is an excellent alternative to Route 46, but it's main challenge is that it requires users to enter the trail in Wampsville, about 3 miles east of Downtown Oneida. Signage at the Wampsville junction alerting trail users who wish to go to Oneida of this alternative route would improve navigation and awareness. Continued investment in this trail would serve to enhance off-road trail options for residents of Wampsville, Oneida and other local users looking for alternative natural, recreational and commuting routes.

Formal boat launches would make paddling more accessible between Oneida and Canastota



Remnants of Canal within City of Oneida could be remembered and celebrated



The Cowaselon Creek aqueduct; preserving the aqueducts is a priority for the history and function of the Old Erie Canal waterway.



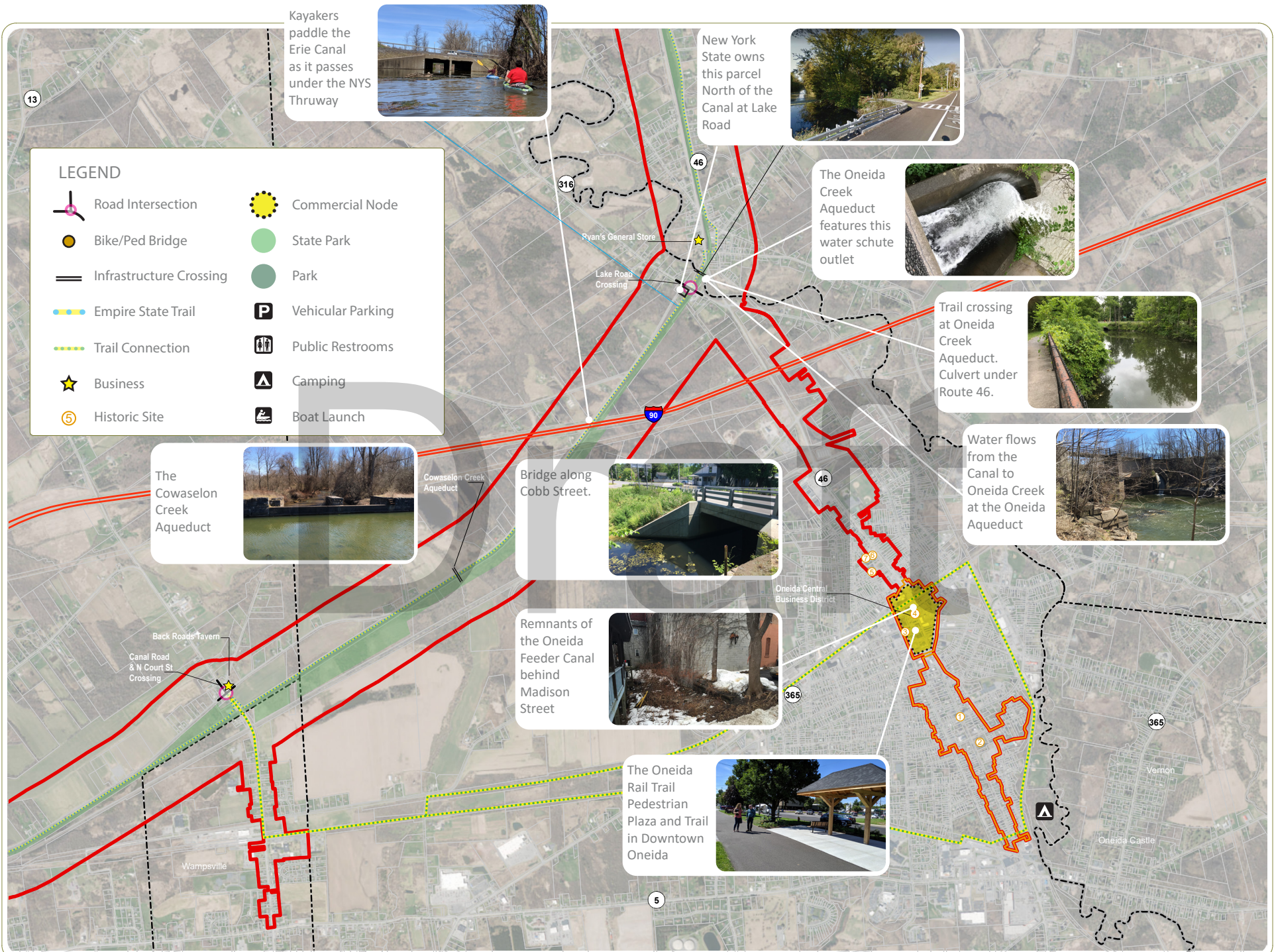
CITY OF ONEIDA ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The map to the right provides an overview of the context of the WRA in the City of Oneida.

- + Oneida contains two of five working aqueducts within the Old Erie Canal system which both need to be assessed on a regular basis with maintenance and repair work prioritized: the Cowaselon Creek Aqueduct and the western portion of the Oneida Creek Aqueduct.
- + The Oneida Creek Aqueduct regularly collects debris due to the narrowing waterway and water flowing through the sluice gate. It needs regular clearing and maintenance.
- + The Oneida Creek Aqueduct abutments create a pinch point at Oneida Creek where debris collects, including some large objects which need to be extracted from the creek.
- + Unobstructed kayaking is technically possible between Canastota and Route 46 in Oneida, however Oneida has no official kayak launch points and fallen trees make passage in some locations difficult. There are multiple location in Oneida where Kayak launches could be installed.
- + New York State owns a canal-adjacent lot on the northeast corner of the Canal and the N. Lake Street intersection. This parcel could be converted to a trailhead for the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park. It would serve as a needed access point and it would help alert trail users to the presence of the City of Oneida, just one mile south.
- + The Oneida Creek Aqueduct has the potential to become a more prominent node and parklette. A concentration of features of interest including the Aqueduct, the Doran Dry Dock, and remnants of the new Oneida Lake Canal are all present within

a small area.

- + The connection between the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park and downtown Oneida should be strengthened and highlighted.
- + Improvements to the road shoulder on the Route 76 bridge over the New York State Thruway are necessary to better accommodate cyclists and pedestrians.
- + Enhancements to the Oneida Rail Trail and its connection to the Erie Canalway Trail would serve to provide more trail and connection options in Oneida.
- + The Oneida Rail Trail and connecting roads are potential alternative routes to Route 46. Cobb Street and Lake Road should be investigated as potential alternatives with a variety of interventions such as signage and road design as options.
- + Although Oneida has a rich canal history, there are few obvious signs or connections to this within the City. Efforts to reconnect to this history could contain stronger links to the trail, commemorative public art, highlighting landscape features that date back to the canal, and interpreting history in the downtown. A concentrated and consistent effort to support local business development, following the Trail Town model would be useful in helping to establish Oneida as a destination. New Interpretative signs to educate residents and visitors about the former canal feeder that existed in Oneida, Doran Dry Dock, etc. are underway through a grant-funded project.
- + The entire stretch of the Erie Canalway Trail within the City of Oneida has been adopted by a non-profit called the Oneida Improvement Committee; this committee could potentially take responsibility for shepherding local projects.



Kayakers paddle the Erie Canal as it passes under the NYS Thruway



New York State owns this parcel North of the Canal at Lake Road



LEGEND

	Road Intersection		Commercial Node
	Bike/Ped Bridge		State Park
	Infrastructure Crossing		Park
	Empire State Trail		Vehicular Parking
	Trail Connection		Public Restrooms
	Business		Camping
	Historic Site		Boat Launch

The Oneida Creek Aqueduct features this water chute outlet



Trail crossing at Oneida Creek Aqueduct. Culvert under Route 46.



Water flows from the Canal to Oneida Creek at the Oneida Aqueduct



The Cowaselon Creek Aqueduct



Bridge along Cobb Street.



Remnants of the Oneida Feeder Canal behind Madison Street



The Oneida Rail Trail Pedestrian Plaza and Trail in Downtown Oneida



0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles