



*A Strategic Plan
for
The Hudson River Valley Greenway/
Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area*

October 2014

Executive Summary

Since the Hudson River Valley Greenway was created by New York State in 1991 and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area designated by the federal government in 1996, they have been charged with advancing the five Greenway criteria of:

- Natural and Cultural Resource Protection
- Regional Planning
- Economic Development
- Public Access
- Heritage and Environmental Education

The Planning Process

The strategic planning process for the Greenway/NHA began in September of 2013, with a kick-off meeting with the strategic planning committee, held at on September 25th at the National Park Service Regional Offices at Bellefield in Hyde Park. At that meeting, two concerns were widely shared:

- Securing future funding for the Greenway/NHA
- Set clear priorities for the Greenway

Subsequent meetings of the steering committee were held on December 13, 2013 and February 19, 2014, both at Bellefield at Hyde Park. Fairweather Consulting also met with the Greenway staff several times over the course of the planning process to better understand the organization's operations and review preliminary findings and analyses. In addition, 22 interviews were conducted with Greenway/NHA partners, stakeholders and board members.

The Greenway/NHA as a unique regional partnership

In 1991, New York State designated the Greenway as a steward for the quality of life in the region. By definition, quality of life cannot be assured through only one category of effort (e.g., the creation of parks, the revitalization of downtowns, the preservation of cultural heritage). Thus, the Greenway/NHA, has an over-arching, interdisciplinary charge to work with partner organizations in government, the not-for-profit sector and the private sector to maintain a balance among these specialized activities, a balance that can only be struck by creating partnerships across a wide variety of organizations, each with a specialized focus to their work. For the Greenway and the National Heritage Area, creating partnerships across political boundaries and organizational specialties is the essence of its work.

The Core Idea

As described in the introduction to this report, the core idea defines a unique and inherent truth about a service or an organization which differentiates it from other organizations in ways which are meaningful and persuasive to the target audiences. It brings together disparate considerations into a single approach for developing and managing the organization's services to its stakeholders.

The Core Idea—Making Connections: Based upon the analysis of the strategic position of the Greenway/NHA, we recommend that the core idea for the Greenway/NHA strategic plan be “making connections.” This can be elaborated as: “Making Connections that:

- Preserve the Hudson River Valley's heritage
- Revitalize its Economies
- Ensure a Sustainable Future for its Communities
- Enhance its Quality of Life

The Strategy: Making Connections--the Campaign for the Greenway

Summarized by the phrase “Making Connections—A Campaign for the Greenway,” the strategy is intended to:

- focus on building broad partnerships to support quality of life in the Valley as embodied in the Greenway Principles
- include a solid rationale for private fundraising on the part of the Greenway/NHA
- raise the visibility of the organization among all its stakeholders

In order to maintain its ability to respond flexibly and rapidly, the Greenway/NHA needs to ensure that its “private” side (the public benefit corporation) has sufficient resources to serve as a ready complement the State agency side of the organization, capable of rapid, flexible responses not possible by government agencies. The “connections” theme also provides an additional justification for private funding: the *physical* connections that are an important part of the Greenway/NHA, including local trails and the legislatively mandated Greenway shoreline trail. Such capital projects represent opportunities for private support, even in the case where the agency asking for the support receives tax dollars for its operating budget.

The “campaign for the Greenway” represents a return to the organization's roots, completing the legacy of the Greenway by fully realizing its capacity for regional partnerships and planning (one type of connection) and putting together a plan to finally achieve the legislatively mandated Greenway Trail (a second type of connection).

Tactics: Recommended Actions to Implement “Making Connections—A Campaign for the Greenway

This section identifies a sequenced program of specific actions to implement this strategy. The actions require three commitments from the Greenway staff and board members:

Commitment 1—Staffing: This strategy cannot be implemented without securing an additional staff position for the Greenway/NHA. Thanks to the continuation of NHA funding, the Greenway/NHA has

access to the financial support to create this position. The position to be filled would be the Heritage Area Coordinator position which would take on many of the project management tasks currently assumed by the Acting Director. This would then free up a portion of the Acting Director's time to be devoted to stakeholder outreach and fundraising.

Commitment 2—Focus: Despite its limited staff and funding the Greenway/NHA has a broad charge both geographically and programmatically. Consequently, the Board and staff must be very careful that the activities and projects the Greenway/NHA does take on are closely related to the purposes and capacity of the organization. It is therefore critical that the organization develop guidelines to ensure that limited staff resources can be put to their highest and best use supporting the Greenway/NHA.

Commitment 3—Fundraising: As part of implementing this strategic plan, the Greenway Executive Director and Board should be actively committed to seeking additional public and private funds to support the organization and its work. It is recommended that the Board form a development committee to oversee the creation of a formal fundraising/development plan for the Greenway/NHA. This plan will be a centerpiece of the "Campaign for the Greenway."

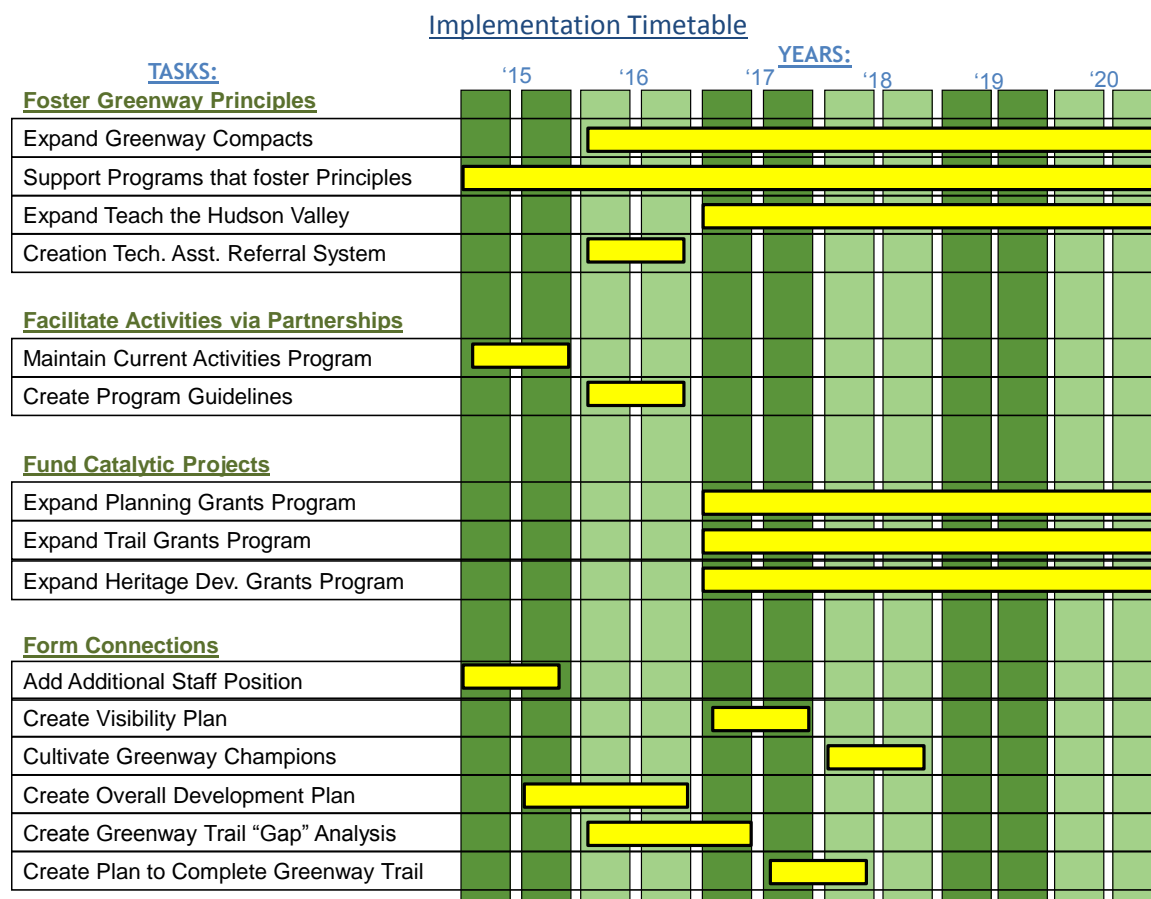
Recommended Actions

These three commitments are the foundation upon which the strategic plan itself rests. They will make it possible to implement the recommended actions that are described here. These recommended actions are grouped under the four types of benefits listed in the market positioning statement:

- **Fostering the dissemination & adoption of Greenway principles** to promote smart growth and sustainable development throughout the Valley
- **Facilitating activities through partnerships** to support those principles
- **Funding "catalytic" projects** to further Greenway principles
- **Forming the physical and programmatic connections** to address many aspects of quality of life in the Valley

A summary of recommended actions with an implementation timetable for completion is given below.

See the full report for details.



Contents

Introduction	1
The Core Idea—Establishing an Organization’s Strategic Position	1
The Planning Process	3
Interview Results.....	5
The Greenway/NHA as a unique regional partnership	6
Greenway/NHA Board Retreat	7
Review of Strength Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats	7
Setting Program Priorities	9
The Board’s role in Implementing the Strategy	9
The Core Idea	10
The Strategy: Making Connections--the Campaign for the Greenway	14
Tactics: Recommended Actions to Implement “Making Connections—A Campaign for the Greenway	15
Commitment 1: Staffing	15
Commitment 2: Focus	16
Commitment 3: Fundraising	16
Strategy Implementation: Immediate Priorities	23
Attachments.....	25

Introduction

Since the Greenway was created by New York State in 1991 and the Heritage Area designated by the federal government in 1996, it has played a central role in protecting and promoting the region that—in many ways—defined the American ideas of nature, wilderness and natural beauty. In the past two decades, the Hudson Valley Greenway Communities Council and the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson Valley have been working together to advance the five Greenway criteria of:

- Natural and Cultural Resource Protection
- Regional Planning
- Economic Development
- Public Access
- Heritage and Environmental Education

Indeed, the breadth of activity has been staggering. The work of the Greenway encompasses three separate but related program areas identified in its original legislation:

- *Planning*: whose responsibilities include facilitating regional planning compacts throughout the Valley while supporting community-based activities in comprehensive planning, waterfront revitalization, main street revitalization, economic development and heritage preservation.
- *Trails*: which includes developing and managing the Greenway Trail System, the Greenway Water Trail and promoting and coordination the creation of Scenic Byways in the Valley.
- *Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area*: which charges the Greenway with promoting Tourism Development and encouraging Heritage Interpretation in the Valley, while overseeing the Teaching the Hudson Valley initiative to ensure that schools are taking full advantage of the Valley's resources as a way of teaching students the importance of the landscape in which they are growing up.

As the 2002 HRVNHA management plan demonstrated, any one of these three program areas would be sufficient enough to occupy the most capable and lavishly funded government agency. The challenge for the Greenway is how to manage the broad range of responsibilities it holds in the face of very real resource constraints. Thus the central task of this strategic plan is setting clear priorities.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to set clear comprehensive priorities for the Greenways programmatic activities, partnerships and resource development so that the agency can continue the pursuit of its ambitious mission in the face of today's fiscal realities.

The Core Idea—Establishing an Organization's Strategic Position: A strategic planning process should identify and articulate the unique role that organization plays for its stakeholders (e.g., clients, funders, allied organizations, etc.) That concept of an organization's unique role can be

understood as constituting the “core idea” of the organization. The concept of a core idea was developed by Pete Mathieu as a way of understanding the process of strategy development.

The core idea defines a unique and inherent truth about a service which differentiates it from the competition in ways which are meaningful and persuasive to the target audiences. It brings together disparate considerations into a single approach for developing and managing the organization’s services to its stakeholders.



The core idea answers the following questions:

What are we serving? What are the key services that the Greenway/NHA will provide to potential visitors or partners? Why are those services compelling and important to the stakeholders? This can refer to only to programmatic subject matter, but also to the concept of acting as a partner agency to help other organizations have better access to stakeholder, organizations or geographic areas they wish to serve.

Who are we serving? Who are the potential users of the Greenway’s/NHA’s programs? Who are the sponsors, supporters, donors, and tourism partners? What are their expectations for the role of the organization?

Why are we serving? This is the essential value of the services provided by the Greenway/NHA, and is based on the desires and priorities of the stakeholders. It defines a distinct role for the Greenway/NHA

to play in the region, providing it with a focus for its operations and serving as a competitive edge for the organization in terms of its fundraising efforts.

Where are we serving? What is the geographic reach of the enterprise and how well does the core idea meet the needs of the stakeholders specifically within that area? This is a definition of the “reach” of the organization and its primary area of responsibility.

When are we serving? Are the services offered by the Greenway/NHA seasonally limited? While some events can only be offered during the tourist season, most of the organization’s initiatives can be offered continuously.

How are we serving? How are the services going to be delivered successfully to the stakeholders and users? What are the specific actions that will deliver the services?

Against whom are we serving? Who are the other organizations or stakeholders from which our intended users can get the services and/or experiences similar to those by the Greenway/NHA? What can the organization offer that may provide a unique appeal to funders interested in the Hudson River Valley? As shown in the table below, the Greenway/NHA is somewhat unique in that its role as a regional partner with most organizations means it has very few direct competitors. The Greenway/NHA competes with other agencies for funding, but not by offering services that directly compete with other agencies for clients.

The process of identifying and understanding the “core idea” of an enterprise creates the foundation upon which to define a clear, distinct role that builds upon the strengths of the organization and to build a sustainable base for fund raising. As shown in the “core idea” diagram above, an understanding of an organization’s core idea is the basis for fully articulating and embracing its mission, a vision for its future and the values upon which it will operate. This strategic plan defines a “core idea” for the Hudson River Valley Greenway/National Heritage Area and identifies the associated strategy and tactics by which the organization can fully realize the potential of that core idea.

The Planning Process

The strategic planning process for the Greenway/NHA began in September of 2013, with a kick-off meeting with the strategic planning committee, held at on September 25th at the National Park Service Regional Offices at Bellefield in Hyde Park. At that meeting, two concerns were widely shared:

- Securing future funding for the Greenway/NHA
- Set clear priorities for the Greenway

These were seen as two of the most important potential benefits from the strategic planning exercise. In addition, the committee was asked to discuss how the Greenway/NHA would be changed by 2013 if the strategic plan was very successful or if it failed. It was generally agreed that a successful plan would lead to expanded regional cooperation, increased tourism, increased visibility for the Greenway as a model for regional planning and cooperation and more completed trails in the region. It was a sense of

the group that a failed strategic plan would lead to increased fractionalization and loss of regional focus in the Valley, an abandonment of the Greenway Principles and a loss of relevance of the organization in the communities it is intended to serve.

Subsequent meetings of the steering committee were held on December 13, 2013 and February 19, 2014, both at Bellefield at Hyde Park. Fairweather Consulting also met with the Greenway staff several times over the course of the planning process to better understand the organization's operations and review preliminary findings and analyses.

In addition, 22 interviews were conducted with Greenway/NHA partners, stakeholders and board members. The list of interviewees is provided below.

Interviews Completed	
Name	Affiliation
Karl Beard	NPS Rivers and Trails Program
Mary Kay Vrba	Hudson Valley Tourism
Glenn Hoagland	Mohonk Preserve
Steve Rosenberg/ Ned Sullivan/ Andy Bicking	Scenic Hudson
Brent Kovalchik (Village)	Village of Red Hook
Kealy Solomon/John Clarke	Dutchess County Planning
Priscella Brendler	Greater Hudson Heritage Network
Ellen Jouret- Epstien	Columbia Land Conservancy
Gregg Swanzy	Kingston Land Trust
Wint Aldrich	Former Deputy Director for Historic Preservation at State Parks
Dennis Doyle	Ulster County Planning
Jane Daniels	NY/NJ Trails Conference, Greenway Conservancy
David Sampson	Founding Director
Betsy Blair	Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve
Sean Shortell, District Director	Office of Congressman Paul Tonko
Virginia Kasinki	Glynwood Center
Betsy Jacks	Thomas Cole NHS, Greenway Conservancy Brd Member
Ruth K. Abrahams, Ph.D.	Gomez Foundation for the Mill House
Kim Elliman	Open Space Institute
Sally Mazzarella	Greenway Board Member
Kitty Brown	Greenway Board Member

Interview Results

In the interviews, participants were asked to identify those things that the Greenway/NHA did well and those things that it needed to improve. In addition, they were asked to identify stakeholders that the Greenway/NHA should develop stronger partnerships with. Finally, interviewers were asked to identify important next steps for the organization.

Things the Respondents Identified as Those the Greenway Does Well:

Nearly all respondents indicated that, through its regular board meetings, the Greenway/NHA serves as a regional clearinghouse for ideas and provides all stakeholders in the region with a “place at the table” for discussions of regional issues.

The Greenway Compact and associated planning assistance were identified as very helpful in moving projects forward in local communities. In addition, Greenway grants were widely praised as an important source of “seed” funding that helps grantees leverage other funds for projects. In every case, respondents indicated that Greenway funding, while by itself not sufficient to undertake a project, was nonetheless an important catalyst to projects. The approval of funding by the Greenway/NHA was often used by grantees to demonstrate the quality of the project to other funding sources. Respondents felt that the simple compliance/reporting requirements of these small grants, coupled with the “catalytic” effect described above made them valuable despite the small awards associated with them.

The ability of the Acting Director to provide technical assistance and timely referrals to other resources was also widely cited as a strength of the organization.

It was felt that the organization is very good at handling special projects like the Hudson River Valley Ramble and the recent Path through History project.

Respondents also noted that the Greenway/NHA provided a clear economic return to communities for Greenway-related activities: that it is an important economic development resource for the region.

Things the Respondents Identified as Those the Greenway Could do Better:

Most respondents said that the Greenway/NHA does a great job given its severe resource limitations, but it was felt that the organization should provide more general outreach in the region, explaining to newly-elected local officials and others what the Greenway and NHA are and what they do.

Respondents also indicated that the organization will have to continue to leverage more and more resources and funding from partners to continue their work given funding shortages. In addition, it was also suggested that, in light of the funding constraints, the organization may wish to focus grants program more closely on the Greenway Principles. In a similar vein, respondents suggested that the Greenway/NHA leverage resources for technical assistance work by using webinars and

other technology applications to deliver services. Another suggestion for maximizing scarce resources was for the organization to better share information on projects across towns in the region and possibly to focus on more intermunicipal work rather than town-by-town projects to stretch program resources.

Several respondents suggested that the organization needs to focus more on completing the shoreline trail as defined in its original legislation.

Several respondents indicated that the Greenway/NHA could improve their capacity to develop Heritage Resources for communities and heritage sites in the region.

Stakeholders the Greenway should serve better or partner with: When asked about the stakeholders the Greenway/NHA should serve better or build stronger partnerships with, the respondents all identified existing partners, including:

- Local communities (more diffusion for Greenway Principles and creation of Compacts)
- Counties (more intermunicipal agreements to create and/or further the Compacts)
- State agencies working in the Valley like DEC, DOS, OPRHP
- Culture Heritage Sites/Tourism

In that sense, the main concern was to ensure that the organization is able to maintain the working relationships it needs to further the Greenway Principles.

Critical “Next Steps:” Setting Priorities

When asked about next steps, almost all respondents focused on the need to set priorities, given resource constraints. Generally, respondents endorsed the concept that the Greenway/NHA build upon credibility and good relations with local governments to further the acceptance of Greenway Principles, to continue to assist communities in making decisions about growth and development and to continue to play a catalytic role with funding and technical assistance. On a related note, several respondents asked if the Greenway Trail is still a priority and if the organization should consider how that can be advanced under current conditions. Improving the overall visibility of the Greenway/NHA was identified by several respondents as an important priority. It was suggested that the Greenway/NHA consider holding an anniversary celebration or other high-impact event to raise the organization’s visibility.

The Greenway/NHA as a unique regional partnership

The Greenway/NHA is a hybrid of public and private organizations—a public/private partnership. Thus, it has a unique ability to access State agencies and their resources, while, on the private side, it can undertake projects more quickly than traditional state agencies. But the Greenway/NHA history of partnerships is unique in another way. In 1991, the Greenway was charged by the State with acting as a steward for the quality of life in the region. By definition, quality of life cannot be assured through only

one category of effort (e.g., the creation of parks, the revitalization of downtowns, the preservation of cultural heritage). Thus, for the Greenway/NHA, its “portfolio” of topics of concern extended from the development of trails and parks to economic development. It has an over-arching, interdisciplinary charge to work with partner organizations in government, the not-for-profit sector and the private sector to maintain a balance among these specialized activities. This balance that can only be struck by creating partnerships across a wide variety of organizations, each of whom has a specialized focus to their work. For the Greenway (and later the National Heritage Area), creating partnerships across political boundaries and organizational specialties is the essence of its work.

Greenway/NHA Board Retreat

This notion of the Greenway as a State-designated steward of the quality of life for the Hudson River Valley established the context for the Board retreat held at Bellefield on March 28, 2014. At the retreat, the Board reviewed the progress to date on the strategic plan and was given the opportunity to review and comment upon several aspects of the planning process. This included a review of the Greenway’s/NHA’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis), a discussion of the organization’s priorities in the coming years along with conversation about the role the Board should play in achieving those priorities. The center of the board discussion concerned the “core idea” of the Greenway/NHA and its implications for the strategic plan. The full description of the board retreat is included in the appendices to this report. The results are summarized below.

Review of Strength Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

During the retreat, the board was presented with a SWOT analysis as prepared by Fairweather Consulting. Upon review, the board added several items that are indicated by an asterisk.

Strengths: What capacities or capabilities of Greenway/NHA are an advantage as it seeks to fulfill its role in the region?

- Planning Knowledge by the staff is valuable to stakeholders
- Connections/Network provided by the Greenway/NHA
- Access to NYS Agencies due to the fact that the Greenway functions like an executive agency
- Flexibility/Agility stemming from the “private” side of the Greenway/NHA that has fewer restrictions on procurement and other practices
- Ability to Provide “Catalytic” Funding through small grants that are highly valued by stakeholders
- Brand Equity & credibility stemming from a well known & well regarded reputation
- Creates structures/opportunities for local participation through its meetings, the Compact process, etc.*

Weaknesses: What are those internal aspects of the Greenway/NHA that make it less able to fulfill its role?

- Limited Staff to manage the full range of activities under the Greenway/NHA (as shown in the organization chart included in the appendices to this report, six of the 12 staff positions in the Greenway/NHA are vacant)
- Limited Budget to support Greenway/NHA activities
- Decreasing Visibility/Brand Equity as budget cuts/staff reductions limit the amount of outreach the organization can make to local governments and other stakeholders
- Complex Role given the Greenway's/NHA's involvement in many fields from trail creation to economic development
- NYS Administrative Procedures can be burdensome for adding staff and other aspects of the organization that occur on the "State side"*
- Loss of Original Champions may hurt the Greenway as such stalwart supports as Congressman Hinchey and NYS Senator Saland are no longer in office*
- Greying of Constituency & Board indicating that, as the population is aging, the Greenway must increase its efforts to bring in new, younger board members*
- Under-engaged Board with few demands made upon them to share their talents and expertise with the Greenway/NHA*

Opportunities: What general economic, social or demographic trends can the Greenway/NHA take advantage of?

- Heritage Tourism is now widely recognized as a key subsector of the tourism economy
- Tourism in General is growing nationally and in the Hudson River Valley in particular*
- Success of Ramble & "Water" trail raise awareness of the Greenway/NHA among new audiences
- Increased Acceptance of Regionalism enables Greenway programs like the Compact to be more readily accepted
- Hamlet/Village/City Revitalization & Emergence of Millennial Generation as urban-oriented creates greater potential for continued urban revitalization in waterfront communities and elsewhere
- Planning Training requirements are increasing for volunteer boards, potentially creating an opportunity for the Greenway/NHA to respond to this need*
- Subregional Partnerships that can bring several municipalities into a single project, better leveraging scarce resources*
- Leveraging Funding by combining sources to support projects*

Threats: What general economic, social or demographic trends might seriously hinder the Greenway/NHA?

- Continued Government Austerity will make it harder to fund the public sector side of the Greenway/NHA
- Lack of Knowledge of Greenway's Role in Regional Development/Frustration with Perceived Lack of Progress that could lead stakeholders to believe that the organization has become ineffective
- Absorption of Greenway into Regulatory Agency that would change the essential nature of the organization from a facilitating partner to a potential enforcement program

- Loss of Urgency regarding planning and preservation as a continued sluggish economy reduces the threat of over-development or inappropriate development *
- Anti-planning Sentiments that may be exacerbated as the sluggish economic growth is attributed to over-regulation*
- Funding metrics in such programs as the Consolidated Funding Application that focuses on job creation ahead of such considerations as environmental protection, enhanced quality of life, etc.*
- Tick-borne diseases that may make people less interested in outdoor activities and less willing to fund the Greenway and other programs with strong outdoor recreation components*

Setting Program Priorities

Following the discussion of the SWOT analysis, the Board was put through an exercise to help identify those programs/projects that should be the most immediate priorities for the Greenway/NHA. The priorities that emerged were all involved in the types of partnerships or connections that have been central to the organization since its inception:

- Providing “Catalytic” Grant Funding for Greenway-related Activities (planning, access, etc.)
- Providing Outreach to Localities/Local Organizations to engage them in regional initiatives
- Regional Planning/Greenway Compact Process
- When asked to identify those activities that Greenway will play a supportive rather than a leadership role in the near term, three emerged:
- Agriculture Development
- Planning for Climate Resiliency
- Putting together interpretive presentations/packages of historical events and/or heritage sites (including training)

The Board’s role in Implementing the Strategy

The retreat concluded with a discussion of the role of board members in implementing the strategy. The general tenor of the discussion was that board members had an important role building and maintaining important connections for the Greenway/NHA and in fundraising for the organization. The key functions identified for the board members included:

- Fundraising
- Assist the staff by providing with access to connections
- Help raise awareness of the Greenway/NHA among the general public and key stakeholder groups (e.g., local officials, tourism agencies, legislators, etc.)

- Recruit legislative champions at the state and federal level to provide ongoing legislative and funding support for the Greenway/NHA

It was suggested that Board engagement should focus on board members' fiduciary responsibility and due diligence. At the same time, it may be useful for the organization to conduct regular orientations for new board members and regularly addressing board development at regular meetings of the board.

The Core Idea

As described in the introduction to this report, the core idea defines a unique and inherent truth about a service or an organization which differentiates it from the competition in ways which are meaningful and persuasive to the target audiences. It brings together disparate considerations into a single approach for developing and managing the organization's services to its stakeholders. The core idea answers the following questions:

What are we serving? What are the key services that the Greenway/NHA will provide to potential visitors or clients? Why are those services compelling and important to the stakeholders? This can refer to only to programmatic subject matter, but also to the concept of acting as a partner agency to help other organizations have better access to stakeholder, organizations or geographic areas they wish to serve.

Who are we serving? Who are the potential users of the Greenway's/NHA's programs? Who are the sponsors, supporters, donors, and tourism partners? What are their expectations for the role of the organization?

Why are we serving? This is the essential value of the services provided by the Greenway/NHA, and is based on the desires and priorities of the stakeholders. It defines a distinct role for the Greenway/NHA to play in the region, providing it with a focus for its operations and serving as a competitive edge for the organization in terms of its fundraising efforts.

Where are we serving? What is the geographic reach of the enterprise and how well does the core idea meet the needs of the stakeholders specifically within that area? This is a definition of the "reach" of the organization and its primary area of responsibility.

When are we serving? Are the services offered by the Greenway/NHA seasonally limited? While some events can only be offered during the tourist season, most of the organization's initiatives can be offered continuously.

How are we serving? How are the services going to be delivered successfully to the stakeholders and users? What are the specific actions that will deliver the services?

Against whom are we serving? Who are the primary regional organizations from which our intended users can get the services and/or experiences similar to those by the Greenway/NHA? What can the organization offer that may provide a unique appeal to funders interested in the Hudson River Valley? As shown in the table below, the Greenway/NHA is somewhat unique in that its role as a regional partner with most organizations means it has very few direct competitors. The Greenway/NHA competes with other agencies for funding, but not by offering services that directly compete with other agencies for clients.

In response to the first question, “who are we serving?”, research indicates that the Greenway/NHA has five major targets audiences:

- Hudson River Valley Residents.
- Hudson River Valley Tourists.
- The Hudson River Valley Tourism Sector (including heritage sites)
- Local governments in the Hudson River Valley (towns, cities, villages, counties, etc.)
- Not-for-Profit Organizations involved in activities ranging from outdoor recreation to economic development
- State and Federal agencies that serve the Hudson River Valley.

The table below summarizes the responses to each of the seven questions associated with the creation of a “core idea” as derived from the research for this strategic plan. The first question, “Who are we serving?” serves as the organizing principle for the table. The remaining six questions are answered for the target stakeholder segments identified:

Elements of a "Core Idea" for the Hudson River Valley Greenway/National Heritage Area						
WHO are we serving?	WHAT are we serving?	WHERE are we serving?	WHEN are we serving?	WHY are we serving? (What is the benefit to customer)	HOW are we serving?	AGAINST WHOM are we serving?
Hudson Valley Residents	Improved Planning Enhanced Recreational, Educational & Cultural Opportunities	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	Enhanced quality of life	Regional compacts, local planning grants, "catalytic" funding	No direct competitors
Hudson Valley Tourists	Improved access to and understanding of the Hudson River Valley as a tourism destination Expanded opportunities for recreation, and cultural activities	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	Enhanced tourism experience	Grants, NHA website and ancillary materials, support for regional events, training and technical assistance, guidebooks, etc.	Other tourism areas
Hudson River Valley Tourism Sector (including heritage sites)	Enhanced tourism attractions and activities for visitors	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	Expanded business opportunities	Enhancement of the Hudson River Valley tourism assets through Greenway/NHA initiatives	No direct competitors
Local Governments	Resources to improve quality of life	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	"Catalytic" funding; improved access to information and expertise for community planning	Grants-making; referrals to technical assistance, training opportunities	No direct competitors
Not-for-Profit Organizations	Project support consistent with the Greenway principles	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	"Catalytic" funding; improved access to information and expertise for community planning	Grants-making; referrals to technical assistance, training opportunities	No direct competitors
State & Federal Agencies	Enhanced service delivery to the Hudson River Valley region	The Hudson River Valley	Continuously	Improved access to communities or constituencies served by the respective agencies	Partnering on programs; Referral of stakeholders to programs	No direct competitors

The core idea for the Greenway/NHA can be traced in the responses to the questions “Why are we serving?” and “How are we serving?” For almost every stakeholder group, the “why” in enhanced access to resources. The “How are we serving?” question involves some type of partnership, referral to important services or access to “catalytic” funding that enables the stakeholder to then access other resources needed for their project. In that sense, the offerings of the Greenway/NHA revolve around partnerships or connections. It is the focus on connections that constitutes the unique and inherent truth about the Greenway/NHA. Indeed, the concept of connections is based in the original conception of the Greenway as a trail that will eventually physically connect all the riverside communities between Albany and New York City. Thus, physical and conceptual connections are at the heart of the Greenway/NHA and its work.

The Core Idea—Making Connections: Based upon the analysis of the strategic position of the Greenway/NHA, we recommend that the core idea for the Greenway/NHA strategic plan be “making connections.” This can be elaborated as: “Making Connections that:

- Preserve the Hudson River Valley’s heritage
- Revitalize its Economies
- Ensure a Sustainable Future for its Communities
- Enhance its Quality of Life

The core idea summarizes the strategic position of the Greenway/NHA. This can be further articulated through a “market positioning” statement that defines that unique strategic position.

A general format for a market positioning statement is:

TO [the target market(s)],

THE PRODUCT/SERVICE IS [key differentiating attributes] Why is this thing different?

THAT CAN [intended benefits] What does it do?

BECAUSE [the manner by which the product or service provides benefits to the target market(s)]. How does it do it?

After much discussion with the staff, steering committee and the board, the following market positioning statement has emerged for the Greenway/NHA:

TO people who live in, work in and visit the Hudson River Valley and those concerned with its economy, environment, scenery and cultural heritage

THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY IS the only organization created by the State of New York to promote & safeguard quality of life in the Hudson River Valley

THAT CAN address all aspects of quality of life in the Valley by making the physical and programmatic connections to support and strengthen the work of governments, not-for-profits and other organizations active in the Valley

BECAUSE it combines a State agency's ability to marshal and focus public resources with a private organization's ability to move flexibly and rapidly to gain private sector, local governmental and citizen support. This unique structure enables the Greenway to:

- Foster the dissemination & adoption of Greenway principles to promote smart growth and sustainable development throughout the Valley
- Facilitate activities to support those principles involving partnerships among public and private stakeholders
- Fund “catalytic” projects to further Greenway principles
- Form the physical and programmatic connections to address many aspects of quality of life in the Valley

The Strategy: Making Connections—the Campaign for the Greenway

At the beginning of this process, the steering committee indicated that the strategic plan must accomplish two things: set clear priorities for the organization to follow while also improving its fundraising abilities. In order to meet these objectives, the strategy must provide a tight focus for the activities of the Greenway/NHA. It also must position the organization for fundraising, a particular challenge given that the Greenway is (at least in part) a State agency supported by taxes. Many philanthropists are reluctant to give to organizations that also receive tax funding. Thus, it is important that the strategy provides a rationale for the Greenway/NHA to seek private support while also receiving taxpayer dollars.

The strategy must also address the ability of the Greenway/NHA to maintain and strengthen its connections with the full range of stakeholders and partners that are essential to the organization's role as a steward of regional quality of life. Finally, our analysis also indicates that, to the extent possible, the strategy must help re-establish the visibility of the Greenway/NHA to offset any loss of visibility that has been a consequence of the long-term reductions in funding and staffing.

In short the strategy must:

- focus on building broad partnerships to support quality of life in the Valley as embodied in the Greenway Principles
- include a solid rationale for private fundraising on the part of the Greenway/NHA
- raise the visibility of the organization among all its stakeholders

Summarized by the phrase “Making Connections—A Campaign for the Greenway,” the strategy is intended to address all three of these concerns. The concept of making connections directly addresses the need for the Greenway/NHA to accomplish its work through partnerships.

In addition, the “connections” theme illustrates the unique nature of the organization and its need for private funding. In order to maintain its ability to respond flexibly and rapidly, the Greenway/NHA needs to ensure that its “private” side (the public benefit corporation) has sufficient resources to serve as a ready complement the State agency side of the organization. Finally, the “connections” theme provides an additional justification for private funding. The *physical* connections that are an important part of the Greenway/NHA, including local trails and the legislatively mandated Greenway shoreline trail are the type of capital projects that private funders may be willing to support, even in the case where the agency asking for the support receives tax dollars for its operating budget.

Through its “Campaign for the Greenway,” the strategy provides a framework for raising the organization’s visibility. When the Hudson River Valley Greenway was first proposed, there was a coordinated campaign among environmentalists, tourism groups, land trusts and other community groups to build support for the concept. In a sense the “campaign for the Greenway” represents a return to the organization’s roots. It will complete the legacy of the Greenway by fully realizing its capacity for regional partnerships and planning (one type of connection) and putting together a plan to finally achieve the legislatively mandated Greenway Trail (a second type of connection).

Tactics: Recommended Actions to Implement “Making Connections—A Campaign for the Greenway

This section identifies a sequenced program of specific actions to implement this strategy. In essence the actions require three commitments from the Greenway staff and board members:

Commitment 1: Staffing

Given the severe staff shortages facing the Greenway/NHA, this strategy cannot be implemented without securing an additional staff position for the Greenway/NHA. Thanks to the continuation of NHA funding, the Greenway/NHA has access to the financial support to create this position. However, due to policy constraints, the Executive Director has yet to be able to fill the position made possible through NHA funding. The position to be filled would be the Heritage Area Coordinator position that is currently vacant. It is anticipated that this position would take on many of the project management tasks currently assumed by the Acting Director. This would then free up a portion of the Acting Director’s time to be devoted to stakeholder outreach and fundraising. Unlike situations in other agencies, the Greenway/NHA can add this position without increasing its budget. The funding is already in place. Thus the first (and in that sense most critical) move in the “Campaign for the Greenway” is for the Board to authorize the Executive Director to fill this position so that—while still dramatically understaffed—the organization will have capacity to begin implementation of this strategic plan.

Commitment 2: Focus

Despite its limited staff and funding the Greenway/NHA has a broad charge both geographically and programmatically. Consequently, the Board and staff must be very careful that the activities and projects the Greenway/NHA does take on are closely related to the purposes and capacity of the organization. It is therefore critical that the organization develop guidelines to ensure that limited staff resources can be put to their highest and best use supporting the Greenway/NHA. It is recommended that these guidelines stipulate that, in order for an activity to be undertaken by the Greenway/NHA, the proposed activity/event should have the demonstrable capacity to further the Greenway Principles and/or NHA management plan, be easily accessible to a broad range of visitors and/or participants and be financially self-sustaining given funds committed by Greenway/NHA or sponsoring organization.

Commitment 3: Fundraising

The work of the Greenway/NHA is too important to the Valley to fall victim to the current conditions of fiscal austerity. As part of implementing this strategic plan, the Greenway Executive Director and Board should be actively committed to seeking additional public and private funds to support the organization and its work. It is recommended that the Board form a development committee to oversee the creation of a formal fundraising/development plan for the Greenway/NHA. This plan will be a centerpiece of the “Campaign for the Greenway.” NOTE: while the strategic plan does not recommend devoting current staff resources to the completion of the legislatively mandated Greenway Trail, completing the Trail would make a highly visible and recognizable for the fundraising efforts involved in the “Campaign for the Greenway.” Two key elements in garnering interest by public and private funders would be raising money for an inventory to identify the remaining physical gaps in the Greenway Trail with a follow up campaign to secure the public and private funding needed to close those gaps.

These three commitments are the foundation upon which the strategic plan itself rests. They will make it possible to implement the recommended actions that are described here. These recommended actions are grouped under the four types of benefits listed in the market positioning statement:

- **Fostering the dissemination & adoption of Greenway principles** to promote smart growth and sustainable development throughout the Valley
- **Facilitating activities through partnerships** to support those principles
- **Funding “catalytic” projects** to further Greenway principles
- **Forming the physical and programmatic connections** to address many aspects of quality of life in the Valley

The detailed recommendations are given below. Each recommendation includes the action taken, the responsible party, partners and metrics for evaluating that action.

PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	METRIC
Foster Greenway Principles			
Continue to Expand Compacts: The Greenway Compacts have been an important vehicle to enable county governments and local communities to adapt the Greenway Principles to preserve and improve their quality of life. Compacts have been approved in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester counties. The Ulster County compact is under consideration. The benefits of the compacts to the counties and the region should be extended by assisting at least three other counties to create their own versions of Greenway Compacts by 2020.	Staff	County & local governments	Compacts completed for three other Counties by 2020.
Support conferences/programs that promote Greenway Principles: In addition to the formal compacts, the Greenway Principles can be fostered in the region by supporting conferences and programs that address such issues as economic development, trails, tourism, resiliency and others in ways that introduce and encourage the use of the Greenway Principles in local planning and development. As part of this effort the Greenway/NHA should seek to have the Principles explicitly addressed as a topic in the conference/program. Support for such efforts can come in the form of financial support and/or staff participation in such efforts.	Staff	HREP, NYSDOS, NYSERDA, local governments, Land Trusts and other Community Groups	Greenway/NHA support and/or participation in at least three conferences/programs per year that include the Greenway Principles in the programming.
Continue to Expand the Teach the Hudson Valley (THV) program: Through the NHA, this program provides financial support for grants of up to \$10,000 each to public and private schools in the Hudson Valley that combine curriculum with visits to sites of cultural, historic, or natural significance. Through the grants, the Greenway/NHA is able to introduce the principles to teachers and school children throughout the region. This is an area in which board fund-raising can be an important source of support for the initiative.	Staff & board members	the National Park Service's Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites; the Hudson River Estuary Program of the New York State Department of Environmental	Expand program to 20 grants per year and/or \$75,000 in awards each year.

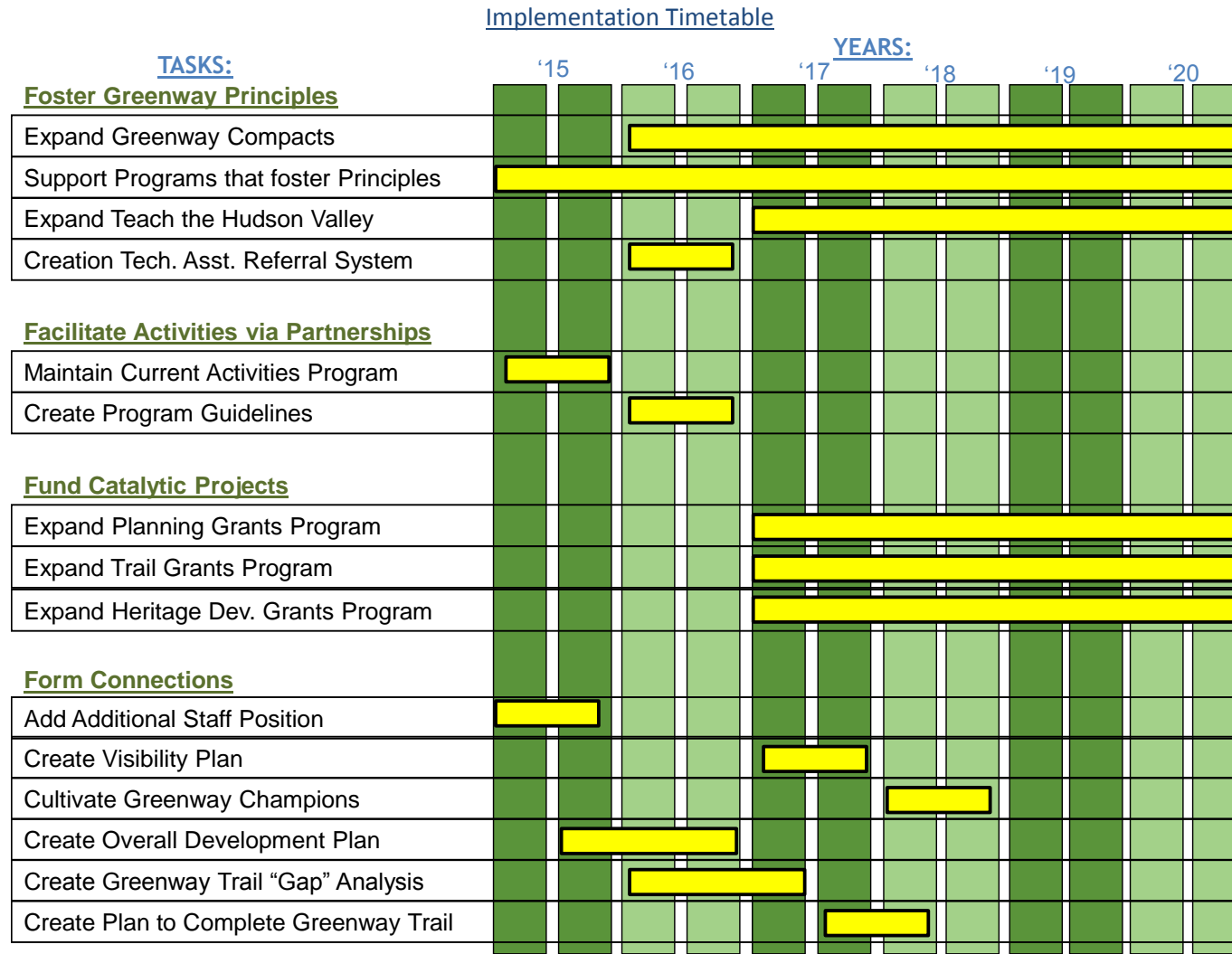
PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	METRIC
		Conservation; and the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, local schools	
Referral/Coordination of Technical Assistance for Planning, Resource Conservation and Economic Development: The Greenway/NHA is already recognized as an important source through which communities gain access to technical planning assistance for a variety of projects. While the organization no longer has the resources to provide this technical assistance itself, it should create working agreements with agencies that provide such assistance including the Hudson River Estuary Program, the NYS Department of State, the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, Scenic Hudson and others so that the Greenway/NHA can act more effectively in its role as a central referral source for planning and other technical assistance consistent with the Greenway Principles.	Staff	HREP, NYSDOS, NYSERDA, NYSOPRHP, Scenic Hudson, etc.	Create regional TA coordination program
Facilitate Activities through Partnerships			
Maintain current commitments to such activities as the Ramble, trail conferences, etc.: The Greenway is currently involved in important regional activities such as the Ramble, the Great Hudson River Paddle and others. These should be maintained through 2015, until the organization develops and adopts its activities guidelines as described below.	Staff & board members		Current slate of activities maintained through 2015.
Develop Guidelines for Greenway/NHA Activities: As described in the body of the report, it is critical that the organization develop guidelines to ensure that limited staff resources can be put to their highest and best use supporting the Greenway/NHA. It is recommended that these guidelines stipulate that, in order for an activity to be undertaken by the	Staff		Guidelines created by 2016.

PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	METRIC
Greenway/NHA, the proposed activity/event should have the demonstrable capacity to further the Greenway Principles and/or NHA management plan, be easily accessible to a broad range of visitors and/or participants and be financially self-sustaining given funds committed by Greenway/NHA or sponsoring organization.			
Fund Catalytic Projects			
Expand Greenway Community Council Planning Grants: These grants help communities develop and implement a vision for their future that balances Greenway criteria of economic development considerations with resource protection and promotion objectives. As part of the development plan, assignments should be made to the staff and board members to cultivate and secure additional resources for this program.	Staff (with board support for fundraising)	Federal, State and Local Governments & Private Philanthropies	Expand program to 15 grants/year and/or \$150,000 in awards by 2020
Expand Greenway Conservancy Trail Grants: This program funds recreational trail projects. Special consideration is given to projects that seek to implement the Greenway Trail Vision Plan. As part of the development plan, assignments should be made to the staff and board members to cultivate and secure additional resources for this program.	Staff (with board support for fundraising)	Federal, State and Local Governments, Private Philanthropies, Regional Land Trusts	Expand total awards given to \$100,000 by 2020, tied to the Gap Analysis.
Heritage Development Grants: These grants are for projects that further the goals and mission of the HRVNHA: to recognize, preserve, protect and interpret the nationally significant cultural and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley for the benefit of the Nation, with priority given to projects or programs that feature a designated Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Heritage Site. As part of the development plan, assignments should be made to the staff and board members to cultivate and secure additional resources for this program.	Staff (with board support for fundraising)	NPS/NHA	Expand program to \$75,000 in funding by 2020.

PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	METRIC
Form Connections			
Add additional staff position to enhance agency's ability to reach out to stakeholders: The position to be filled would be the Heritage Area Coordinator position that is currently vacant. It is anticipated that this position would take on many of the project management tasks currently assumed by the Acting Director. This would then free up a portion of the Acting Director's time to be devoted to stakeholder outreach and fundraising.	Board		Additional NHA staff position filled in 2015
Create a Plan to Maintain & Increase Visibility of Greenway & NHA in Region: The stakeholder interviews make it clear that the Greenway's success to date is built upon strong relationships with communities and other stakeholders that is a legacy of a time when the organization had extensive staff that could build those relationships. In order to keep this legacy alive, it is vital that the Greenway staff and board maintain a visible presence throughout the region. An <u>ad hoc</u> committee should be formed to create a calendar of key regional events at which there should be a Greenway presence and recruit staff and board members to serve as representatives at these events, bringing appropriate literature about the Greenway and its programs.	Staff & board members and ad hoc "visibility committee"		Increased regional participation in all Greenway/NHA programs by 2017.
Cultivate the next generation of Greenway Champions: From its beginning, the Greenway/NHA has received support from public officials from all parties and a variety of other high profile figures. The original "Greenway Champions" that helped launch it are now retired and/or no longer in public life. Board members, with the support of the Executive Director, should seek to identify and cultivate additional public officials and public figures who would be willing to advocate on behalf of the Greenway so that the organization maintains a strong cadre of champions who can mobilize federal, state and local	Staff & board members	Regional State and Federal legislative delegations	Creation of a "Greenway Champions" board committee

PRIORITY AREAS & ASSOCIATED ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	METRIC
government support and public opinion on behalf of the Greenway/NHA. This initiative can be undertaken through the creation of a "Greenway Champions" board committee to work with Executive Director to identify and cultivate champion is a manner similar to the way in which a board nominating committee identifies and cultivates prospective board members.			
Create an overall development plan to secure expanded funding for the Greenway and NHA, with emphasis on private funding sources: The development plan should identify the funding priorities for the organization, including the Greenway Trail, the "catalytic projects" essential to the work of the Greenway. The plan will identify fundraising goals, sources and sequenced action plan to meet the fundraising targets.	Staff & board members (with the assistance of a professional fundraising consultant)	Federal, State and Local Governments & Private Philanthropies	Creation of a development committee, with full development plan implemented in 2016.
Seek Support for "Gap Analysis" related to completing the trail: The Greenway Trail is the most visible, widely known aspect of the Greenway/NHA. As such, it is the easiest project around which to build support for the Greenway/NHA. The organization should seek funding for an analysis that identifies the key missing links in the Greenway Trail and defines a series of projects (acquisitions, site improvements, etc.) that will lead to the full completion of the Trail. This "gap analysis would serve as the basis for a fundraising effort focused on completing the Trail as part of the "Campaign for the Greenway."	Staff & board members		Gap analysis completed by 2016.
Create a Plan to Complete the Trail: Using the Greenway Trail "gap analysis" described above, the the Greenway/NHA should create a development plan for completing the Greenway trail. The plan would identify the discrete projects needed to complete the gap along with estimated costs. This plan would be folded into the organization's overall fundraising/development plant and used to attract support from sources that are primarily interested in capital projects.	Staff		Trail development plan completed by 2017.

A timetable for the recommended actions is given below.



Strategy Implementation: Immediate Priorities

This section describes the three major immediate priorities for strategy implementation. These are actions that need to be undertaken as soon as possible in order to build the capacity and momentum to ensure that the strategy's recommendations are implemented. These are:

1. Appointment of coordinator position: In a sense the appointment of this position is the foundation of strategy implementation. The position will take on some of the administrative and coordination tasks associated with the NHA and Greenway programs. This in turn will free up some of the Executive Director's time to focus on key fund-raising activities. The position needs to be approved by the Board as soon as possible. A draft position description is attached to this memo. Unless this position is filled as soon as possible, it will become extremely difficult to implement that strategy in a meaningful, sustainable manner.
2. Establishment/activation of Development Committee: Raising financial support for the Greenway will be challenging it is therefore imperative that the development committee be activated as soon as possible. It is envisioned that the committee would be considered a committee of the corporation under the new Non-Profit Revitalization Act of 2013, consisting of both board members and non-board members. As such its recommendations will be nonbinding and advisory in nature. But this enables the Greenway/NHA to include "outside" members on the committee. It is very important that the committee members consist of individuals who have experience and/or interest in fundraising as well as members who have direct personal connections to potential funding sources (e.g., foundation program officers, individual philanthropists, those responsible for charitable giving for major corporations, etc.) An overall description of the Development Committee's role follows.

Development Committee: This committee assists the Executive Director in expanding the financial resources available to the Greenway and Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Working with the Executive Director, the committee participates in creating, updating or implementing the development plan for the organization that defines the organization's fundraising policies and procedures for solicitation of funds in the form of government grants, contributions from individuals, foundations and corporations. As part of this effort, committee members will work with the Executive Director to identify potential sources of public and private funds, and are expected to serve as a liaison to funding sources in cultivating and soliciting from such sources.

3. Establishment/activation of Visibility Committee: The Visibility Committee would also be a committee of the corporation under the new Not-for-Profit Revitalization Act, serving in an advisory capacity consisting of both board members and non board members. The committee would be responsible for overseeing the creation of an organized effort to keep the Greenway

and NHA visible at public events throughout the Hudson River Valley Region. Members of the committee should be knowledgeable about the region's civic life and have personal contacts with staff and board members of organizations in the Valley that hold events that can be important opportunities for the Greenway/NHA to increase its visibility to the general public, local elected officials and others in the region's public life. A description of the committee follows:

Visibility Committee: The purpose of this committee is to provide guidance to the organization to increase public awareness of the Greenway and National Heritage area within the region it serves. Specifically, this committee will:

- Develop a regular calendar of important regional events in which the Greenway/NHA should participate and/or at which it should be represented
- Coordinate with the Executive Director and Board members to ensure that there is adequate Greenway/NHA representation at such events
- Ensure there is adequate printed and digital material succinctly describing the Greenway/NHA for distribution at events by Greenway/NHA
- Ensure the Committee's efforts are coordinated with and complement the staff's work on publicity and community relations

Both of these committees require strong leadership. Creating them will begin by identifying potential committee chair persons that embody the qualities required of members of the respective committees and who also have the stature and influence to attract other individuals of comparable quality to the committee.

Given the limited time and resources available for implementation, the most immediate priorities are filling the staff position to free up some of the Executive Director's time and the creation of the development committee to begin the fund-raising process. Once the coordinator position has been approved and candidates are being recruited, and Development Committee is in formation, then process of establishing the Visibility Committee can begin.

Attachments

Draft Job Description for Heritage Programs Coordinator

Draft Case Statement for Hudson River Valley Greenway/NHA

Attachment: Draft Job Description—Heritage Programs Coordinator

Responsibilities: Reports to and assists the Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area with coordination and implementation of all heritage area projects and programs and with general office administration.

- Projects and programs may include but are not limited to the grants programs operated by the Greenway/NHA; heritage related events, conferences and other programs; brochure, tour, trail, and map development; publications design including flyers, event programs, and quarterly newsletter; interpretative training and other skills training workshops; active communications program including weekly E-newsletters, regular social media updates (including Facebook and Twitter), website updates and heritage events calendar maintenance
- Coordinate and/or staff regional heritage-related roundtables, workshops, events, programs, meetings, etc., among heritage partners and others to facilitate communication, exchange information, and strengthen historical interpretation
- Work with local and regional tourist agencies, municipalities, legislators, heritage groups, and historical organizations on heritage-related initiatives
- Other duties as assigned

Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, Museum Studies, Heritage Tourism, Historic Preservation, History, or a related field. At least 1 year work experience in a heritage museum, educational institution, or heritage preservation organization is strongly preferred. Applicants may substitute 2 years of full-time work experience for one year of higher education.

Excellent ability to work alone or in conjunction with others to complete projects in a timely manner. Solid computer skills, including MS Word, Access, Excel, and PowerPoint. Strong writing, analytical, and budget management, event management skills necessary. Social marketing/public relations experience desired. Grant writing, grant administration, and/or fund-raising experience a plus, as is experience with Quickbooks and donor management software.

Attachment: Draft Case Statement

From the time of its great school of landscape painting, the Hudson River Valley has been recognized as a national treasure. Over the decades, the Valley's citizens realized that only by working together could they safeguard its remarkable quality of life: a scenic landscape interspersed with working farms; recreational opportunities that extend from mountain ridges to the majestic Hudson River itself; vibrant and diverse communities that have served as sources of livelihood and cultural enrichment for generations.

But it has never been easy. Cultivating quality of life means finding the right balance between landscape conservation and economic growth, between growing the tourism industry while preserving the unique experiences that draw visitors to the region in the first place. On top of all of this, the work has to be accomplished amid more than 2,000 separate units of local government and special districts each with its own set of mandates and priorities.

How can all of these municipalities and the myriad interests found in them be brought together in working partnerships that can protect and nurture all aspects of life in this remarkable valley? The answer to this question was found a generation ago: the Hudson River Valley Greenway.

Created by New York State in 1991, the Greenway started with the idea of a hiking trail connecting the Valley on both sides of the Hudson, from Albany to New York City. It soon grew beyond the physical connection of the trail to a series of partnerships bringing local governments, citizens, businesses and other organizations together to further what became the Greenway Principles:

- Natural and Cultural Resource Protection throughout the Valley
- Regional Planning to develop mutually beneficial regional strategies for natural and cultural resource protection, economic development, public access and heritage and environmental education
- Economic Development that is compatible with the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources
- Public Access to the Hudson River through the creation of riverside parks and the development of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System.
- Heritage and Environmental Education about the Valley for both residents and visitors

By 1996, the value of this approach was recognized by the US Government when it created the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area to enable the Greenway to better protect the Valley's unique heritage. Since then, the Greenway has continued to thrive on the connections it makes: governments, organizations and ordinary citizens working together to protect this remarkable place. And the physical connections have blossomed also. Communities throughout the Valley have built trail connections linking their most important recreational and scenic resources. The Hudson River now hosts a fully operational water trail. Twenty years on, the goal of creating the Greenway Trail itself is finally within reach, with only a few miles still to be connected. And the investment has been more than worth it. A recent evaluation found that, every year, each tax dollar invested in the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area returns more than \$580 to the local economy.

Now is the time to fulfill the legacy of the Greenway and National Heritage Area, to ensure that the vital connections built over the last generation will grow and remain strong so that the Hudson Valley and its unique and vital heritage will never be lost to its residents, to New Yorkers and to the people of the United States.

To do this the Hudson River Valley Greenway needs to be creative, agile and innovative. The continuing support of New York State government provides an important platform for the Greenway to continue its work. But private support is needed more than ever if this irreplaceable organization is going to be able to:

- Provide catalytic grant support so that a community's hopes for a waterside trail can become another connection in the greater Greenway
- Identify the few remaining gaps in the Greenway Trail and finally build that grand connection that will join communities together and bring tourists from around the globe to the Hudson River Valley
- Provide municipalities with the support they need to encourage economic growth and renewal consistent with the Greenway Principles
- Cultivate the full array of innovative educational and cultural programs through which we can become fully aware of the wonder that is the Hudson River Valley and the rich legacy that connects us all