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For Immediate Release

Town of Dryden Wins \$1.5 Million Grant for Dryden Rail Trail

(Dryden, NY) The Town of Dryden received notice today that its application for \$1.5 million for the Dryden Rail Trail has been awarded through the New York State Transportation Enhancement program. Dryden was one of six successful applicants from the Southern Tier in this highly competitive program.

The funds will be used to construct a pedestrian bridge over Rt. 13 near the Rt. 366 intersection. The pedestrian bridge over Rt. 13 is a vital component of the rail trail project. It has stood out as the most challenging physical obstacle to completing the project. The funding will also be used to finish three miles of trail surface with stone dust to ADA compliance.

“We’re thrilled with the award and pleased that the Governor sees what we see, this is game changer for the town of Dryden,” stated Supervisor Jason Liefer.

Todd Bittner, Task Force member and Natural Areas Director at the Cornell Botanic Gardens noted, “The State grant funding is indicative of the broad community support behind the development of the rail trail, which will help reduce commuter generated carbon emissions, enhance access to nature, and stimulate tourism and the local economy.” Bittner played a key role in developing the grant application.

“The Rail Trail demonstrates a vision for Dryden that connects communities and improves the lives of our residents” added Deputy Supervisor Dan Lamb. “This grant is a testament to a lot of great work from a lot of great people.”

“On behalf of the Dryden Rail Trail Task Force I am overjoyed with this outstanding support of our ongoing rail trail project!” stated Bob Beck, Chairman of the Rail Trail Task Force.

The Dryden Rail Trail is a multi-use, non-motorized path in the abandoned Lehigh Valley rail corridor that spans the Town of Dryden. The trail will connect to the existing East Ithaca Recreation Way at the Ithaca town line on Game Farm Road and provide access to the City of Ithaca and Cornell University. It will pass through the Hamlets of Varna and Etna and the Village of Freeville, and end at Rt. 13 in the Village of Dryden where it will connect to the existing Jim Shug Trail. The Dryden Rail Trail project is led by the Rail Trail Task Force which is a group of volunteers appointed in the spring of 2016 by the Dryden Town Board.

More information on the Dryden Rail Trail can be found at <http://dryden.ny.us/board-commission-list/rail-trail-task-force/>

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