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STRUTHERS

Mahoning River Corridor Plan

Prepared by ms consultants, inc.



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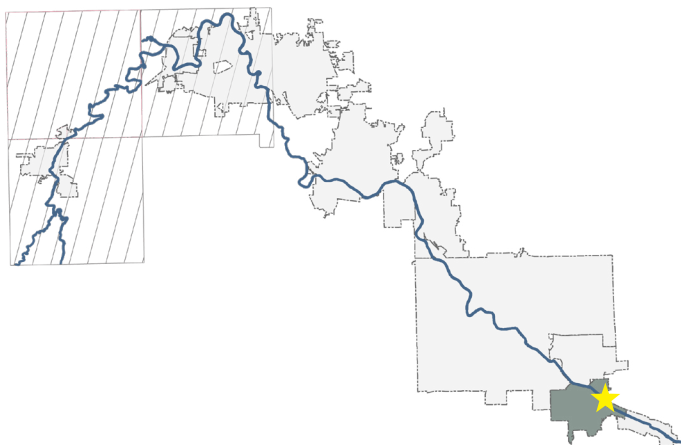
COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT

Overview

The following toolkit explores how the corridor-wide objectives may be specifically applied to the Struthers river section with an emphasis on the identified opportunity site. Each community presents its own challenges and potential for revitalization and river restoration. The Community Implementation Toolkits outline these unique traits, provide context on existing conditions, and offer recommendations for the future. The recommendations are supported by action items and potential funding sources to support feasibility and help ensure implementation. The Community Implementation Toolkits should not serve as a stand-alone guide for the local community, but as an additional, specialized resource to the Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan as a whole.

The Struthers Community Implementation Toolkit includes the following sections:

- Existing Conditions
- Primary Opportunity Site
- Implementation Guide



Existing Conditions

OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Struthers, a critical town in the boom of America’s steel industry, is rich in history and future potential. The CASTLO industrial park offers high-quality economic development opportunities for future growth, while the river, Bob Cene Park, and Yellow Creek connect residents with access to nature and recreation amenities.

CHALLENGES

Struthers’ economic opportunities present challenges relative to the long-term health and stability of the river. Future riverfront industrial or manufacturing uses should be well-buffered and designed to contribute, not deter from, future river restoration. Additionally, existing rail lines, though beneficial to nearby industry, impede public access to the river.

MAHONING RIVER CORRIDOR RIVERFRONT COMMUNITIES

TRUMBULL COUNTY		MAHONING COUNTY
Newton Township	Newton Falls	Youngstown
Braceville Township	Leavittsburg	Campbell
Warren Township	Warren	Struthers ★
Warren	Niles	Struthers
McDonald	Girard	



2.47	River Miles
SMALL TOWN INDUSTRIAL	Character
10,111	People
0	Launches
<1.0	Trail Miles

Dam Removal & Riverbank Restoration in Struthers

Removal of the remaining lowhead dams along the Mahoning River will be a monumental leap forward toward the environmental and recreational goals of the Region. Lowhead dams, though small, significantly disrupt the natural flow of water, negatively affecting the River’s ecosystem and recreational opportunities.

These dams break the Mahoning River into segments requiring river-goers to have to spot and avoid these dams which are often almost impossible to see and are notoriously dangerous drowning hazards. Removal of these dams will also open Mahoning to safer kayaking, fishing, and light boating and could create an economic spark for the communities along the River’s banks.

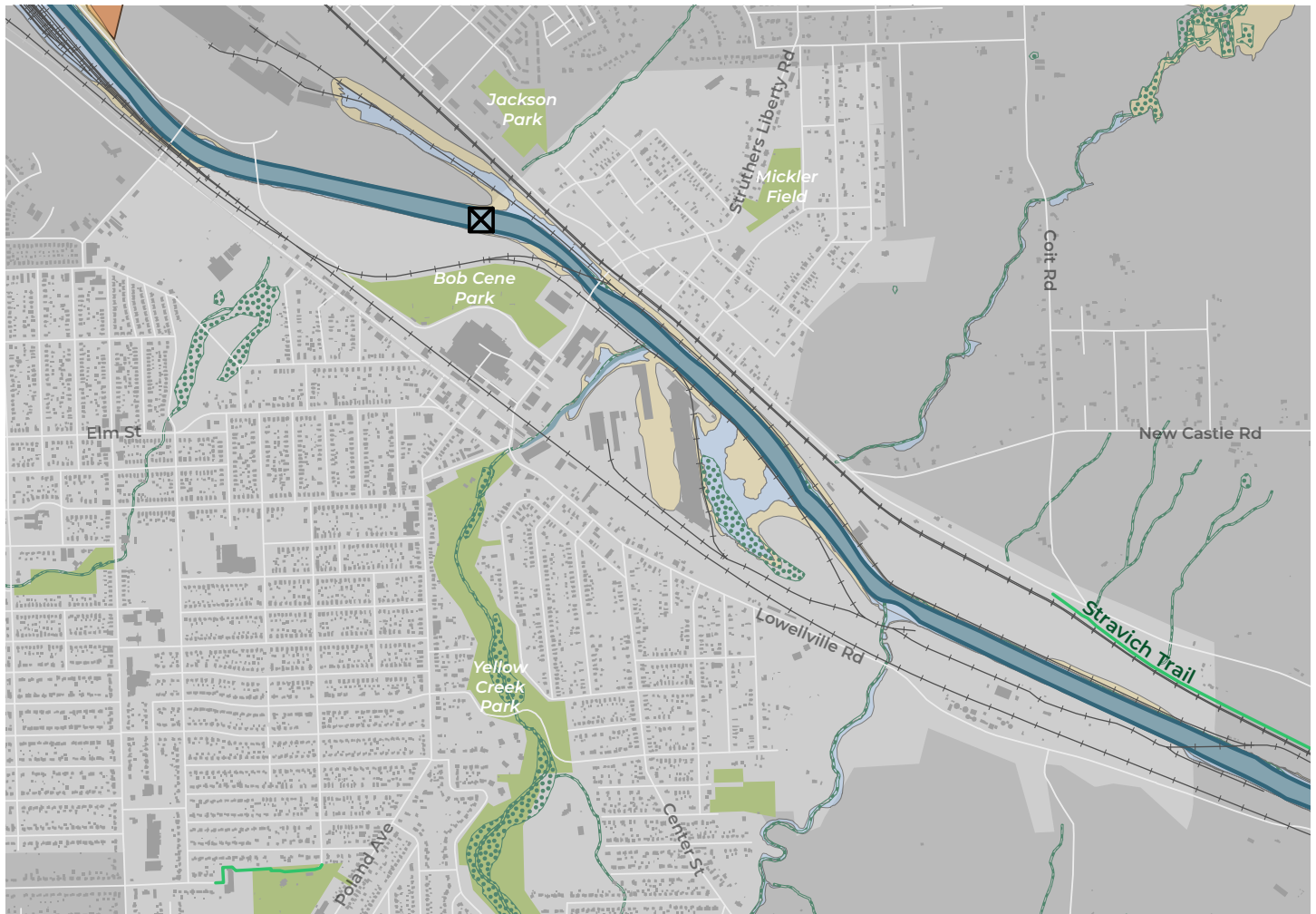
The Struthers Dam is currently being removed which creates a huge opportunity for the community. After the dams removal, river-goers will be able to freely navigate between Campbell and Struthers, connecting the communities in new and exciting ways.

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MAHONING RIVER
Corridor Revitalization
www.mymahoningriver.com

FIGURE 1 EXISTING CONDITIONS - ENVIRONMENT



THE ENVIRONMENT

Existing Conditions

The community of Struthers guides you down its hills to its downtown which rests on the River's banks. Industrial land uses mix with public parks in a unique way.

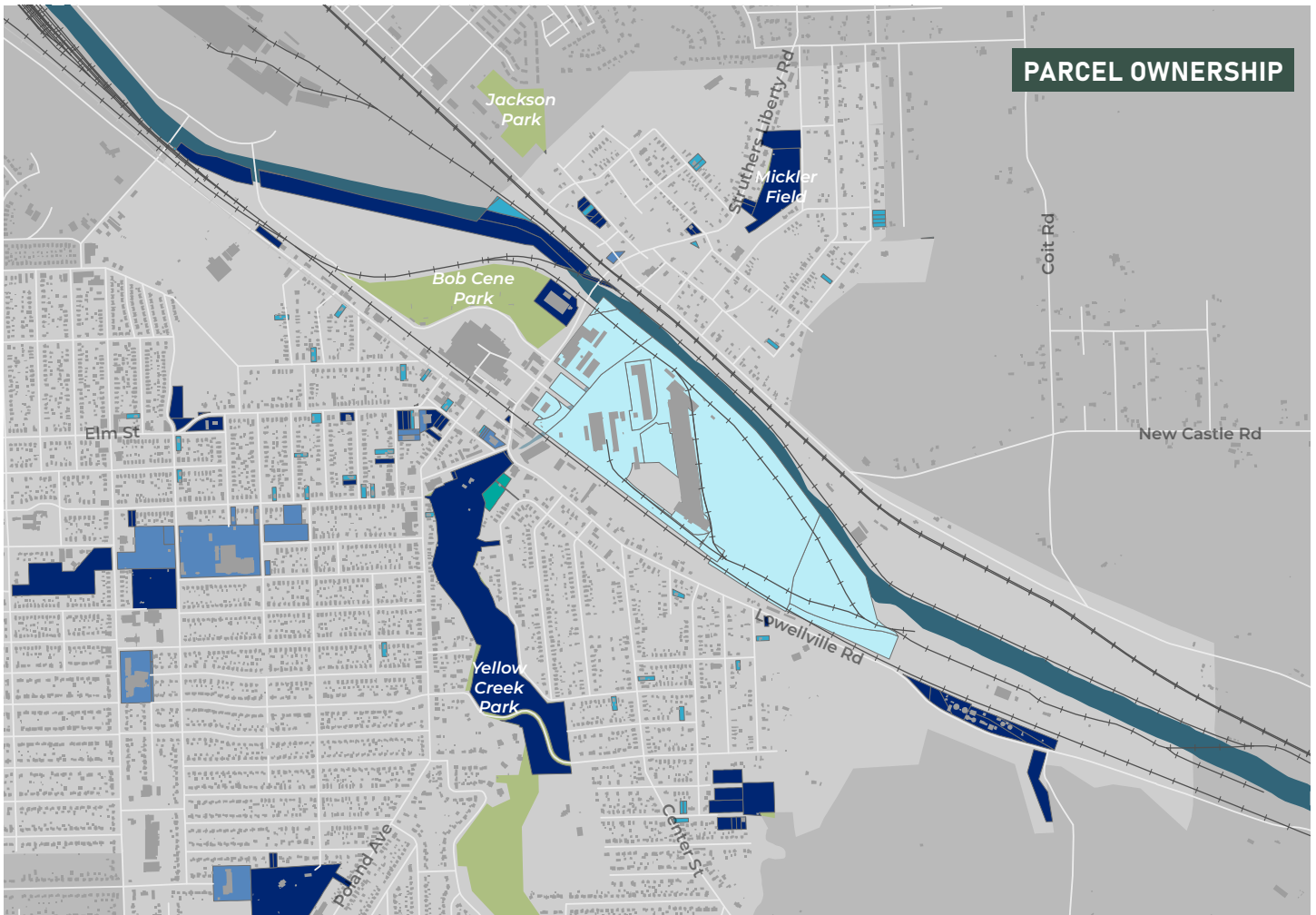
Central to Struthers is Yellow Creek Park, a key regional asset. Yellow Creek is surrounded by densely forested areas that are home to the community's diverse wildlife of birds, insects, and small mammals. Yellow Creek is one of four parks in Struthers, which, provide fields and outdoor sport facilities to members of the community.

Industry plays a central role in the economy of Struthers. Along the southern bank of the River, CASTLO Industrial Park, Casey Equipment Corporation, and CMC Impact Metals continue the long history of Struthers manufacturing. A small riparian strip exists along the River's banks that is less than 50 ft. in width. Expanding this edge to a 100 ft. minimum width is a concern of regional relevance as it will protect the waterway from direct industrial runoff. If the City hopes to invite river-goers to its newly opened waterways, bolstering this riparian edge will offer a much more enjoyable and safe experience for kayakers and canoers.

LEGEND

	Mahoning River
	Removed Dam
	Existing Launch
	Existing Trail
	Public Park
	Wetland
	100-year Floodplain
	500-year Floodplain
	Struthers Boundary

FIGURE 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS - ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT








ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Existing Conditions

The City of Struthers has diversified since its days as a steel town into a community offering a range of business and residential opportunities. Community and economic development initiatives are primarily concentrated in the downtown and the CASTLO Industrial Park.

As shown in Figure 2, the CASTLO Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) owns nearly half of the riverfront property in Struthers and is a critical partner in river restoration. Parcels owned by the CIC and public entities (especially the City) demonstrate potential for acquisition, redevelopment, and leveraging of incentives. These sites may serve as a catalyst for growth and can demonstrate the community’s desired development patterns. The City of Struthers already owns a strip of land along the Mahoning River which can be used to improve riparian health and guide private landowners in ensuring development supports river restoration.

LEGEND	
	City of Struthers
	Mill Creek MetroPark
	Government - Other
	Land Bank
	CASTLO

STRUTHERS: PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE

Recreation Complex

FIGURE 3 SITE LOCATION WITHIN STRUTHERS



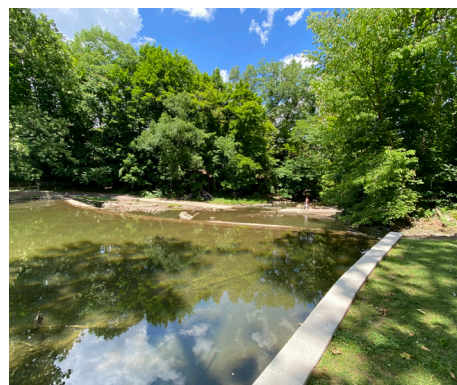
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Ownership	Astro Development / CASTLO
Current Use	Industrial
Local Zoning	Industrial
River Access	N/A
Size	45.45 Acres

Additional Notes:

- The Mahoning River bisects the Struthers and Campbell communities
- There are plans for a community recreation complex on the northwest portion of the site
- Dam removal and sediment dredging completed in 2021

FIGURE 4 PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE: EXISTING IMAGERY



Primary Opportunity Site Overview

The vision for the future of the primary opportunity site on the Mahoning River in Struthers is a sports and recreation destination which enhances everyday living for community residents and attracts and entertains visitors from across the region. Dam removal makes way for new water activities and restored habitats. Visitors of the riverfront can revel in the endless opportunities to play, gather, and enjoy nature. High-quality civic services, including a new community center and enhanced park amenities, are complimented by an active industrial park and commercial growth of retail, office, and other uses.



FIGURE 5 PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE: FUTURE RENDERING



STRUTHERS: PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE

Recreation Complex

FIGURE 6 PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY SITE: PROPOSED





Proposed Character:

- Eating, drinking, and/or other experiential-based establishments welcome families and athletes of Bob Cene Park
- Outdoor seating provides excellent views of the Mahoning River



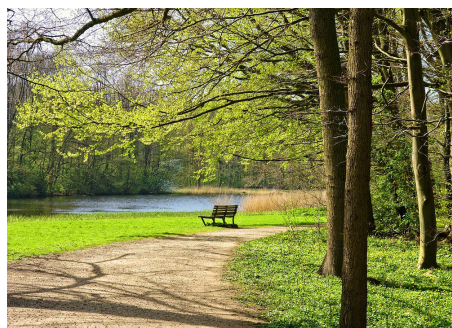
Proposed Character:

- A safe pedestrian crossing encourages trail use and connects the Campbell and Struthers communities
- Art and branding elements make the passage a photo-worthy marketing tool



Proposed Character:

- Existing fields at Bob Cene Park are enhanced to capitalize on river restoration and provide new amenities



Proposed Character:

- A spur of the proposed Mahoning River Greenway provides a safe and inviting connection from the riverfront attractions to the tranquil Yellow Creek Park



Proposed Character:

- Shovel-ready sites bring new jobs and economic prosperity to the area
- Ongoing riparian restoration and environmental protection support healthy river functions

STRUTHERS: IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Preparing for the Future Now

The recommendations provided within the Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan represent goals for the region over the next few decades. The future vision for the Struthers river segment should be pursued strategically by breaking down the ideal long-term state into manageable short-and immediate-term projects. The Implementation Guide provides further insight to assist local decision-makers in working together to achieve a revitalized downtown river district with best practices, industry standards, and potential funding sources. Though the guide is designed to be a simple and straightforward reference, these guidelines should not be treated so rigidly as to prevent adaptation should unforeseen circumstances arise during implementation. The Implementation Guide is not an exhaustive list and should be pursued in concert with the corridor-wide objectives identified in the larger Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan. Regional collaboration and coordination is highly encouraged.

To learn more about funding opportunities, visit Chapter 05 Next Steps of the Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan.

COMMUNITY BRANDING

Struthers is well-positioned to leverage its existing parks and recreation space and its development sites as a way to strengthen the community’s riverfront area as a walkable, lively center for a mix of uses. A strategy to create a recognizable and successful district to serve residents and uplift the economy should include the following elements.

DEVELOPMENT & DESIGN REGULATIONS

Local zoning regulations and/or design guidelines can help cultivate the preferred environment by encouraging desired development patterns and spurring investment in the area.

Examples of components to include in a zoning district, overlay, or design review include:

- Signage guidelines
- Promotion of community’s architectural style
- The use of durable high-quality materials
- Building facade objectives (ex: transparent ground floor windows)
- Site plan requirements (ex: parking located to the side or rear of buildings and screening requirements)

PUBLIC SPACES

Public gathering spaces and municipally-owned land present the opportunity to support private investment and set the tone for the type of aesthetics and quality of experience that Struthers is hoping to achieve. The City should continue to utilize its public spaces including parks, right-of-way, and government property, to attract and retain visitors to the area. Public spaces also present the opportunity to showcase the Mahoning River and connect the downtown to other neighborhoods and attractions. Examples of using public space to support community branding include lighting, signage, buried utilities, outdoor seating, and landscaping. Beautification projects can be supported by economic development tools, like the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA), which allows establishments to have outdoor dining and alcohol in the public right-of-way abutting their properties without the need for fencing.

MARKETING & BRANDING

The physical development of a downtown riverfront district must be supported through a strategy to build brand identity. Online engagement (i.e. website, social media), signage and wayfinding, and print materials (i.e. brochures, visitor guides) are all necessary platforms to encourage residents and tourists to visit the downtown and guide the perception of the downtown. Public-private partnerships - both local and regional - are essential to streamline a singular brand and identity.

Funding Opportunities



Design review promotes a unified vision and minimum standards for the look, feel, and atmosphere in a district with guidance on architecture, signage, landscaping, and materials.



Public gathering spaces, like the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Amphitheater and Pavilion (above), attract visitors to the area and help build brand identity.

RECREATION COMPLEX

As shown in Figures 5 and 6 of this toolkit, the Struthers river corridor is an excellent opportunity to embrace park, recreation, and civic amenities. This is a long-term growth opportunity to improve the lives of local residents while

also attracting new visitors and tax revenue to the area. There are multiple components which Struthers may consider for its recreation destination including:

OUTDOOR PLAY



Public playgrounds in the City of Struthers are currently located in Mauthe Park and Yellow Creek Park. Providing additional play opportunities at a recreation complex would increase the community's access to play structures and ensure that families of all ages can enjoy the restored riverfront. Options exist to include natural elements in outdoor play amenities, such as rocks, logs, sand pits, gardens, and sustainable materials. Accessible features and components to serve a range of age groups are highly encouraged.

RIVER ACCESS



With dam removal underway and plans and funding for a new launch, Struthers is taking exciting strides toward restoring public access and pride in the Mahoning River. The launch should be easily accessible and supported by safety information/education. In addition to direct access to the water for river activities, public access should also include paths to view the river and public art or interpretive signage to celebrate Struthers' history. A pedestrian crossing to Campbell would further enhance opportunities for residents to enjoy the water and take part in its rebirth as a regional asset.

COMMUNITY SPACES



Community spaces should be incorporated in the riverfront recreation complex, either as a standalone facility or integrated in an indoor sports facility. Examples include senior centers, public fitness facilities, classrooms, areas for events and festivals, and rental space. In addition to improving the quality of life for residents, a community center or integrated community spaces are excellent community development tools. Struthers can establish a fee system in which local employees may access recreation programs and facilities at the resident rate regardless of where they live; allowing the community to build relationships with potential future residents and the region at-large.

INDOOR SPORTS



Existing baseball diamonds at Bob Cene Park attract users from all across the region. The success of these facilities can be leveraged and enhanced to expand sports facilities near the river. Potential activities include indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, or less common uses like ice hockey, climbing walls, or athletic training. The City can work with potential developers or property owners to align regional market demand in the sporting industry with site design. The goal is to compliment river restoration and environmental protection with income-generating uses that elevate Struthers' identity.

MULTI-USE CONNECTIONS

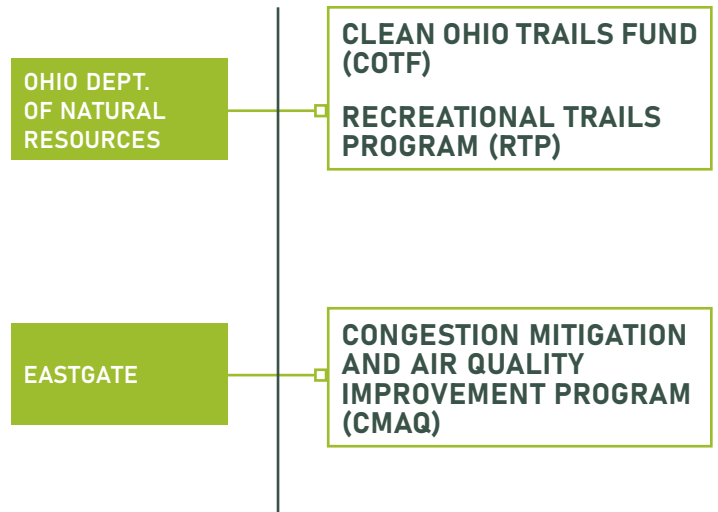
REGIONAL CONNECTOR

Despite the many recreation and cultural attractions in the area, the Youngstown-Campbell-Struthers segment of the Mahoning River corridor severely lacks alternative transportation connections. Addressing this issue will be an important component of establishing a regional trail network. The proposed Mahoning River Greenway is a regional multi-use path connecting local communities, parks, and recreation attractions along the river.

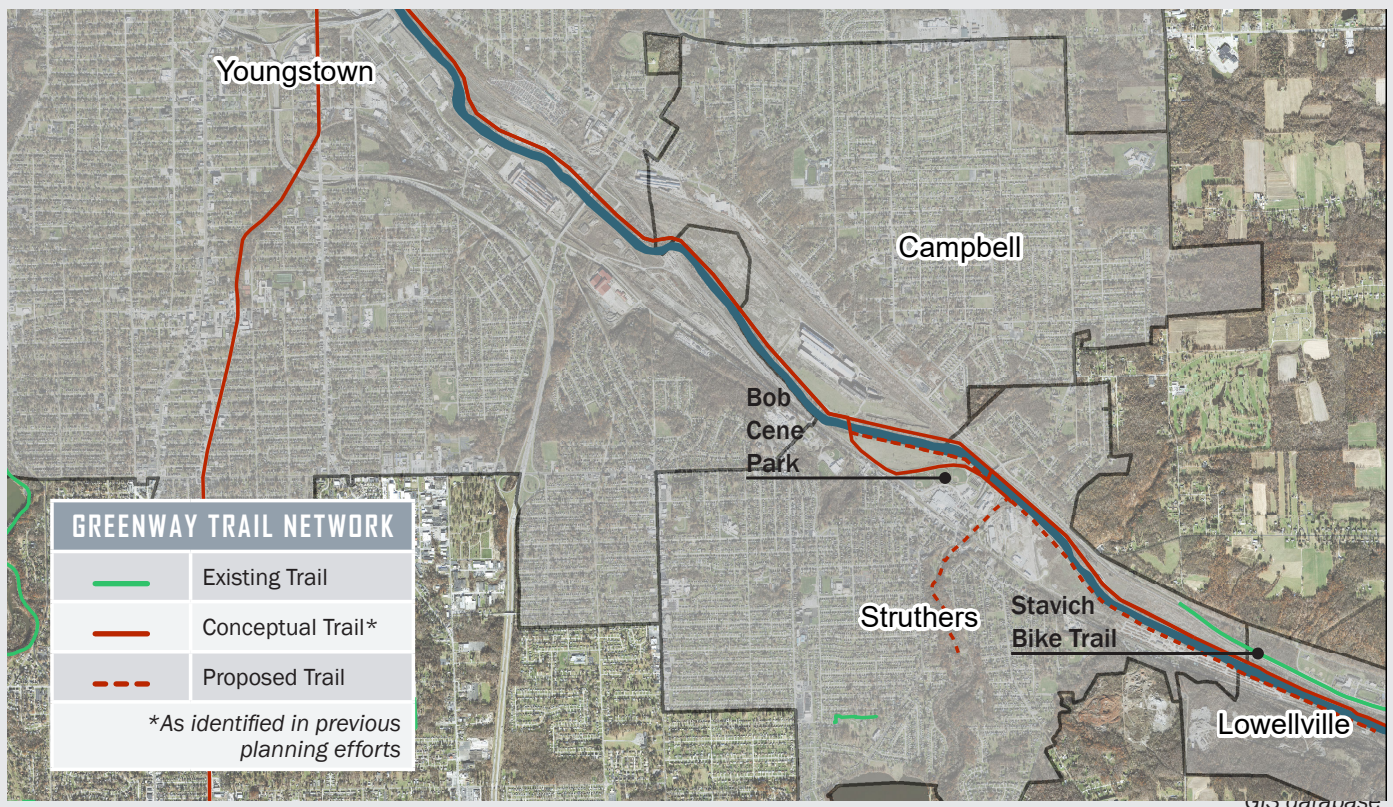
Struthers should embrace the opportunity to work with neighboring communities and regional partners to support cross-jurisdictional connectivity while also improving its internal multi-modal connections.

The Place-Making & Connectivity Feasibility Study (2020) identified projects to improve active transportation options in the Struthers Central Business District, such as sharrows and sidewalks. The planned improvements for new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure should be aligned with opportunities to extend bicycle infrastructure toward planned riverfront development in Lowellville.

Funding Opportunities



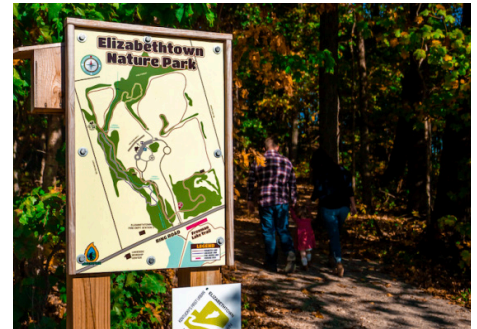
Struthers' Mahoning River Greenway Segment



PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL & RECREATION

- A.1** Identify and design a riparian zone.
- A.2** Conduct a feasibility study for proposed trail connections.
- A.3** Collaborate with the City of Campbell on establishing a pedestrian crossing on the Mahoning River.
- A.4** Establish planned launch site.
- A.5** Connect the Yellow Creek Park to riverfront amenities.



ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- B.1** Continue pursuit of streetscape enhancements identified in the Place-Making & Connectivity Feasibility Study (2020).
- B.2** Update zoning regulations to encourage downtown and riverfront revitalization.
- B.3** Work with regional economic development partners to identify and attract desired business types on the river.
- B.4** Identify key properties for acquisition potential by the City or economic development partners (CASTLO, Western Reserve Port Authority, etc.).



Enhanced wayfinding around the Mahoning River and trail networks in Struthers should include physical signage, as well as digital marketing and branding components. Coordination with other riverfront communities and regional tourism and recreation partners is highly encouraged.