

A CONCISE SUMMARY OF THE THREE MOST-RESPECTED REPORTS ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF A LONG-DISTANCE LINEAR PARK TYPE PROJECT

Envisioning a Statewide Connection Mass Central Rail Trail Benefits Study



The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail AN ASSESSMENT AND USER PROFILE OF NEW YORK'S LONGEST MULTI-USE TRAIL Executive Summary



ERIE CANALWAY TRAIL
200 years of history
78% of off-road trail complete
360 miles of trail between Buffalo and Albany
\$253 Million in annual economic impact
1.6 Million annual visits



CAMBRIDGE ECONOMETRICS

Economic Impact Analysis of the New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway (NHNCG)

The NHNCG is comprised of the Norwottuck Rail Trail, Manhan Rail Trail, Southampton Greenway, Columbia Greenway Rail Trail, Southwick Rail Trail, and Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Some of the trail segments in Connecticut also overlap with the East Coast Greenway.

Final Report
November 2025

camecon.com



THE THREE MOST RESPECTED REPORTS ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF A LONG- DISTANCE LINEAR-PARK TYPE PROJECT

Economic Impact of the [Erie Canal Trail](#)

<https://tinyurl.com/PTNYReport>

Envisioning a Statewide Connection: [Mass Central Rail Trail](#) Benefits Study.

<https://tinyurl.com/MCRT-Report>

Economic Impact Analysis of the [New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway](#).

<https://www.greenwaysolutions.org/n-s-report>



- In 2017 when the Governor of NY was notified of the impact of the [Erie Canal Trail](#) when it was only 78% complete, he was stunned.
- **\$253+ million a year in economic impacts. Or \$3/4 million a mile.**
- He then arranged for the creation of the Empire State Trail which finished this and built another 400 miles of linear parks that runs from NYC to Canada.
- **An additional 200 miles on Long Island from Nassau County to Montauk is beginning in May of 2026.**

Economic Impact of the Erie Canal Report

<https://tinyurl.com/PTNYReport>



THE THREE MOST RESPECTED REPORTS ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF A LONG-DISTANCE LINEAR PARK-TYPE PROJECT

The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail
AN ASSESSMENT AND USER PROFILE OF NEW YORK'S LONGEST MULTI-USE TRAIL

Executive Summary

Parks & Trails NEW YORK

Prepared for: NEW YORK



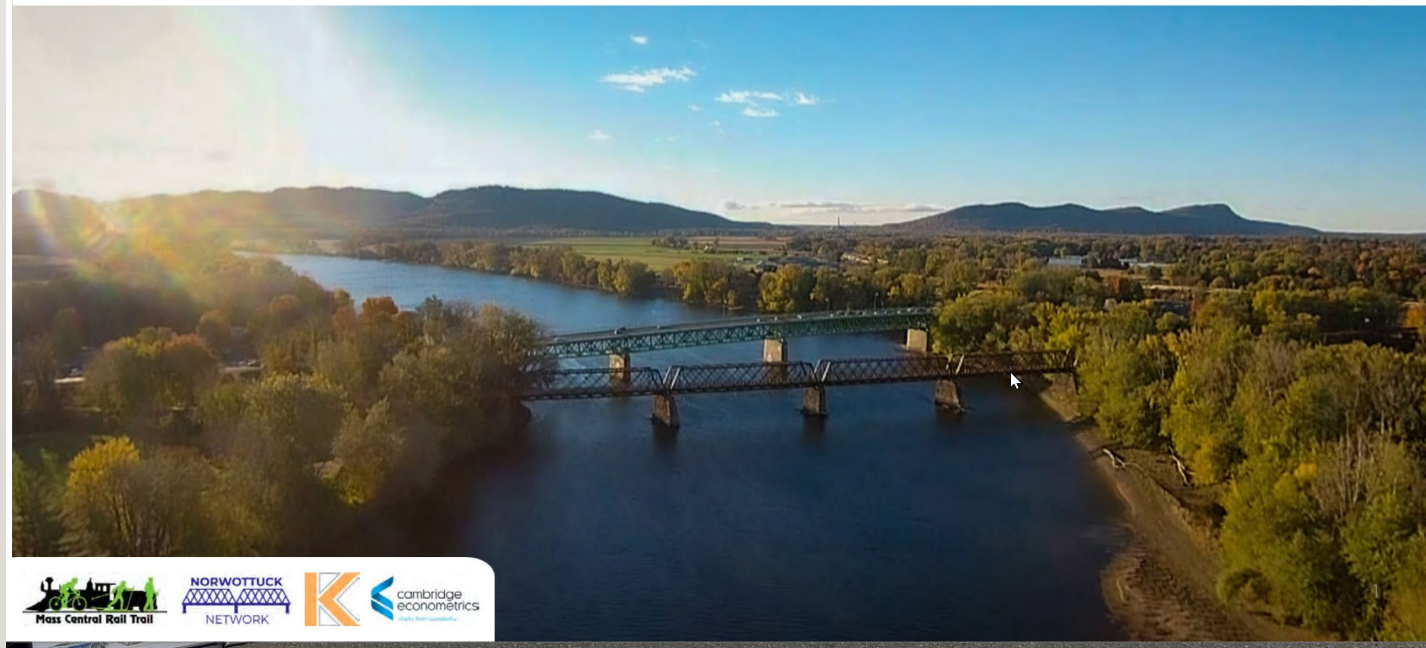
Summer of 2023. Report about what the [Mass Central Rail Trail](#) would be worth when completed

- Between 4-5 million users a year.
- 960,000 visitors just in Worcester County
- 400,000--500,000 overnight visitors a year
- **\$213+ million a year in economic impacts. Or \$2 million a mile.**
- State government continues to move this forward, but is just now beginning to align funds and capacity to finish the rail trail.
- www.MCRT.org is the main site.

<https://tinyurl.com/MCRT-Report>

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Envisioning a Statewide Connection
Mass Central Rail Trail Benefits Study



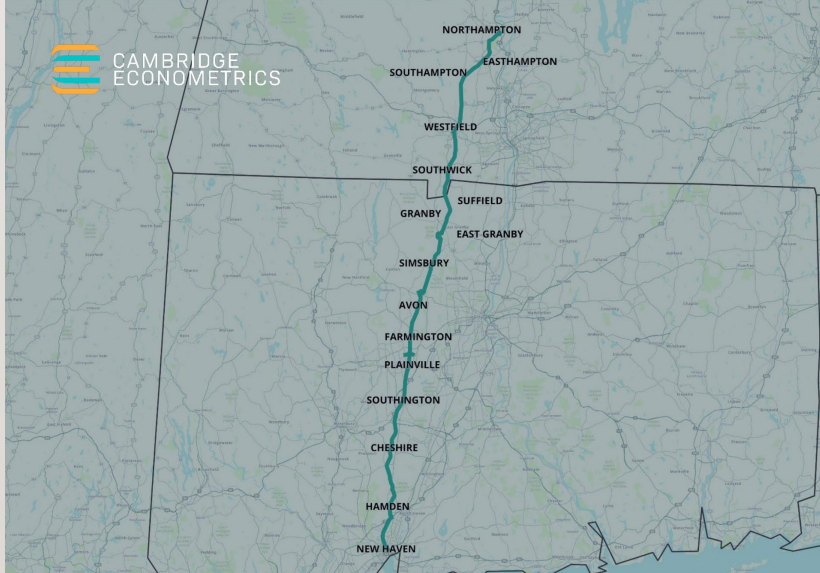
Fall of 2025. Report about what the [New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway](#) would be worth when completed.

- 1.6 million users a year.
- Around 160,000 overnight visitors a year
- **\$114 million a year in economic impacts Or \$1.4 million a mile.**
- www.NHNCG.org A site about the entire trail
- This is a trail that used to have 12+ names tied to different communities and locales and it is now starting to distill into one name.

Economic Impact Analysis of the New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway.

<https://www.greenwaysolutions.org/n-s-report>


THE THREE MOST RESPECTED REPORTS ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF A LONG-DISTANCE LINEAR PARK-TYPE PROJECT



Economic Impact Analysis
of the New Haven &
Northampton Canal
Greenway (NHNCG)

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www.GreenwaySolutions.org/Reports



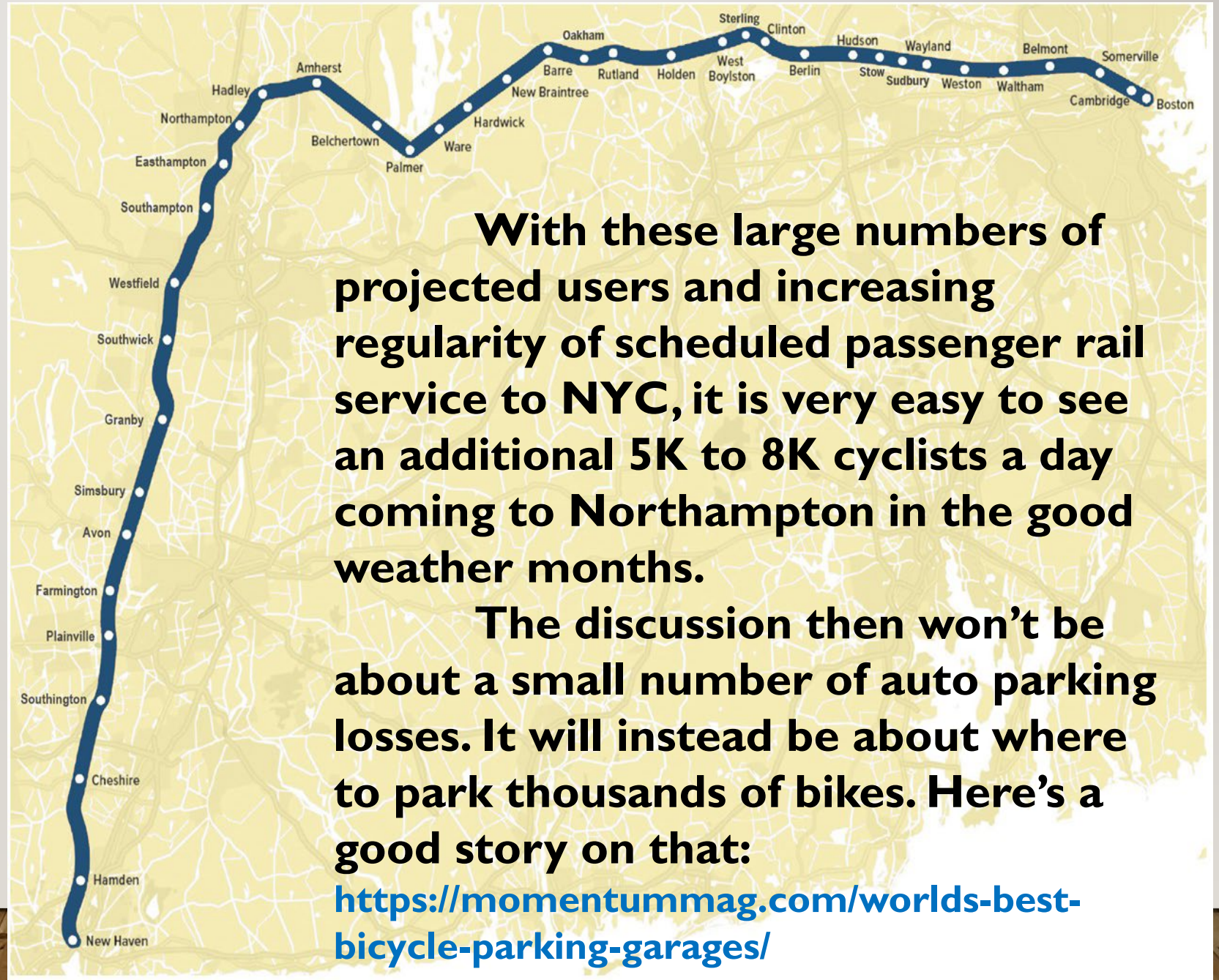
The longest trail in New England is the MCRT from Boston to Northampton. 104 miles running East-West.

It intersects with 17 other trails--not shown.

Today, we are only showing one of those intersecting trails.

The North-South running, 81 mile long New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway.

Totaling 185± miles.



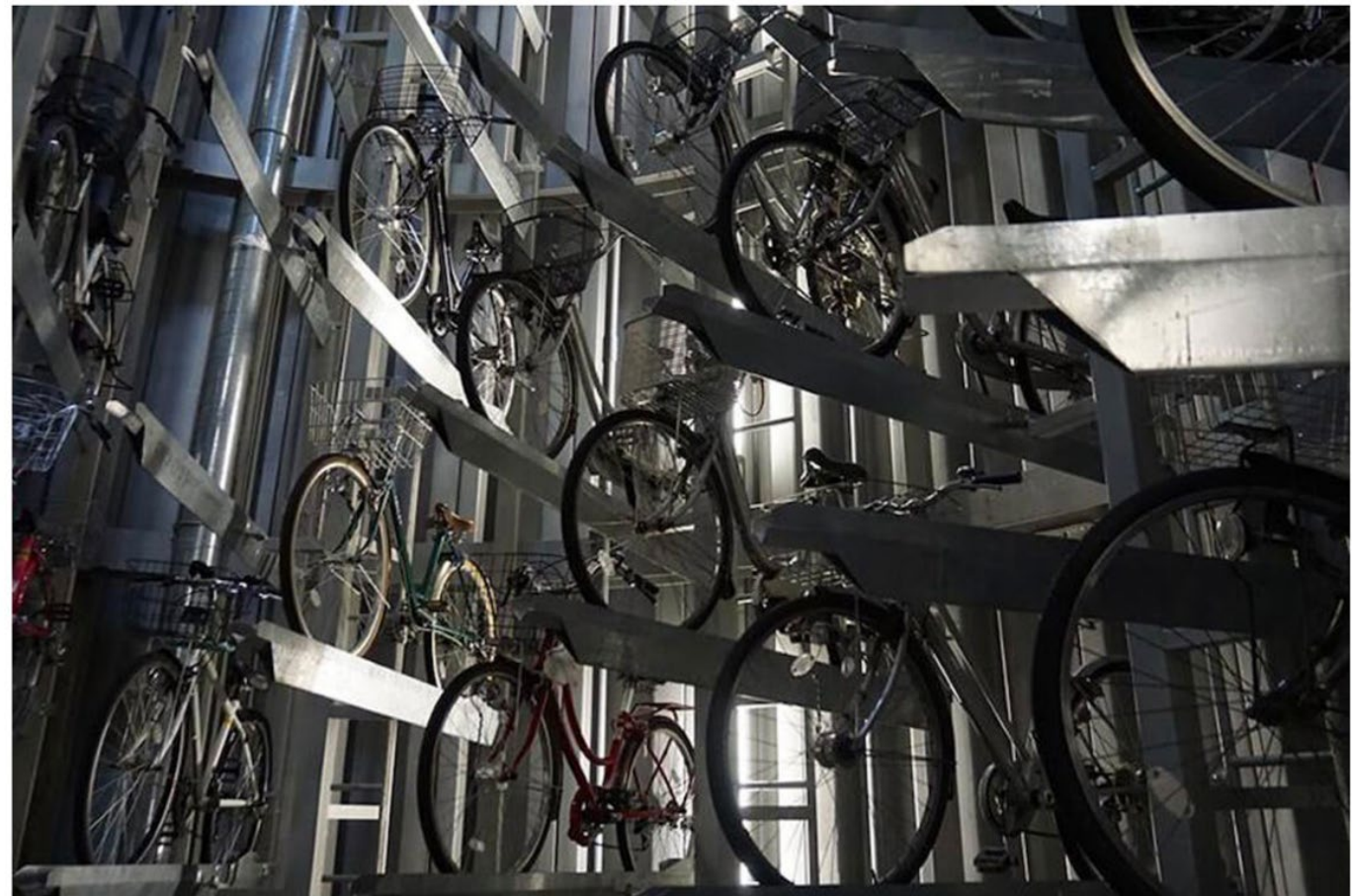
With these large numbers of projected users and increasing regularity of scheduled passenger rail service to NYC, it is very easy to see an additional 5K to 8K cyclists a day coming to Northampton in the good weather months.

The discussion then won't be about a small number of auto parking losses. It will instead be about where to park thousands of bikes. Here's a good story on that:

<https://momentummag.com/worlds-best-bicycle-parking-garages/>



- **Hmmm... 5,000-8,000 bikes a day coming into downtown Northampton from 2 directions?**
- **There will certainly be a need for a multi-level, mechanized bike parking garage like they do in Europe and elsewhere.**
- <https://momentummag.com/worlds-best-bicycle-parking-garages/>



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RANKING OF DESIRABLE TOURISTS BASED ON ECONOMIC IMPACT:

I. Inn-to-Inn Tourists

Highly desirable due to daily high expenditures on lodging, food, and luggage transport services, which support local businesses and hospitality.



RANKING OF DESIRABLE TOURISTS BASED ON ECONOMIC IMPACT:

2. Specialized Bikers/Touring Cyclists:

These visitors often travel in groups, stay in local accommodations, and dine out, providing a high economic return per person, especially if touring scenic routes.



RANKING OF DESIRABLE TOURISTS BASED ON ECONOMIC IMPACT:

3. HIKERS: While some may be budget-conscious (camping), those visiting state/national parks often spend on gear, guides, and nearby lodging/restaurants, particularly in scenic regions.



RANKING OF DESIRABLE TOURISTS BASED ON ECONOMIC IMPACT:

4. BIRDERS: Highly valued for their willingness to visit rural or remote areas during off-peak seasons (migration), contributing significantly to rural economies and ecotourism.



Key considerations:

High-value over high-volume: states now look for tourists who spend more per visit, rather than simply higher numbers of visitors, to reduce strain on infrastructure.

Targeted demographics: the "best" tourists are those aligned with the state's specific natural, historic, or cultural assets.

Duration of stay: tourists who engage in multi-day, multi-stop trips (like inn-to-inn or long-distance cycling) offer higher ROI.

Off-peak contribution: special interest tourists like birders are valuable for driving revenue outside of the main summer season.





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