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SCHUMER ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY PROJECT STUDY THAT WOULD TRANSFORM WESTCHESTER WATERFRONT BY LINKING MANHATTAN TO YONKERS WITH BICYCLE- AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY PATHWAYS – UNVEILS NEXT STEPS FOR FEDERAL FUNDING

Hudson River Greenway Link Would Connect Riverfront Pathways in Manhattan to Paths in the Bronx and Yonkers, like Westchester County RiverWalk; Will Create One Continuous Greenway for Cyclists, Pedestrians & Even Commuters on the Lower Hudson River

In 2005, Schumer Secured Funding for Just-Completed Study of Project Feasibility, Development of Specific Proposals – Schumer Announces Results of the Study and Begins Push for Federal Dollars to Fund Next Steps of Link

Schumer: Now That Report Shows Greenway Link is Feasible, Let's Make it a Reality

Today, at JFK Park and Marina in Yonkers, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer announced the completion of the Hudson River Greenway Link Study, which lays the groundwork for a transformative project that will create a riverfront bike and pedestrian trail link between Manhattan and Yonkers. Schumer said that the completion of this study allows the project to move to the next phase, which includes engineering and construction, with the ultimate goal of creating a continuous greenway for cyclists, pedestrians and even commuters. While there are likely three phases to the project, a continuous trail will be created in the first phase, which will transform the Westchester waterfront, boost recreation and bring more economic activity to the region. Schumer unveiled the details of the study, which defines the best approach and design for connecting existing pathways like the Westchester County RiverWalk and the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway along the Hudson River. And, now that the study has been completed and shown the project to be feasible, Schumer unveiled the next steps of the project and his plan to secure federal transportation funding to get the project off the ground.

Schumer has long supported this project: in 2005, Schumer helped secure a \$1 million earmark for this just-completed study. Schumer said that this pathway will help revitalize Yonkers and Westchester County by creating sustainable economic development opportunities, walkable communities, recreational access to mass transportation and new ways to enjoy the Hudson River waterfront. As we have seen in places like The Walkway Over The Hudson, by investing in recreational trails, local businesses experience an uptick in business and new economic opportunities pop up all along new bike paths.

“The Hudson River Greenway project is an exciting project that will create benefits for cyclists, commuters, pedestrians and local businesses alike. It will link Manhattan to Yonkers in one continuous greenway –giving Westchester County residents a new, environmentally-friendly way to travel to New York City and back again,” said Schumer. “The Hudson River Greenway will also connect those looking to get out of the City for a day with the beautiful vistas and historic villages of the lower Hudson River, especially those along the RiverWalk. Those visitors are liable to stop and shop in the historic towns and village centers along the Hudson and get the wheels of the local economy spinning even faster. What’s more, for residents living along the route who work in New York City, the Hudson River Greenway will offer an alternate commute, which will alleviate traffic and improve the environment. So I will be working overtime to find sources of federal funding to support the Greenway, and get the first phase of construction off the ground.”

The Hudson River Valley Greenway project would create a continuous link between Lower Manhattan and Yonkers. While there are currently several bicycle lanes in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Yonkers, they are disjointed and include barriers for pedestrians and bikers. Communities in all three counties have expressed interest in creating a greenway that bypasses these barriers and connects the separate greenways into one easy-to-travel route. Schumer said the proposed greenway would create a green infrastructure that would improve the lives of millions of New Yorkers and suburban residents seeking a more scenic way to travel back and forth between New York City and communities along the Lower Hudson. Schumer said that in 2011, tourism accounted for \$1.7 billion in economic activity in Westchester County, supporting approximately 24,000 jobs, according to Phoenix Marketing International headquartered in Rhinebeck, N.Y. This direct recreation link to the tourism capital of the country – New York City – will only boost that figure.

Schumer, joined by Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer, along with several local stakeholders, unveiled the details of the study and explained that the Hudson River Greenway project will connect visitors with the natural beauty of the Hudson River in Westchester County and attract daily travelers from New York City to sites along the Westchester County RiverWalk. Schumer noted that the local community board still has to decide between a few alternative routes proposed in the study, but he expects the route to be finalized in the next several months. Schumer also explained that one of the most important benefits of the project would be for commuters who live near the proposed route. If given the opportunity to commute directly into the city via bicycle, residents along the greenway could help alleviate traffic and improve the environment by biking to work instead of driving.

The primary goal of the Hudson River Greenway link is to connect the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway in northern Manhattan and the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail in southwest Yonkers, first via a combination of on-street routes and off-street routes with the eventual goal of a full

“greenway” – entirely off-street. A greenway is a strip of undeveloped land, set aside for recreation or environmental preservation. In urban areas, these are treasured spaces that link communities together with parks and green pathways. The final stages of the greenway would be placed as close to the waterfront as possible; but a continuous route would be achieved if even the first phase of the plan were completed.

The Greenway project has three proposed phases. The first stage would provide a path between Yonkers and Upper Manhattan. This stage would take between 1 to 3 years and fully link the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway to the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail via numerous on-street greenways. Schumer explained that these on-street sections could be achieved relatively cheaply, by creating bike lanes on existing roadways with paint and adding signage to steer pedestrians and cyclists along the route. Also, part of this stage would be to add an exclusive bike lane alongside the running path in Riverdale Park in the Bronx. All told, stage one, which includes both an engineering and construction phase, is estimated to cost between \$10 and \$20 million. Schumer said that while later stages will bring the route closer to the waterfront and involve more green space, phase one was the most important step because it achieves the continuous route from Manhattan to Yonkers and allows Westchester and New York City residents and local businesses to benefit from route sooner.

The second stage, which would take between 3 to 10 years, would primarily be an off-street greenway, with fewer on-street links. It would make existing on-street sections more bike-friendly and “green,” in places like Buena Vista Ave in Yonkers. It would also begin the process of moving the proposed route closer to the riverfront and off of city streets, in sections like the Alexander Street Corridor. The third and final stage would create a complete, off-street greenway along the waterfront. The Greenway, at each phase, would be accessible to travelers and will preserve and display the scenic resources of the Hudson River Valley, but its benefits are not purely recreational. This continuous link between the Hudson Valley and New York City would give residents an alternative commute and deliver more travelers to the historic villages and local businesses along the Westchester County RiverWalk; both of which are net positives for the New York City and Westchester economies. Cutting down on traffic into New York City lessens the wear on the City's transportation infrastructure and increases efficiency; getting more travelers to visit the restaurants and businesses in Westchester County adds to their economic growth.

Schumer said he has identified at least two sources of federal funding that the Greenway project would be most eligible for – the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – and several sources of alternate funding, including: the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities program and Sandy resiliency funding. The TAP, for example, provides funding for projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and

bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation, and recreational trail program projects. And the CMAQ program was implemented to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute air quality improvements and provide congestion relief.

In addition, Schumer pledged to work with city, local, and state officials to identify other sources of funding; for example, through the State Parks budget. But first and foremost, Schumer explained that the project must find a lead agency to apply for funding and coordinate between the different jurisdictions through which the Greenway project runs. After a lead agency is selected, Schumer pledged to work with them to find immediate funding opportunities for phase one of the Greenway.

A copy of Senator Schumer's letter to the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is available upon request.

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