

# LANSING CENTER TRAIL POLICY

Updated September 17, 2025

**General Purposes and Policies of the Town.** The Town Board of the Town of Lansing has long supported recreational, transportation, and other trails as now exist in the Town Center known as the “Lansing Center Trail” (“LCT”). It is the Town’s intent, as reflected in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, to integrate the LCT with an overall town center that incorporates complete street designs, a walkable community plan, public recreation and open space areas, and mixed residential and focused commercial and service businesses. Thus, the LCT is intended to be flexible and permanent, but to also integrate with and compliment other uses and facilities in the Town Center. The LCT is hereby declared to be a public recreational area within the embrace of the Public Trust Doctrine, but it is also built, dedicated, and designated as a right-of-way (“ROW”) so as to maintain locational flexibility to permit the LCT to continue to connect to other trails and areas while simultaneously making room or relocating routes to allow for other trail development projects, ballfields, recreation areas, roads, buildings, and other changes in land and traffic, among a myriad of other factors that may influence the proper or best location for connected trails and the LCT. Thus, the presence and purposes of the LCT are fixed, but no single trail, loop, connector is permanently located or perpetually guaranteed to be fixed in any specific location or configuration, as all elements of the LCT must be flexible and able to be relocated, closed, improved, re-built, hardened the overall vision of the Town Center, as well as to support the long-term preservation of the Town’s interconnected trail system, which the LCT is a critical part of in and for the Town and the Lansing community.

**LCT as a Right-of-Way.** Towards this end, the LCT shall be and be construed not as a fixed-in-place easement, but as an overall appurtenant ROW. Such ROW is created to ensure connectivity across the Town Center and from the Town Center to nearby governmental facilities, parks, ballfields, and other trails to connect to remote areas and other municipal and state trail and greenway systems. Such ROW is intended to be both a recreational trail and transportation system, including to promote the walkable community, a walkable Town Center, and the complete streets vision for the Town Center as set forth in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.

**Town Center Land Sales and Transfers of Rights.** Whenever the Town considers conveying any right or interests in Town Center lands, whether by deed, license, lease, easement, or otherwise, provisions to protect and enhance the LCT as a ROW shall be included in such instruments of conveyance, or in related reservations of rights, restrictive covenants, or conservation or other easements that ensure that the LCT and its general ROW across and through the Town Center is preserved. The language and instruments accomplishing such purposes shall be developed, reviewed, and approved by the Director of Parks & Recreation and the Attorney for the Town, and any such instrument and any agreements or language implementing these purposes shall be presented to, and approved by, the Town Board. Such reservations, restrictions, and rights-of-way, etc., shall consider and, where appropriate, implement any one or more of the following Trail Preservation, Standards, and Rules as are therein required or otherwise necessary or convenient to the goals and purposes set forth in this Policy.

## **Trail Preservation, Standards, and Rules.**

- 1. ROW Standards and Goals.** All trails shall be denominated and described as rights-of-way. The fixing of a given trail location, or the location of any supporting infrastructure, shall not require that the trail or such infrastructure forever remain in such location. The LCT and its improvements are intended to remain flexible and relocatable as to accommodate other uses, improvements, and

infrastructure that it the LCT is designed to be and remain a part of. As rights-of-way, each individual spur and loop is non-permanent, and the rights-of-way are and shall be described as ensuring only a robust LCT system that interconnects to other community trails and public/private places, and such is not a guarantee that every loop, trail, connector, etc., shall perpetually remain in a given location or at the Town Center. All land conveyances, instruments affecting the fee title of the Town Center lands, and all land use approvals shall endeavor to maintain such rights-of-way and implement land records to ensure the continued vitality of such rights-of-way.

**2. LCT Mapping.** Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** is an updated map of the LCT. All trail loops, lines, and connectors be and hereby are approved in the approximate locations where shown in Exhibit A, subject to relocations as rights-of-way whenever so determined and approved by the Town Board by Resolution. Such trails and their concomitant right to connect to adjacent trails and lands are expressly reserved here by a perpetual right-of-way running in favor of the Town of Lansing. Such right-of-way shall be 15' in width, the middle line of which is located at the current centerline of the trail(s) as now exists. However, as minor mapping errors, it is noted that the Short Line Spur is on the railroad bed in the hedgerow and the Murdock Spur is also located in the hedgerow, and not in the open field as shown upon the map. As part of the current trails master planning that is underway, any updated mapping (including relocated or removed trails are areas) shall be substituted herein as Exhibit A when approved by the Town Board. The Trail rights-of-way shall be perpetual and no secondary easements or rights arise or are implied other than as follows: (i) the right of the Town or its agents to emplace trail improvements and recreational facilities along such Trails, but within the bounds of the rights-of-way unless otherwise agreed in writing; and (ii) the right of the Town to relocate the trail to another location upon the said demised or conveyed lands so long as reasonably necessary for good cause as determined reasonably by the Town, at the sole cost of the Town unless agreed otherwise, and so long as the revised location does not unreasonably and substantially interfere with the improvements or existing or planned uses of such lands by the owner thereof. When there is doubt, it shall be presumed that the rights-of-way hereby reserved take precedence over other planned but not yet approved and developed uses or improvements upon or relating to such lands.

**3. Prohibition of Non-Approved Buildings and Obstructions.** No party may erect building or structures within or over such Trails areas; nor will any party plant or cultivated any trees or other flora as may interfere with the said trails or its rights-of-way; nor will any party engage in any direct or indirect conduct or omission that blocks, obstructs, or interfere with the ingress and egress rights of the Town and designated members of the public, to use and enjoy the Trail.

**4. Capital Improvements & Amenities.** All capital improvements pertaining or related to the LCT shall be approved by resolution of the Town Board, including but not limited to adding new trails, adding new trail loops and connectors, making surface improvements to such trails (e.g., gravel, stone, asphalt, paving, cinders, crushed limestone, etc.), undertaking excavation or other land disturbances for trails or related projects that move more than one cubic yard of material, exceed one-quarter of an acre in gross area, or are in or within 50' of any wetlands. Or wetland areas, streams, or riparian corridors. When in doubt as to the location of streams, wetlands, or riparian areas, the Town shall engage the assistance of the Engineer for the Town to delineate the area or give an opinion and advice as to the same. Capital improvements shall also include any trail amenities such as buildings, bathrooms, ballfields, and recreational courses, as well as any equipment or infrastructures that have a gross cost of over \$5,000 ("Gross cost" shall mean the total cost of all labor and equipment calculated at market and prevailing wage rates, regardless of whether the labor may be provided by town

employees or volunteers, and regardless of whether any goods or equipment may be accounted for in any budget or be already owned by the Town).

**5. Maintenance & Repair, Generally.** All maintenance on the trail shall be performed by the Town Department of Parks & Recreation and the DPW, including but not limited to mowing, trimming, tree management, weed and invasive species removal, plantings, signage, repairs to trails or any trail amenities, and like matters. Such work may be assigned to volunteers, so long as such volunteers are under the direct management of the town, unless the volunteer or volunteer organization has a cooperative contract with the town and procures and maintains the insurance required in and by such agreement, duly naming the Town of Lansing as an additional insured. Additional standards and rules for maintenance are set forth below.

**6. Town Code Chapter 190 Rules Apply to the LCT.** All rules for Town Parks and recreation areas and the Town Center Ballfields as set forth in Town Code Chapter 190 apply to, and shall be enforced upon, the LCT. Any conduct restricted or prohibited in town parks or town recreational and ballfield areas is and shall remain restricted and prohibited upon and near all LCT trails and areas, including parking lots. In addition, no motor vehicles are permitted along any trail except when operated by or for the Town and with the approval of the Town, and vehicular use is intended to be limited, such as for needed construction, inspection, maintenance, and repair.

**7. Trails Management.** As a recreational area of the Town of Lansing, general management of the surface activities and improvements, plans, maintenance and repair schedules, and the personnel working in and upon the LCT shall be under the direction and supervision of the Director of Parks & Recreation. All new trail construction, including relocation, and all public works and capital improvements (both generally and as defined above) shall be undertaken under the supervision of the Director of Parks & Recreation or the DPW Director, as the Town Board shall decide on a case-by-case basis taking into account the nature and purposes of the public works or project then under consideration.

**8. Trail Rules.** The Director of Parks & Recreation may make, post, and implement any additional special event or temporarily needed rules for the LCT. For more general and policy and use-based rules the approval of the Town Board may be required, and examples where this may occur include trail loops being specifically designated for dogs, the addition of a dog park, the addition of a community garden, and the installation of frisbee golf stations. Likewise, the Town Board may adopt or amend rules for the LCT, including by amending this Policy, adding a section or article to Town Code Chapter 190 to add the LCT as a specific park or recreational area of the town subject to special rules, or by other legislative acts permitted under New York State law. All LCT rules shall conform to this policy and the Trail Construction and Management Standards set forth below.

**9. Director of Parks; General Duties.** It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Parks & Recreation to: (i) Assist in the creation and maintenance of a master plan for the acquisition, disposal, layout, improvement, beautification and maintenance of the LCT; (ii) Provide recommendations in regard to the management and maintenance of the LCT, including by ensuring that the Trail Construction and Maintenance Standards set forth below are adhered to for all LCT projects and programs; (iii) Recommend programs and funding for improvements in layout, maintenance and operations for the beautification and enhancement of the LCT; (iv) oversee volunteers and volunteer groups that work upon or otherwise use, assist in the maintenance or management of the LCT, or which undertake planning or fundraising for Town LCT improvements and programs; (v) to

implement the rules and requirements of and for the LCT and recommend and advise upon any LCT changes, improvements, or needed rules and regulations; and (vi) where and as appropriate, develop policies, permit forms, and permit applications relating to allowed special events at or upon the LCT, each and all of which shall be subject to the review and approval of the Town Board and, once permit forms and rules are adopted, to review and issue permits in accordance with such policy.

**10. Trail Construction and Maintenance Standards.** The LCT shall be developed as a sustainable trail system intended to provide for recreational and walking areas in the Town Center area, as well as to connect to other community trails, acting in a sense as the system's hub. All LCT trails and infrastructure shall seek to minimize impacts on the environment while meeting the needs of the trail users and the overall plan for the Town Center, each as determined by the Town Board. Matters pertaining to trail closures, repairs, relocations, restoration, or closure shall be determined by local law or other legislation approved by the Town and, in addition, all trails, trail repairs, trail restorations, and new trail extensions and connections, should endeavor to be built and maintained in accordance with the following standards and requirements:

**A. Trailheads, Kiosks, Signage.** LCT users should have access to information regarding trails to enhance safety and the quality of their experiences. Trail information can be disseminated in a wide variety of formats, including kiosks, brochures, websites, guidebooks, and on-trail signs, symbols, and blazes. Even with good trail guides and websites available, trail signage is indispensable to help avoid incidents and damage to nearby flora and fauna. All trails shall be developed with an intent to use standardized communications systems, including signage, which are: (i) approved by the Town; and (ii) uniform in colorization and style so as to distinguish the LCT from other trails and facilities.

**B. Trail Development Standards.** Trails should be developed using appropriate design standards based on desired uses, and considerations should be made for trail types, single or multiple treadways, tread widths and surfaces, corridor and vertical clearances, sight distances, grades, turning radii, trail lengths, and the number of users per mile, each and all to provide an appropriate trail experience for expected users, including based upon the level of usage expected, and the appropriate experience level of users (e.g., steep slopes tend to require experienced hikers and seasonal closures, etc.). When undertaking to upgrade, repair, develop, build, or install any new trailway the New York State trail development standards of the Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (including the Trails technical Document series) and the guidance from the American Trail foundation (e.g., Guidance for Managing Informal Trails, the Trail Planning and Design Hub, Trail Operation and Maintenance Requirements, etc.) shall serve as referential starting points for the design, maintenance, and management standards for all LCT trails, with modifications as necessary to address the natural characteristics of the resources and specific needs of the trail segment in question, each as duly to be approved by the Town Board.

**C. Accessibility.** All LCT trails shall be built and designed to assure that trails, to the extent feasible and as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are accessible to all users, and that all buildings, facilities, programs of and associated with the LCT are accessible in terms of architecture and design, transportation, and communication to individuals with disabilities. This includes compliance with: (i) the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for built environments and outdoor developed facilities, such as trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, and beaches; and (ii) ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas (AGODA). Such standards should serve as

referential starting points for the design, maintenance, and management standards for all LCT trails and should be followed to the extent required and reasonably feasible, regardless of whether they technically apply to the LCT. Overall, new, relocated, and altered trails connected to an accessible trail or designated trailhead should be designed to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. Trail conditions, including topography, geology, and ecology, and expected experience will limit the number of fully accessible trails, but providing for accessibility to the extent reasonably feasible is a declared goal of the Town for the LCT, especially in regards to key accessibility issues such as surfaces, tread widths, openings, protruding objects, tread obstacles, passing space, parking areas, slopes, rest areas and intervals, trail symbols, and signage.

**D. Maintenance.** Trail maintenance standards will utilize acceptable practices and methods in the maintenance of trails customized for the particular uses and trails to be maintained. Maintenance activities generally include: (i) maintaining drainage structures and water management, including stormwater management and rolling grades to divert water from trail surfaces; (ii) surface treatment and maintenance, including clearing and grubbing to maintain height and width clearances; (iii) the maintenance of bridges, culverts, and other crossings; (iv) maintenance and placement of trail symbols and signage; (v) beautification and shade tree plantings, visual and other buffer placement, and removal of invasive species or noxious weeds; and (vi) promoting the stabilization of trail surfaces across varying seasons and weather conditions. Whenever any of the maintenance items referenced above go beyond standard maintenance practices (whether due to complexity, size, equipment needed, needing a NYS Dig ticket, or because it is a public works project or exceeds the other guidelines in this policy), approval of the Town of Lansing, or of the Town Board, shall be required.

**E. Temporary and Permanent Trail Closures and Relocations.** Sometimes it is necessary to close or reroute a trail due to poor initial design, overuse, illegal use, or other natural factors having caused some type of degradation. Other times a trail may need to be relocated or rerouted due to other plans or infrastructures approved for the Town Center. All permanent trail closures and relocations shall be implemented as directed by the Director of Parks & Recreation, the DPW Director, or the Town Board. All seasonal or temporary trail closures may be made and lifted at the discretion of the Director of Parks & Recreation. When a trail or trail segment is closed for purposes or repair or improvement, reclamation strategies shall be implemented that consider issues of stabilization, recontouring, revegetation, and trail maintenance and monitoring. Each trail and each site should be carefully evaluated to: (i) determine if the trail can and should be rehabilitated; (ii) whether the existing trail location and route are the best or most proper location for such trail; and (iii) determine the most careful and thorough planning for such trail, both in terms of its construction and to ensure that the trail overall promotes the purposes of the LCT as a recreational Town Center area that continues to augment interconnectivity of the LCT with other community trails, destinations, and facilities.

**F. Monitoring Program.** The LCT shall have a monitoring program developed the Town of Lansing Parks & Recreation Department to regularly appraise and monitor trail conditions. At the least, this shall include seasonal trail inspections and a program to allow for comments and reports about issues, obstructions, and problems on the LCT to be reported to the Town Board or Town Supervisor. Trail use will be monitored to help avoid user conflicts, to ensure sustainability, to promote education about the LCT and other trail users, and to identify overloading and overuse areas so as to help mitigate such impacts through adding diversion spurs, relocating trails, limiting trail use, periodic closures, additional maintenance, or the promotion trail hardening techniques.

# EXHIBIT A

## CURRENT LANSING CENTER TRAIL MAP

### SEPTEMBER, 2025

(Original on file at Town Hall)



- **OZMUN LOOP:** John Ozmun came from Orange County, NY and ran a sawmill in the 1840s on land adjacent to the Lansing Center Trail.
- **TOWNLEY LOOP:** Richard Townley, for whom Townley Creek was named, arrived in Lansing from Pennsylvania. The family had sold land in Pennsylvania in 1788 to Frenchmen to create a village to house Marie Antoinette and the Dauphin. They never made it to Pennsylvania.
- **SHOEMAKER LOOP:** Jacob Shoemaker came from Stroudsburg, PA and farmed 203 acres. This loop is near the foundation of Shoemaker's home.
- **KNETTLES LOOP:** Knettles, a farmer, was active in local politics. He counted himself a Democrat until 1855, when he became a Republican.
- **TERPENING LOOP:** Terpening Corners was the name given to a major intersection near the Lansing Center Trail. Terpening is an old Dutch name.
- **HEDDEN LOOP:** Hedden's Creek runs through the Lansing Center Trail. Aaron Hedden came to Lansing in 1802, and died in 1864 at age 81.
- **MUNSON LOOP:** The Munsons have been farming in Lansing since at least the mid-1800's. Mary Munson still call Lansing home.
- **CONLON LOOP:** The Conlons settled here from Ireland in 1850. Andrew, one of 6 sons, served as Lansing's Justice of the Peace and on the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors... marrying Katherine Knettles, another conservative Lansing family.
- MILTON CORNERS:** Milton was the name of the military township formed in 1789 and subsequently subdivided. Lansing was separated out in 1817.
- LOUISE BEMENT LANE:** Street named for Louise Bement, who was our beloved Town of Lansing Historian from 1981-2022.





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