VISION FOR THE LEHIGH VALLEY CATALYST
SECTION OF THE D&L TRAIL

Once complete, the D&L Trail will connect cities and towns of the valley and create a real alternative to driving.

The catalyst section of the D&L Trail will recenter communities on enjoyment of the Lehigh River—the spine of human settlement, industry and wildlife movement from the time of the Lenape Indians.

Built at a time when the Lehigh Valley is emerging as a vibrant population center with excellent quality of life and environment, this urban section of the D&L Trail will be distinct from other sections of the Heritage Corridor.

This 7-mile section will be built for use by many more residents and visitors, and offer more amenity, heritage destinations, points of interest, ecological improvements, and inviting riverfront spaces.

By developing two parallel path systems on both sides of the Lehigh River, the D&L Trail can offer a range of experiences for different users, and an incredible variety of routes, vistas, atmospheres and itineraries for regular users.

Long-distance travelers on the D&L Trail will find that many elements of the east side towpath trail are designed for continuity of experience with the 165-mile D&L Trail. Locals will find a wide, smooth bikeway and parallel walking and running trail on the west side of the river, which allow for faster travel and almost continuous connection to the river.
1. Premier, iconic, multi-modal urban/suburban mobility system that features pedestrian and bicycle movement for job growth, health, and equity.
2 New infrastructure for water quality, and places to experience river life and the natural environment
3 Network of exciting heritage destinations that spur historic preservation, revitalization, place-making and economic development
CATALYTIC MOBILITY NETWORK

BIG LOOP WITH MANY CROSSINGS

This section of the D&L Trail is not a single line. It is a big loop with many east / west connections that link communities, workplaces, connecting transit and trail lines on both sides of the Lehigh River. Fast and slow paths join the towns and boroughs to the city of Allentown.

Five of the nine existing vehicular bridges in the Lehigh Catalyst site area offer the safest crossings. A new pedestrian and bike bridge on the Coplay Trestle is proposed to offer a more generous crossing with room to stop and enjoy the river. The 6 bridges (5 vehicular and 1 pedestrian) connect the east and west side trails in a big loop, as well as a number of local loops. A beautiful, inactive rail trestle bridge north of American Parkway will support a slim, elevated park over the river, accessed from the Allentown (west) side, making another strong connection to the river.

WATER TRAIL

The east and west D&L Trails will greatly expand access to the water trail on the Lehigh River. D&L Trail improvements will increase the number of places that people can reach the river and get out on the water. Kayak, canoe and bike rental kiosks will increase visitors’ opportunities to hop in a canoe at one location, stop for lunch in another, and bike back to where they started.
ROUTE 329 BRIDGE
2 LANE 2 WAY (32 FT); SHORT SPAN (600 FT); SIDEWALK (SOUTH SIDE)
(1933)

LEHIGH STREET BRIDGE
2 LANE 2 WAY (46 FT); LONG SPAN (1200 FT); SIDEWALK (NORTH SIDE, PROTECTED)
(2015)

RACE STREET BRIDGE
2 LANE 2 WAY (32 FT); SHORT SPAN (400 FT); SIDEWALK (NORTH SIDE)

TILGHMAN STREET BRIDGE
4 LANE 2 WAY (54 FT); SHORT SPAN (1700 FT); SIDEWALK (BOTH SIDE)
(1929, 1995, UNDER CONSTRUCTION UNTIL 2021)

HAMILTON STREET BRIDGE
4 LANE 2 WAY (64 FT); LONG SPAN (1600 FT); SIDEWALK (NORTH)
(1959, 1973)
WEST SIDE TYPICAL SECTION
MULTIUSE TRAIL SYSTEM

The D&L will serve a high volume and diverse kinds of users with two parallel paths. Commuters and travelers on wheels—bikes, wheelchairs, roller skates—will use a two-lane 12-foot wide path surfaced in smooth asphalt that incorporates recycled glass. Runners and walkers can use a 6- to 10-foot wide pedestrian footpath made of stabilized stone dust.
SEVEN DISTINCT CHARACTER AREAS

There are 7 distinct character zones in the D&L corridor between Cementon and Allentown. Each one has its challenges and assets, relationship to the river and neighborhoods, and varying dimensions of the right-of-way. The design plays up the diversity of conditions in the 7 character areas of the Lehigh Valley Catalyst, while providing for continuity between them.
The east side D&L will be a 12-foot wide path made of stabilized stone dust located on the canal towpath in the reaches where a canal was part of the navigation (in all but the slackwater sections). The re-watered canal can manage a very large quantity of stormwater runoff from adjacent municipalities, improve water quality, generate other ecosystem benefits, and offer a beautiful wetland garden amenity for trail users.
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