



DANIEL P. MCCOY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

COUNTY OF ALBANY
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
112 STATE STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207-2021
(518) 447-7040 - FAX (518) 447-5589
WWW.ALBANYCOUNTY.COM

MICHAEL P. MCLAUGHLIN, JR.
DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE

November 13th, 2025

Honorable Joanne Cunningham
Chair, Albany County Legislature
112 State St. Rm. 710
Albany, NY 12207

Dear Chairwoman Cunningham,

The County Executive's Office is seeking authorization to enter into an agreement with the Town of Bethlehem and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy for the transfer of County funding which will be used for the purpose of open space land conservation.

The County will be using appropriation lines that are for the specific purpose of open space conservation to transfer \$150,000 to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and \$210,000 to the Town of Bethlehem. The Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy will use the \$150,000 to aid in the purchase of 197 acres of land located in the Town of Guilderland, which will then be donated to the John Boyd Thacher State Park to protect forested habitats for wildlife and water quality.

The Town of Bethlehem plans to use the \$210,000 to support the purchase of 133 acres located in the Town of Bethlehem for the purpose of protecting the Town's conservation values, protecting farmland soil as well as wildlife ecosystems and waterways, and contributing to their 2017 Open Space Plan.

If you have any questions regarding this request, I can make myself available at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. McCoy
Albany County Executive

cc: Hon. Dennis Feeney, Majority Leader
Hon. Frank Mauriello, Minority Leader

Rebekah Kennedy, Majority Counsel
James Curran, Minority Counsel



County of Albany

Harold L. Joyce
Albany County Office
Building
112 State Street - Albany,
NY 12207

Legislation Text

File #: TMP-6979, Version: 1

REQUEST FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Description (e.g., Contract Authorization for Information Services):

Authorizing an agreement with the Town of Bethlehem and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy for the purpose of land preservation.

Date: 10/17/25
Department: CEO
Attending Meeting: Cameron Sagan
Submitted By: Patrick Curran
Title: Sustainability and Economic Development Coordinator
Phone: 518-447-5639

Purpose of Request: Contract Authorization Enter text.

CONTRACT TERMS/CONDITIONS:

Party Names and Addresses:

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy - 195 New Karner Rd, Albany, NY 12205
Town of Bethlehem - 445 Delaware Ave, Delmar, NY 12054

Term: (Start/end date or duration) Enter text.
Amount/Raise Schedule/Fee: \$360,000

BUDGET INFORMATION:

Is there a Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐
Anticipated in Budget: Yes ☒ No ☐
Spreadsheet attached: Yes ☐ No ☒

Source of Funding - (Percentages)

Federal:	0	County:	100%
State:	0	Local:	0

County Budget Accounts:

Revenue Account and Line:	Enter text.
Revenue Amount:	Enter text.
Appropriation Account and Line:	A98730-44488 /A91340-44046
Appropriation Amount:	\$250,000 / \$10,000

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Mandated Program/Service: Yes ☐ No ☒

If Mandated, Cite Authority:	Enter text.
Request for Bids / Proposals:	
Competitive Bidding Exempt:	Yes ☒ No ☐
# of Response(s):	Enter text.
# of MWBE:	Enter text.
# of Veteran Business:	Enter text.
Bond Resolution No.:	Enter text.
Apprenticeship Program	Yes ☐ No ☒

Previous requests for Identical or Similar Action:

Resolution/Law Number and Date: Enter text.

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST: (state briefly why legislative action is requested)

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MOHAWK HUDSON LAND CONSERVANCY

Conserving and Connecting Communities

195 NEW KARNER RD
ALBANY, NY 12205

518-436-6346

WWW.MOHAWKHUDSON.ORG



October 3, 2025

Via email: joanne.cunningham@albanycountyny.gov : daniel.mccoy@albanycountyny.gov

Hon. Daniel McCoy
Albany County Executive
Harold L. Joyce Albany County Office Building
112 State Street, Room 710
Albany, NY 12207

Hon. Joanne Cunningham
Chairwoman
Albany County Legislature
Harold L. Joyce Albany County Office Building
112 State Street, Room 710
Albany, NY 12207

RE: Land Preserve Funding Request

Dear County Executive McCoy and Chairwoman Cunningham,

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC) is requesting \$150,000 from the County's Land Preserve Fund to purchase 197 acres of land in the Town of Guilderland. This project is both regionally and nationally significant as it protects forested habitat for wildlife and water quality, conserves land adjacent to a popular state park and national historic site and preserves scenic open space and rural character of the Town of Guilderland. Protection of this property directly aligns with Albany County's Helderberg Escarpment Planning Guide and New York State's 2016 Open Space Plan as outlined below.

Habitat and Water Quality

The property's forest provides habitat for a variety of plants and wildlife. The property is located in an Important Bird Area according to National Audubon Society and within a strategic wildlife corridor identified by MHLC and The Nature Conservancy that aims to connect the Catskills to the Adirondacks. Most notably, the forest provides important foraging habitat for the various species of bats that hibernate in Hailes Cave whose entrance is approximately 1,700 feet away in Thacher State Park. Hailes Cave is about a mile long underneath the Helderberg Escarpment and is an important winter hibernacula that was once home to Indiana bat and Northern long eared bats before White-Nose Syndrome decimated their populations. In addition, the property contains approximately 2,000 feet of a tributary stream to the Black Creek which flows down from the mountain to the wet lowland along Route 156. Limiting development and commercial forestry on the property will preserve the forest cover for wildlife habitat and limit sedimentation from entering the Black Creek watershed, home to the Black Creek Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

History and Recreation

The property was once part of Frederick Crounse farm, a National Registered Historic Site. Crounse was an officer in the Albany County Militia and the farm provided food to the Army in the Battle of Saratoga. Protecting land immediately adjacent to this historic site allows visitors the opportunity to envision the landscape as it was during the Revolutionary War. The property is also directly adjacent to John Boyd Thacher State Park, a popular tourist destination in Albany County that provides a variety of recreational opportunities including rock climbing, hiking and camping. The Long Path, a long-distance hiking trail that traverses the State, currently terminates at High Point in Thacher State Park. This project will complement those existing recreation attractions by preserving the forested landscape the nearly one million visitors annually to Thacher State Park seek.

Scenic Open Space

The property contains land both on the top of the Helderberg Escarpment and frontage on Route 156 Altamont-Voorheesville Road in the Town of Guilderland, just outside the Village of Altamont. The Helderberg Escarpment is widely considered the most prominent natural feature of Albany County and a geologic resource of international importance. This area of Albany County has largely retained its rural character; however, development pressure threatens the Route 156 corridor. Limiting the development of the property will conserve the scenic viewshed of the Escarpment residents and visitors to the area cherish.

Request for Funding

MHLC is currently under contract to purchase the property for \$400,000, after the property listed for sale with a commercial realtor. We recently received a \$250,000 award from Scenic Hudson Land Trust through their Climate and Environmental Justice Fund for this project. A \$150,000 grant from Albany County would secure the remaining funding needed to purchase this property.

For over 30 years, Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy has worked with private and public partners to protect 15,638 acres. In Albany County, we are proud to have conserved nearly 12,275 acres that provide clean air, clean water and outdoor opportunities that improve community health and connect people to the beauty of our region. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to partnering with Albany County on this exciting project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark King". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Mark King

Executive Director

Request for Funding

Town of Guilderland, Albany County, NY



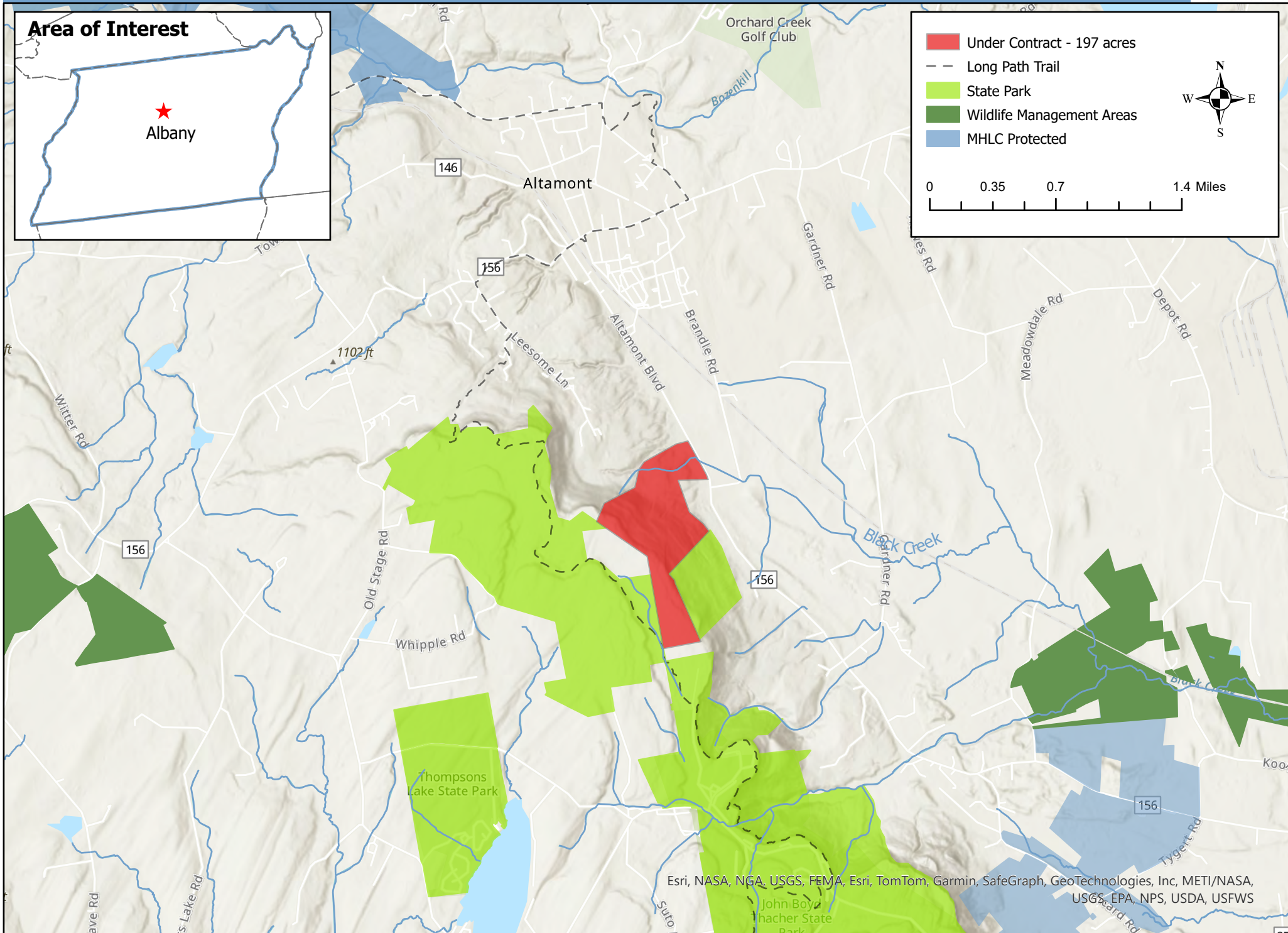
Area of Interest

★
Albany

- Under Contract - 197 acres
- Long Path Trail
- State Park
- Wildlife Management Areas
- MHLC Protected



0 0.35 0.7 1.4 Miles



TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Albany County - New York

OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054

(518) 439-4955 x1164

DVanLuven@BethlehemNY.gov

David VanLuven
Town Supervisor



October 28, 2025

Via email:

Daniel McCoy, County Executive County_executive@albanycountyny.gov

RE: Land Preserve Funding Request

Dear County Executive McCoy,

The Town of Bethlehem is requesting \$210,000 from the Albany County Land Preserve Fund to support the purchase of 133 acres of land in the Town of Bethlehem. The purchase price of \$735,000 is based on a fair market value determined by an independent appraiser. The Town proposes to contribute \$450,000 from its Farms & Forests Capital Fund, subject to permissive referendum, and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy has committed \$75,000. A \$210,000 grant from Albany County would secure the remaining funding needed to purchase this property.

The Town's Conservation Easement Review Board discussed the subject parcel at its January 17, 2023, October 1, 2025, and October 27, 2025 meetings and voted to make a positive recommendation to the Town Board for the use of the Farms & Forests Capital Fund to protect this significant open space. In addition to advancing objectives in the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update (2022), this project would protect each of the four Conservation Values categories from the Town's Open Space Plan (2017):

- Community Character: The subject parcel is a large open space in the heart of the hamlet of Delmar that is within walking distance of the Four Corners, Albany County Rail Trail, and Normans Kill Ravines Park. Historically, this land was farmed by the Booth and Cook families, with tax records existing for residents of the property going back as far as 1799.
- Recreation and Greenways: The subject parcel is adjacent to the Normans Kill Ravines Park and would provide a sizeable expansion of that park for future passive recreational uses such as walking and mountain biking trails. The property would also offer a new access point to the park, better connecting the park with neighboring residential areas. The parcel is adjacent to roads on the Town of Bethlehem's Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network and is close to the Adams Street access points on the Albany County Rail Trail. The parcel's meadows, ravines, and forests area offer varied scenic vistas for visitors.
- Forests, Fields, and Wildlife Ecosystems: The subject parcel contains forests and woodlands, which provide critical habitat for both flora and fauna. These ecosystems filter pollutants and reduce downstream flooding in the Normans Kill. Further, this project will conserve contiguous lands that serve as viable wildlife greenways and travel pathways.

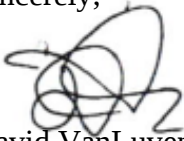
- Natural Water Systems (Streams, Wetlands, and the Hudson River): The subject parcel contains federal wetlands, floodplains, and several creeks. These ecosystems absorb stormwater, thereby helping attenuate downstream flooding in the Normans Kill and Hudson River. Keeping these lands protected from residential, commercial, or industrial development will ensure the ongoing permeability of the land, allowing for filtration of pollutants, limiting runoff, and slowing erosion.

In addition to each of the four Conservation Values previously noted, the subject parcels also contain areas of prime farmland soils.

The Bethlehem Town Board will be voting on entering an option agreement contract with the sellers, which will be contingent on approval by the Albany County Legislature. With the proposed \$450,000 from the Town's Farms & Forest Capital Fund and \$75,000 committed from the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, a \$210,000 grant from Albany County would secure the remaining funding needed to purchase this property.

The Town of Bethlehem has been a regional leader in open space protection, securing the long-term conservation of nearly 700 acres over the last eight years. For these projects, we have worked in partnership with interested land owners, nonprofit organizations, the State of New York, and Albany County. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to partnering with you and Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy on this exciting project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David VanLuven', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David VanLuven
Bethlehem Town Supervisor