

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee has reviewed the attached Act renaming the “North County Trailway,” a multi-use path which spans 22.1 miles from Eastview in the Town of Mount Pleasant north to Baldwin Place in Somers, and the “South County Trailway,” a multi-use path which spans 14.1 miles from Eastview in the Town of Mount Pleasant south to the New York City border at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, after the late Andrew P. O’Rourke, the former Westchester County Executive. Both paths combined shall be renamed the “Andrew P. O’Rourke Westchester County Trailway.”

Your Committee recognizes that Mr. O’Rourke graduated from Fordham University and served this country in the United States Air Force as a bombardier and navigator, rising to the level of Captain—he was on a response team throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis and flew missions around the world during his eight years on active duty. After receiving his law degree from Fordham Law School, where he attended at night—traveling from McGuire Air Force Base multiple days a week, Mr. O’Rourke began his professional career as a practicing attorney in Yonkers at a leading aviation law firm, while he pursued his Masters of Law from New York University.

Your Committee further recognizes that, having served as a member of two separate Westchester County law firms, Mr. O’Rourke was elected to the first of four terms as a Yonkers City Councilman, before being elected to the first of four terms on the County Board of Legislators. He would eventually be chosen by his peers to replace then County Executive Alfred B. DelBello in 1982. Mr. O’Rourke would go on to become the second-longest serving Westchester County Executive, serving from 1983 to 1997. Applying what the military had taught him about diversity and the chain of command to his administration of county government, Mr. O’Rourke dedicated County land for a Holocaust Memorial in White Plains and he appointed the County’s first African-American and Latino Commissioners and the first women to head the General Services and Law Departments.

Your Committee notes that, during his tenure, Mr. O'Rourke advocated for and oversaw the expansion of the County's infrastructure. He won approval of referenda to rehabilitate the Westchester County Center and County Airport and oversaw the reopening of Rye Playland as a county amusement park. He brought the Croton Point Park back to life, after decades of the property being used as a garbage dump. When homelessness spiked, he partnered with HUD and local officials to build transitional housing for families. He also oversaw the building of the Westchester County Jail and a recycling plant. Through building up of the County's infrastructure, Mr. O'Rourke was able to maintain the County's AAA bond rating, while stabilizing property taxes. After serving 15 years as the Westchester County executive, then-Governor George Pataki appointed Mr. O'Rourke to the New York Court of Claims. In 2000, he was elected to the New York Supreme Court, a position he held until his passing in 2013.

Your Committee further notes that, as a long-time leader of Westchester County, Mr. O'Rourke was an advocate and supporter of the construction of both the North County Trailway and South County Trailway. He was instrumental in the County acquiring multiple parcels of land between the neighborhoods of Eastview at Saw Mill River Road and Lincoln at the New York City border, and also in having the land paved for pedestrian enjoyment. Accordingly, it is appropriate to honor his memory, by naming the North County Trailway and the South County Trailway, collectively, after Mr. O'Rourke, since it would in all likelihood not exist but for his vision for Westchester.

Your Committee further notes that, following his time as County Executive, then-Governor George Pataki appointed Mr. O'Rourke to the New York Court of Claims. In 2000, he was elected to the New York Supreme Court, a position he held until his passing in 2013.

Your Committee is informed that the County Executive will ask the Parks Department to work with the municipalities through which the North County Trailway and South County Trailway run, to install an appropriate memorial and signage to honor Mr. O'Rourke's memory.


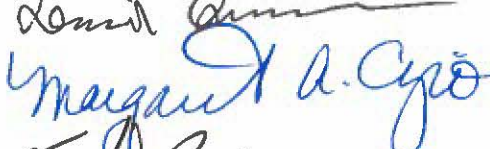




As you know, this Honorable Board must comply with the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"). The proposed act does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning dated January 14, 2025, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators."

Your Committee, after careful consideration, recommends the adoption of this Act, renaming both the North County Trailway and the South County Trailway, collectively, in the memory of the late Andrew P. O'Rourke.

Dated: March 3, 2025

White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

 David Amico  Margaret A. Cyto  J. W. R.  P. M.	 J. W. R.  P. M.
---	---

Legislation

Parks & Environment

Dated: March 3, 2025

White Plains, New York

The following members attended the meeting remotely and approved this item out of Committee with an affirmative vote. Their electronic signature was authorized and is below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin J. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

COMMITTEE ON

Legislation

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Renaming No. & So. County Trailway ☒ NO FISCAL IMPACT PROJECTED

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT

To Be Completed by Submitting Department and Reviewed by Budget

SECTION A - FUND

☐ GENERAL FUND

☐ AIRPORT FUND

☐ SPECIAL DISTRICTS FUND

SECTION B - EXPENSES AND REVENUES

Total Current Year Expense \$ -

Total Current Year Revenue \$ -

Source of Funds (check one): ☐ Current Appropriations ☐ Transfer of Existing Appropriations

☐ Additional Appropriations ☐ Other (explain)

Identify Accounts: _____

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses: Annual Amount \$ -

Describe: _____

Potential Related Operating Budget Revenues: Annual Amount \$ -

Describe: _____

Anticipated Savings to County and/or Impact on Department Operations:

Current Year: _____

Next Four Years: _____

Prepared by: Debra Ogden

Title: Sr. Budget Analyst

Department: Budget

Date: September 4, 2024

Reviewed By: [Signature]

Budget Director

Date: 9/5/2024

ACT NO.

-2024

An Act renaming the “North
County Trailway” and the
“South County Trailway,”
collectively, to the “Andrew
P. O’Rourke Westchester
County Trailway.”

BE IT ENACTED by the County Board of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. The “South County Trailway,” that spans 14.1 miles in Westchester County, from Eastview in the Town of Mount Pleasant south to the New York City border at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, and the “North County Trailway,” that spans 22.1 miles in Westchester County, from Eastview in the Town of Mount Pleasant north to Baldwin Place in Somers, shall be and hereby is renamed “Andrew P. O’Rourke Westchester County Trailway.”

Section 2. This Act shall take effect immediately.