

OUTLOOK

An Overview of Planning Issues in Herkimer and Oneida Counties

Fall ♦ 2000

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The Herkimer and Oneida Counties' Planning Offices Have Moved to Utica's Historic Union Station

Yes folks, it's official . . . as of August 28, 2000, the Herkimer and Oneida Counties' Planning Offices have moved to a new location. The following program areas also made the move: Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program (HOCCPP), Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS), and Environmental Management Council.

You can find us on the 3rd floor of Utica's Union Station at 321 Main Street. Our telephone numbers and fax number will remain the same. ♦



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Long Range Transportation Plan Update Approval

The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update to 2020 was approved by the Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee (GP&L). The LRTP Update reflects a new plan horizon of 2020 and reports on the status of previously proposed projects in the 1994 plan for transit, highways and bridges, corridor projects,

and rail. It also reflects changes in demographics, regional economic conditions, land use patterns, and additions or changes resulting from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

The updated plan emphasizes the following:

- preservation of the existing transportation system
- support for economic development
- increase accessibility and mobility options
- connectivity of transportation system
- protect and enhance the environment

The updated plan reported on the status of various projects proposed in the 1994 plan.

Since 1994, four area public transit providers have received new buses including; Utica Transit Authority, 22 buses; Rome VIP, 5 buses; Birnie Bus, 1 bus; and the Oneida County Rural Transit, 4 buses. The LRTP Update estimates the five transit op-

erators will need a total of 157 new vehicles at a cost of \$25 million by the year 2020. The plan also calls for continued support for transit coordinators and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Job Access efforts, as part of aiding clients to reach work sites under the federal Welfare to Work initiative.

Preservation of the existing transportation system is an important goal of the 2020 LRTP. A number of major transportation projects have been undertaken since 1994 to preserve the transportation system including:

- Route 26 Bridge - Rome - \$10.6 million
- Route 28 Bridge - Mohawk & Herkimer - \$11.2 million
- Route 5 Bridge - Town of Kirkland - \$2.9 million
- Route 8 Improvements - \$5.0 million
- Route 233 Improvements - \$4.0 million

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Fort Herkimer Church Park and Canalway Trail

The Town of German Flatts will use Enhancement funds to undertake two projects: 1) Fort Herkimer Church Heritage Park and 2) Canalway Trail Project

The Fort Herkimer Church Heritage Park improvements will include the conversion of one of two houses purchased by the town for a Visitor's Center; installation of a small transient dock facility along the Erie Canal; grading and construction of an off-street parking facility for approximately 15 cars. Improvements will also include; installation of walkways and picnic facilities, fencing improvements along the Fort Herkimer Church cemetery, and development of interpretive signage focused on the history of the Fort Herkimer stockade, church, and Erie Canal. Interpretive materials and memorabilia will be displayed at the Visitor's Center, which will also include rest room facilities for park and church visitors.

The town will also construct a 2 mile segment of the New York State Canalway Trail on lands owned by the NYS Canal Corporation between the Route 28 Bridge and the proposed Fort Herkimer Church Heritage Park. This trail segment will closely follow the shoreline of the Erie Canal, and will be surfaced with stone dust and developed in accordance with state construction specifications. Trailhead facilities will be developed at the Fort Herkimer Church Heritage Park and at the American Legion park area at the Route 28 Bridge. Trail development will include clearing and grubbing, base and surface improvements, and bench and sign installation

The church enhancements will preserve an historic resource of statewide and national significance while the Canalway Trail component will provide recreation facilities for bicyclists, joggers, and walkers.

Four Transportation Enhancement Projects Selected for Funding

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) continued the Transportation Enhancement Program. The Enhancement Program provides federal reimbursement for transportation projects other than highways and bridges. It provides funding for projects targeted toward cultural, aesthetic, historic, and environmental aspects of our intermodal transportation system. The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS) staff, in cooperation with Region 2 NYS Department of Transportation, solicited candidate projects for possible funding in the Fall of 1999. A list of projects for consideration by the State Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee was submitted.

Round one of the federal Surface Transportation Program Transportation

Enhancement Program selection process is completed. The State Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee (TEAC) has met, considered the candidate applications statewide, and selected those projects to be funded. Four projects in Oneida and Herkimer Counties were selected by the TEAC to receive a total of \$3,180,104 in federal funding.

Round 2 of the STP Transportation Enhancement Program is expected to be announced in the Fall of 2000. The second solicitation will cover the funds from the remaining three years of TEA-21 (FFY 2001-FFY 2003). A guidebook, to help applicants and sponsors understand the program and its appropriateness for their community, is to be made available as part of the announcement.

Boonville Canal Trail

The Village of Boonville intends to build a non-motorized vehicle pedestrian/bicycle trail along the Black River Canal. This trail will run south from the village entrance, connecting the village with three popular destinations: an existing multi-purpose recreation trail system; the Boonville Youth Athletic Association ball fields; and the Headwaters Shopping Plaza.

An historic feature of this project will be its use of a 19th century Whipple bridge as a bicycle/pedestrian bridge for crossing the canal. This bridge is supposedly one of only six remaining Whipple bridges in the entire country. Another element of this project is the acquisition of an old canal warehouse located directly on the canal at the northern end of the canal trail. Once acquired, the village intends to investigate National Register of Historic Places listing of this building as the village pursues plans to restore the building as a local canal museum. The trail will be maintained through the village's recreation budget. Historic interpretation will be coordinated with staff of the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor.

Marinus Willet Center Fort Stanwix

The Marinus Willett Center is a proposed center for heritage education and preservation to be operated by the National Park Service. It will serve as the visitor facility and museum for Fort Stanwix National Monument and house the extensive museum collection. The center will support many federal, state, regional, and local heritage preservation, education, and economic development initiatives.

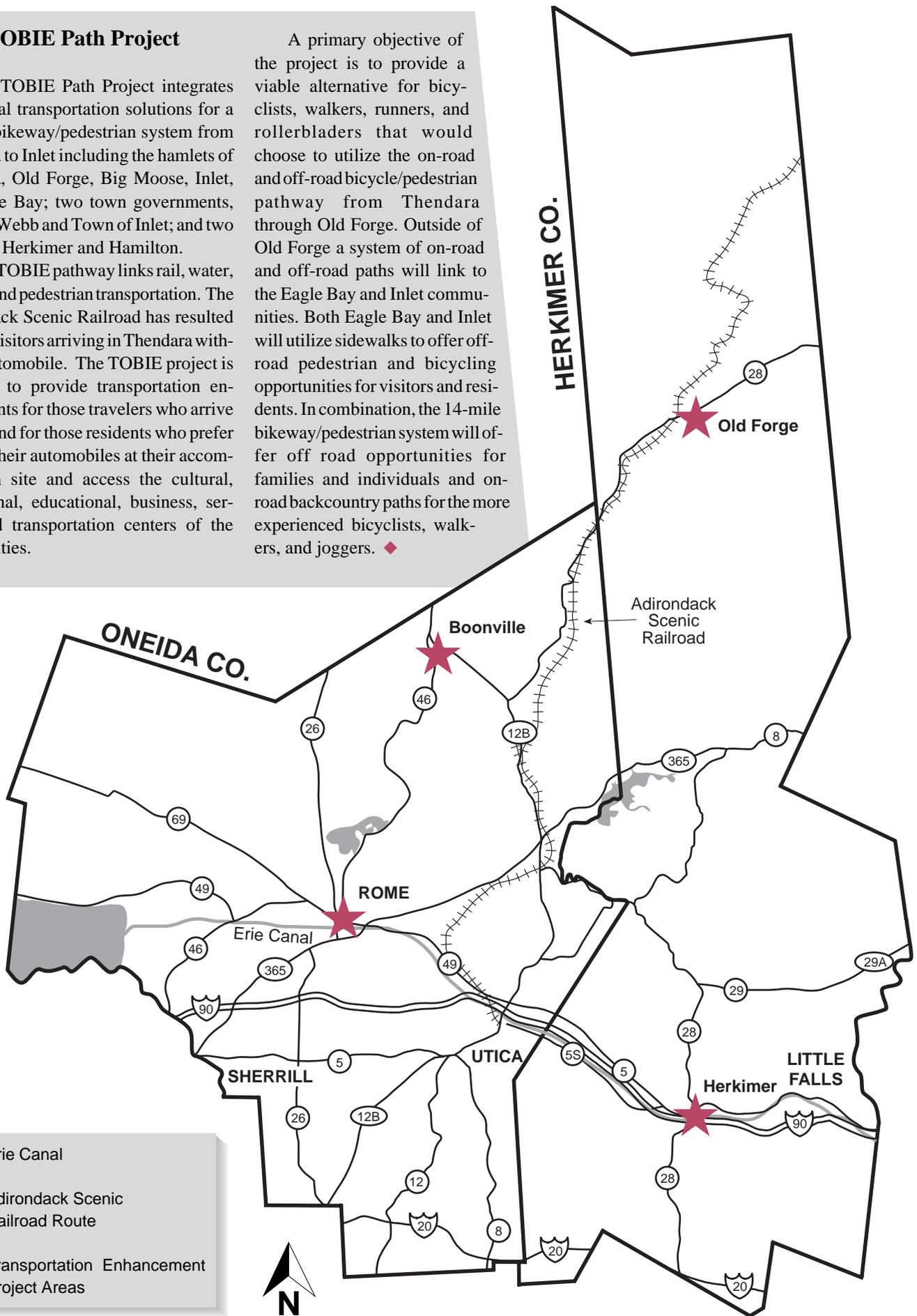
Located in Rome on the Oneida Carrying place near the historic Erie Canal and the Mohawk River, the center will be an historical research and interpretive center with many related themes including early Iroquois history and culture. Through state of the art multi-media presentations, exhibits, web pages, and special interpretive programs and events, the Willett Center will present a complete picture of the many political, military, social, and economic forces that shaped the Mohawk Valley and the emerging independence of the colonies.

TOBIE Path Project

The TOBIE Path Project integrates intermodal transportation solutions for a 14 mile bikeway/pedestrian system from Thendara to Inlet including the hamlets of Thendara, Old Forge, Big Moose, Inlet, and Eagle Bay; two town governments, Town of Webb and Town of Inlet; and two counties, Herkimer and Hamilton.

The TOBIE pathway links rail, water, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation. The Adirondack Scenic Railroad has resulted in many visitors arriving in Thendara without an automobile. The TOBIE project is designed to provide transportation enhancements for those travelers who arrive by train and for those residents who prefer to leave their automobiles at their accommodation site and access the cultural, recreational, educational, business, service, and transportation centers of the communities.

A primary objective of the project is to provide a viable alternative for bicyclists, walkers, runners, and rollerbladers that would choose to utilize the on-road and off-road bicycle/pedestrian pathway from Thendara through Old Forge. Outside of Old Forge a system of on-road and off-road paths will link to the Eagle Bay and Inlet communities. Both Eagle Bay and Inlet will utilize sidewalks to offer off-road pedestrian and bicycling opportunities for visitors and residents. In combination, the 14-mile bikeway/pedestrian system will offer off road opportunities for families and individuals and on-road backcountry paths for the more experienced bicyclists, walkers, and joggers. ♦



Flooding Issues Tackled on Many Fronts

In addition to working with the US Army Corps of Engineers on structural flood control feasibility studies, five (5) Herkimer County communities are undertaking additional approaches to address the continuing flooding problems that plague their communities. The communities of German Flatts, Mohawk, Ilion, and the Town and Village of Frankfort are currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to investigate structural alternatives to control flooding. Structural remedies may involve construction of retention basins, berms, channel modifications, etc. The communities are also working with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to enhance mapping and data management capabilities that will lead to improved non-structural flood control activities such as planning and land use analysis, relocation and acquisition, open space preservation, public education and outreach, and improved regulatory standards.

Most recently, the communities have decided to apply to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under a program that will reduce flood insurance premium rates for residents in the Fulmer Creek, Moyer Creek and Steele Creek flood hazard areas. In addition to reductions in flood insurance premiums, the Community Rating System (CRS) program has a number of added benefits. According to the National Flood Insurance Program, the CRS program saves lives, prevents property damage, and improves community education and coordination. The primary objectives of the program are; 1) to reduce flood losses, 2) to facilitate accurate insurance ratings of flood prone property, and 3) to promote an awareness of available flood insurance protection in the community.

Communities that join the CRS program are classified in a rating system as Class 1 through Class 10. CRS "credit points" are obtained by the community based

on numerous flood mitigation activities that may be voluntarily implemented. Within Herkimer County, many of the community efforts involving the ACOE flood control feasibility studies and the DEC data management enhancements are CRS creditable activities. Depending on the community's credits and rating, reductions on flood insurance premiums can range from 5% to 45%.

Flood mitigation activities that are most commonly undertaken by communities in the program include: public education activities, maintaining flood information and data, developing higher regulatory standards, stormwater management activities, floodplain management planning, acquisition and relocation activities, retrofitting, drainage system maintenance, and flood warning program activities. Questions about the CRS Program may be directed to HOCCPP staff at (315) 798-5710. ♦



Census 2000 Data Products at a Glance

Planned Release Date <i>(Dates in this column refer to the first medium of release.)</i>	100 % Data Products	Lowest Level Geography
Mar - Apr 1, 2001	Census 2000 Redistricting Data Summary File State population counts for legislative redistricting. Media: Internet, CD-ROM	Blocks
Jun - Sep 2001	Demographic Profile Population totals and selected population and housing characteristics in a single table. Media: Internet, CD-ROM, Paper	Places
Jun - Sep 2001	Congressional District Demographic Profile Population totals and selected population and housing characteristics in a single table for Congressional Districts only. Media: Internet, CD-ROM, Paper	Congressional Districts of the 106th Congress
Jul 2001	Race and Hispanic or Latino Summary File Media: CD-ROM	Places
Jan - Nov 2002	Census 2000: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics Media: Internet, Paper (printed report)	Places

SOURCE - U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Decennial Programs Coordination Branch website.
Last revised on September 6, 2000.

Transit Coordination Progressing

A Transit Coordination and Consolidation consultant report, funded through the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS), noted that potential savings could be realized in Oneida and Herkimer Counties through the provision of coordinated demand response transit services for local residents. Service providers include: public transit by the Utica Transit Authority and the City of Rome, two private companies, not-for-profit human service agencies and a rural transportation operator.

Through experience in implementing similar study results in various urban areas throughout the county, HOCTS staff is confident that through coordination of services, savings can be realized by municipalities and operators. Add to this the challenge of the Welfare to Work initiative, the need for a regional approach becomes more apparent.

To this end, HOCTS has been working with the Oneida County Planning Department, the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program (HOCCPP) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to address financial concerns. Additional issues are related to the area's public transit providers' efforts to coordinate those services provided by service agencies now restricted to agency clientele. Carter Goble Associates (CGA) a firm specializing in

transit consulting services, has been assisting in the project. A summary of the consultant findings and the joint staff recommendations were made public earlier this year at a facilitators meeting with over 50 transportation purchasers of service and elected officials in attendance.

In essence, the meeting resulted with the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the goals and parameters for creating a transportation brokerage system and obtains agreement on the scope, schedule, and process required for implementation. Transit brokerage is a program that facilitates coordinated transit services through more efficient use of existing operators. To date, seven major organizations have indicated their intent to participate in the creation of a Brokerage System.

The brokering concept at this point is to retain through a competitively procured contract a private firm, under supervision of the Planning Department, to staff and manage the brokerage. The contractor will be responsible for the following components: guaranteed ride, transit token system, ridesharing program, employer incentives effort, and transit tracking. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is being prepared and will be sent out to Transit Brokerage firms once the MOU has been finalized and endorsed by the participating agencies.

A portion of the funding to finance the

RFP will come as grants through Oneida County acting as the applicant on behalf of a joint Herkimer-Oneida Counties consortium. The county applied for and was awarded two grants: 1) New York State - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and 2) Federal Transit Administration - Job Access, both are funding sources that can be used to address the needs of people moving from welfare to work. The first intent of the RFP is to use these grants to develop a transportation system designed to help welfare recipients achieve independence. The second intent is to further expand transit coordination to include public, private for profit, and non-profit paratransit services through a brokerage network. The more purchasers and providers of transportation services that participate in a coordinated effort, the more trips there are, the more ridesharing opportunities that can be offered.

In short, the broker under contract will have a set time frame to work in a focussed manner to implement Job Access and TANF components and later expand the level of participation to include the general public. The entire operation from set up to operations and maintenance of a brokerage office is outlined in the RFP under sections titled Design, Implementation and Management.

For more information as the program progresses, contact HOCTS staff at (315) 798-5710. ♦



"Long Range" *continued from page 1*

The LRTP Update also reports on the status of a number of growth corridors and subareas identified in the 1994 plan. Projects that have identified funding and are ready for implementation are programmed on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Project and Programming Status:

- Judd Road Connector - on TIP
- Utica Rome Expressway - under construction
- Route 167 Bridge - on TIP
- Route 5 Subarea Study - on TIP
- Route 5, 5A, 5B (Jay-K) Intersection - on TIP

- Griffiss Parkway - on TIP
- Route 5S Study - on TIP
- Yahnundasis Intersection - on TIP
- Route 12 Town of Paris - on TIP

Union Station phased redevelopment efforts have focused on maintaining and enhancing the station's multimodal transportation function:

- Phase I - completed - \$2.2 million
- Phase II - near completion - \$2.4 million
- Phase III - scheduled for 2000 - \$5.2 million
- Phase IV - future plans - \$4.0 million

How the LRTP is implemented will depend on the availability of funds, project development, and construction schedules. However, the 2020 LRTP Update continues as the vision for transportation planning in Herkimer and Oneida Counties. Copies of the Executive Summary or full report are available at the HOCTS office - 321 Main Street, Utica, NY or call (315) 798-5710. ♦

Communities That Care: A Community Development Planning Model

Planning staff has been involved in the introduction of a unique researched-based social development model aimed at preventing adolescent problem behaviors in both Herkimer and Oneida Counties. This model called Communities That Care (CTC) comes from Developmental Research and Programs in Seattle, Washington where it was developed by Doctors Hawkins and Catalano. In Herkimer County, the Integrated County Planning Project has spearheaded this effort. In Oneida County, the Let's Talk Now Anti Violence Committee first recognized the potential of CTC, then the Oneida County Funders Council assumed the responsibility for its implementation.

The Communities That Care model promotes;

- community mobilization,
- assessment of risk and resources within communities,

- identification of gaps in services or places that need to be strengthened, and
- implementation of promising approaches to fill those gaps.

The Communities That Care approach is aimed at implementing preventive strategies that have been proven effective. These strategies are to be tailored to each community based on existing risk and protective factors, and existing services and programs in that community. In addition, CTC does not supplant but, instead, builds on existing collaborative teams and planning efforts.

In both counties, key staff from public and private agencies, law enforcement, schools and colleges have participated in training sessions. Both counties have drafted a "community profile" that examines data related to 19 risk factors found within four domains; 1) community, 2) family, 3) school, and 4) individual/peer. Based on these find-

ings, collaborative groups are determining the highest priority risk factors.

In Herkimer County, the planning groups that are part of the Integrated County Planning Project have completed the CTC training process and have begun to consider possible strategies and their implementation by appropriate county departments and community organizations.

In Oneida County, CTC is developing under the auspices of the County Executive's Office and The Funders Council, a group of human service funders in Oneida County whose mission is to improve the delivery of human services in the county. Working together with the Resource Center for Human Services at Hamilton College, CTC is mid way in the effort to conduct a Risk and Resource Assessment and establish an organization structure for this countywide effort. ♦

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