

Environmental Impact Assessment

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

- a. The Union Transportation Trail (UTT) is currently a 9-mile, crushed-stone rail-trail in Monmouth County, NJ, running along the former Pemberton & Hightstown Railroad right-of-way established in 1864. Initially connecting rural farms to larger rail lines, the line operated until 1977 before being converted into a recreational trail starting in 2010. In present day, the UTT serves as a multi-use trail for walking, biking, and equestrian use, featuring 11 bridges and 10 street crossings.
- b. The objective of this project is to extend this recreational trail 3.2 miles into East Windsor.
- c. The Union Transportation Trail occupies an old rail bed up to Old York Road. The trail extension in East Windsor will diverge from the true railroad bed and instead follow a power line and planned trail corridor to Airport Road. The trail will run partially on JCP&L land just as it does in Monmouth and Ocean Counties. JCP&L has granted an easement to install and maintain this new section of the UTT.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Describe existing environmental features:

- a. No existing vegetation will be removed or disturbed for this project. Nearby and along the edges of the project limits are mature woodland, but no impacts are anticipated.
- b. There are no known or anticipated state and federal endangered species nearby the project. No impacts are anticipated.
- c. The project site is flat, with well drained soils and underlying geology.
- d. The project scope involves construction or reconstruction at or near the surface with minimal footprint. No impacts upon water resources/hydrology are anticipated.
- e. The project will not impact any known historic/archeological resources.
- f. The project will be fully accessible to existing transportation and vehicular parking.
- g. The site is an existing utility corridor. No impact upon adjacent land uses are anticipated.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION

Impacts are defined as direct or indirect changes to the existing environment, whether beneficial or adverse, that are anticipated to result from the proposed action or related future actions and uses. Any off-site impacts, such as increased traffic on neighborhood roads or increased noise levels in surrounding areas, should be described. Whenever possible, environmental impacts should be quantified.

- a. See answers in #2.
- b. See answers in #2.
- c. This project would provide a localized pedestrian/bicycle amenity linkage to a greater trail network for both local and extended recreational use that would benefit residents, visitors, schools, and academic sports teams while providing safety from roadways and traffic.
- d. No additional environmental features will be impacted by this proposal.
- e. No environmental permits are anticipated for this project.
- f. The project area is presently developed.
- g. N/A

4. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

- a. There are no alternative project locations that are feasible for this project.
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

5. MITIGATING MEASURES

Since the project poses no known impact, mitigation is not necessary.

6. AUTHOR(S) AND QUALIFICATIONS (IN BRIEF)

Grant Writer with consult from Landscape Architect and reference from Engineering Consultant.