What is the Northern Valley Greenway?

The Northern Valley Greenway...
Is a concept for an 7.4-mile-long, linear park running through six towns in Bergen County: Tenafly, Cresskill, Demarest, Closter, Norwood & Northvale.

Source:  
https://www.northernvalleygreenway.org/
What is the Northern Valley Greenway?

The Northern Valley Greenway…

- Is a grassroots effort sparked by a local teenager in the wake of a tragic accident.
- Is a grassroots Rotarian Service project sponsored by multiple Rotary Clubs along the potential Greenway alignment.

[Image of Change.org petition, 5/2/2019]

[Image of Northern Valley Greenway Movement Was Sparked By Letter]

[Image of Northern Valley Press]

Northern Valley Greenway | Technical Planning Assistance Summary
What is the Northern Valley Greenway?

The Northern Valley Greenway…
- Rotary Service Project
- Inter-Local Municipal Initiative with resolutions of support and borough liaisons
- Non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization

Elected officials, mayors, and representatives from local municipalities, Bergen County, and state and federal legislators, along with volunteers and advocates gathered at the historic Demarest Station, a scenic location along the potential greenway, to mark the kick-off of the NJDOT Technical Planning Assistance Study. (Image source: Northern Valley Press).
What is the Northern Valley Greenway?

The Northern Valley Greenway…

can fill a gap in Regional Connectivity

Joseph B. Clarke Rail Trail (existing)
Connection to Rockland County

Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Extension (proposed)
Connection to Jersey City
What is the Northern Valley Greenway?

The Northern Valley Greenway…
Can be part of a bigger vision for off-road connectivity in northern New Jersey.
What is the Technical Planning Assistance Study for the NVG?

New Jersey Department of Transportation Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs
Technical Planning Assistance Study

Purpose

First professional inventory and assessment of potential Northern Valley Greenway to
• Identify challenges
• Identify opportunities
• Understand general feasibility to inform next steps
Technical Planning Assistance Study

Purpose

Desktop data collection and assessment

Help inform next steps for NVG Committee
Technical Planning Assistance Study

Process/Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1 JUL</th>
<th>2 AUG</th>
<th>3 SEP</th>
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<th>5 NOV</th>
<th>6 DEC</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Concept Alternatives</td>
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Stakeholder Workshop 09/26/2018

Public Information Center 03/05/2019
Technical Planning Assistance Study

Products

- Environmental Screening (Desktop)
- Draft Purpose & Need Statement
- Base Mapping (GIS Database)
- Opportunities & Constraints Summary
- Concept Alternatives Assessment
- Input Records & Analysis from Stakeholder Workshop and Public Information Center

Anticipation of federal funding sources and processes for project advancement
What did we learn?
What are the findings?
Study Area and General Conditions
Study Area / Right-of-Way

6 Municipalities

- 1.8 mi.
- 1.3 mi.
- 0.9 mi.
- 1.1 mi.
- 1.2 mi.
- 1.1 mi.

7.4 miles
Right-of-Way

±60’ wide, typical

±25’-35’, central Tenafly
Conditions
"The rails and ties are judged to be in poor to fair condition, which limits the rail speed to 10 MPH [miles per hour].“

Population
Demographics
Trends
Population/Demographics

Source: American Community Survey 2016
Population/Demographics

- **Population Density**
  - Study Area: 3,000 persons per square mile
  - New Jersey: 1,225 persons per square mile

- **Housing Density**
  - Study Area: 1,037 housing units per square mile
  - New Jersey: 484 housing units per square mile

Source: American Community Survey 2016
Population/Demographics

- **Population Increase**
  2010 – 2016:
  3%
  154,235 to 158,427 persons

- **Commuting:**
  - 80% by motor vehicle
  - 14% by public transit
  - 3% by foot or bicycle

*Source: American Community Survey 2016*  
*(29 census tracts w/in 2 miles)*
Population/Demographics

**Commuting Time Increase:**
From 2010 to 2016, mean travel time to work increased 8% (from 32 to 34.5 minutes)

**Predicted Population Increase:**
7% to 8% population predicted increase by 2045 (per NJTPA Population Forecasts)

Based on observed trends, it is reasonable to expect that mean travel time to work will continue to increase as population increases.
What could the potential greenway connect?
Southern Extent

▲ Existing Freight Operations/Staging

Proposed Hudson Bergen Light Rail with terminal station at Englewood Hospital
Northern Extent

Joseph B. Clarke Trail
Schools, Community Centers, & Local Businesses

- 20 Schools within a Half Mile
- 8 Libraries / Community Centers
- 6 Downtown/Business/Commercial Zones
Parks & Open Space

- ±200 acres direct access from study area
- ±1,000 acres within a half mile
What are the obstacles?
Street Crossings

17 Crossings:
• 5 Signalized
• 11 Unsignalized
• 1 Off-Road

● Crossing Roadway Jurisdiction:
• 8 County
• 9 Local
Street Crossing Types

- **7** Mid-Block Crossings
- **9** Parallel Roadway Crossings

[Map showing street crossing types with labels for ENGLEWOOD, TENAFLY, CRESSKILL, DEMAREST, CLOSTER, NORWOOD, NORTHVALE, and NY.]
Bridges & Culverts

6 Bridges

Steel Girders with Concrete Abutments

6 Culverts

Northern Valley Greenway | Technical Planning Assistance Summary
Anticipated Permits

- NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands Permit (N.J.A.C. 7:7A)
- NJDEP Flood Hazard Area Permit (N.J.A.C. 7:13)
- NJDEP Stormwater Management (N.J.A.C. 7:8)
- NJDEP NJ Pollution Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Construction Stormwater Discharge (N.J.A.C. 7:14A)
- NJDEP New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (N.J.A.C. 7:4)
- Bergen County Soil Conservation District
Floodplain/Riparian

NJDEP Flood Hazard Area Permit (N.J.A.C. 7:13)

- Required for disturbance to watercourses (Floodway, Floodplain, Riparian Zone)
- Riparian Zones will vary from 50 to 300 feet
Wetlands

NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands Permit (N.J.A.C. 7:7A)
- Required for disturbance to watercourses (Floodway, Floodplain, Riparian Zone)
- Impacts to be minimized
- Wetland mitigation (on-site, off-site, or via banking)
Utilities

- Buried Fiber Optic
- Overhead distribution lines
- Electrical substation (Orange & Rockland)
- Overhead pole-mounted transmission lines
- Electrical substation (Orange & Rockland)
Conceptual Alignment Assessment
Typical Cross Section Conditions

Condition 1: Full Width Available (60’)
Condition 2: Limited Constructible Width (<60’)
Condition 3: Limited Constrained Width (25’ – 35’)

Northern Valley Greenway | Technical Planning Assistance Summary
Typical Cross Section Conditions

**Condition 1: Full Width Available (60’)**

- Typical right-of-way width is 60’
- Generally flat with little or no evidence of poor drainage
- Generally free of encroachment by other uses
- Overhead utility poles may be located within right-of-way

±35% of Study Area

Example near Dean Park in Tenafly
Typical Cross Section Conditions

Condition 2: Limited Constructible Width (<60’)

±58% of Study Area

- Typical right-of-way width is 60’
- Variation in cross slope (up or down)
- Environmental factors (wetland or floodplain) may be present
- Right-of-way may be impacted by encroachment of other uses, such as parking
- Overhead utility poles may be located within right-of-way
Typical Cross Section Conditions

Condition 3: Limited Constrained Width (25’ – 35’)

- Typical right-of-way width is 25 - 35’
- Existing topography is generally lower than immediate surroundings

Example in Tenafly

- Right-of-way width is reduced by constructed features, such as buildings or retaining walls
- This condition is exhibited in Tenafly only
Concept Assessment

A: Greenway & Linear Park
B: Shared Use Path
C: Rail with Trail
Concept A
Greenway & Linear Park

- Vision developed by the Northern Valley Greenway Committee in consultation with the Municipalities, County, and extensive public outreach
- Robustly proportioned bicycle and pedestrian facilities to handle the expected heavy user volume from the community and surrounding areas
- Includes supporting facilities such as space for activity zones, park features, exercise stations, and emphasizes conservation (e.g. pollinator corridors)
- Enables joint strategies with local nature centers, area school systems, local health, wellness, educational and environmental organizations
Concept B
Shared Use Path

• Basic shared use path designed to meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines
• Shared treadway with a mix of travel speeds and modes among bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians
• Can be designed to account for future activity zones to be planned and developed independently

Middlesex Greenway in Woodbridge, NJ
Concept B
Rail with Trail

- Preserve existing rail operations and construct a shared use path within margins of existing right-of-way, as available
- Shared treadway with a mix of travel speeds and modes among bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians
- Cannot include activity zones in order to preserve rail operations
- Unclear what parties, if any, would have interest in utilizing the corridor for active rail operations (freight or passenger)
- Lack of a rail operator would invalidate this as a potential concept
Concept Assessment

Design Criteria & Expectations

- Vision expressed by Northern Valley Greenway Committee with public outreach;
  - Separate treadways,
    - Includes park features & furnishings

Common design; mobility-oriented, Park considerations in future

Utilitarian; No space for park considerations
# Concept Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Separation of Speeds</th>
<th>Level of Service</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best</td>
<td>Physical Separation</td>
<td>Highest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>No Physical Separation</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not meet</td>
<td>No Physical Separation</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Safety: Does not meet minimum AASHTO guidelines in highly constrained areas (may necessitate on-road alternatives).
- Separation of Speeds: No Physical Separation.
- Level of Service: Lowest.
## Concept Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Constructibility:</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>Layout Flexibility</td>
<td>Highest</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level of Difficulty</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Lowest</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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</table>
## Concept Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ADA Accessibility</strong></th>
<th><strong>Connectivity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Substandard Design Elements</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Issues Anticipated</td>
<td>Best; Most appeal for users of all ages, abilities, and intents</td>
<td>None Anticipated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Issues Anticipated</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>None Anticipated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Issues Anticipated</td>
<td>Poor - creates barrier preventing movement across</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Connectivity**:
  - Best; Most appeal for users of all ages, abilities, and intents
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
  - Very Good
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
  - Poor - creates barrier preventing movement across
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
  - Very Good
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
  - Poor - creates barrier preventing movement across
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
  - Very Good
  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated

- **ADA Accessibility**:
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  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Connectivity**:
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  - No Issues Anticipated

- **Substandard Design Elements**:
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- **ADA Accessibility**:
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  - No Issues Anticipated

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- **Substandard Design Elements**:
  - None Anticipated
Concept Assessment

Permits/Approvals
- NJDEP Individual Permits

Potential Wetland/Riparian Impacts
- Highest
  - Wetland: ±4 ac
  - Riparian: ±4 ac
- Lowest
  - Wetland: ±2 ac
  - Riparian: ±3 ac

Site Remediation Effort
- Highest
- Medium
- Lowest

Northern Valley Greenway | Technical Planning Assistance Summary
Potential Next Steps