

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Murphy Administration Advances Greenway Development Plans

11/30/2023

Two-Mile Segment of Former Rail Line in Newark and Kearny to be First Phase of the Greenway, a future Nine-Mile Linear State Park

TRENTON – A nine-mile former rail line through parts of Hudson and Essex counties is one step closer to becoming a new state park, Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette announced today. Following an extensive months-long public engagement process, the Murphy Administration is sharing the initial development and construction plans for the [Greenway](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://t.e2ma.net/click/bmxrik/nrdedit/v5hsu6;!!J30X0ZmC1o0tBA!MZsAVScB3b5gbnXhNikod2j1B1Tjb2Ko7Bmq12NkY7bw7KVpy3X04mEG3kd5R-3tRTsG3VCQs). The first phase of the multimillion-dollar project will be focused on a nearly two-mile span through Newark, Essex County, and Kearny, Hudson County.

As part of a phased development approach for the Greenway, the Newark-Kearny segment will directly serve the 350,000 residents of the two municipalities, and more in the surrounding area. The project is a catalyst for environmental improvements and economic development, expanding access to green, open space, increasing transportation and recreation opportunities, and improving stormwater management and air quality. The DEP expects to break ground in early 2024, with the first segment anticipated to open to the public in late 2025.

"Connecting communities in one of the most densely populated regions in the nation, the Greenway will serve as nothing short of a game-changer for cities across Essex and Hudson Counties," said **Governor Phil Murphy**. "Upon completion, this monumental project will increase recreation, transportation, and economic development opportunities for hundreds of thousands of New Jersey residents and visitors. Just as importantly, it will considerably expand access to green, open space – and its associated environmental and public health benefits – for environmental justice communities across North Jersey."

"Today's announcement to begin the Greenway's construction in Newark and Kearny brings us one step closer to making this new state park a reality," said **Commissioner LaTourette**. "Converting this abandoned rail line into a thriving recreation and transportation corridor will bring people and communities together to enjoy the environment we share. Such a significant undertaking is only possible with the support and collaboration of the host communities, and we thank the residents and leaders of Newark and Kearny for their partnership."

The Newark-Kearny segment is composed of three project areas. The western section will span from Branch Brook Park to Broadway in Newark. The central section, in Kearny, will begin at Passaic Avenue and go through Forest Street. The eastern section, also in Kearny, will start at Forest Street and run east to the Meadowlands' edge.

The DEP plans to develop the Newark-Kearny segment through a series of connected experiences, focusing on a combination of active and passive recreation opportunities. This stretch has the potential for both scenic overlooks and community hubs that leverage existing vistas and space availability to create a one-of-a-kind amenity for both the surrounding community and visitors.

One of the overlooks would provide visitors with a glimpse into the natural environment of the Meadowlands and views of the Manhattan skyline. In Newark, DEP could develop an active urban community hub for recreation and games, a vibrant playground, and amenities to support playing all day.

The DEP and its consultants evaluated each segment based on a number of factors that included environmental, public access and economic development needs, as well as the capability to begin work quickly. The Newark and Kearny segments scored high in this evaluation. The next steps include preliminary design work, securing necessary state permits and continuing to gather public feedback.

"It has been my goal to see this innovative and inspired land-use project become a reality. Every phase should be celebrated so we do not lose sight of the long-term economic development, conservation, environmental justice, recreation and transportation benefits the Greenway project holds for residents of Essex County," said **Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**.

"I want to thank Governor Murphy for putting the state's resources behind the initiative to create the Essex-Hudson Greenway and preserve this nine-mile ribbon as open space. Making the abandoned railway accessible for public use and recreation will be a tremendous benefit for our residents," said **Joseph N. DiVincenzo Jr., Essex County Executive**.

"As one of the earliest and most ardent supporters of the Greenway, I could not be more excited to see it moving forward," said **Essex County Commissioner At-Large Brendan Gill**. "This project represents a historic investment in conservation infrastructure and will provide needed outdoor recreation and open space in one of our most densely populated and developed areas, but it is about much more than that. New Jersey is one of the most segregated states in the country. By connecting these diverse communities, the Greenway will connect people who might not otherwise come together. When someone bicycles from Newark to Montclair in an afternoon, or strolls from Jersey City into Secaucus, they get to be part of a community larger than the single town in which they live. That's what this project is about."

"Connectivity has historically been at the center of Newark's success as a transportation hub and as a thriving city. The Greenway is about connections. It will ultimately tie together eight Hudson and Essex County communities formerly connected by rail and about to be connected once more through recreation, relaxation, and natural beauty," said **City of Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka**. "For Newark residents, the Hudson-Essex Greenway will be an exciting new recreational opportunity as we build a more sustainable city."

Greenway Background

When completed, the Greenway will connect eight Essex and Hudson county communities – Jersey City, Secaucus, Kearny, Newark, Belleville, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, and Montclair. It represents an opportunity to create a linear multi-modal recreational and transit corridor enabling seamless walking, biking and transit opportunities between Montclair and Jersey City, while providing opportunities for community connection and regional environmental improvements.

Governor Phil Murphy announced the acquisition of the Greenway in September 2022. Since then, the DEP – along with its interagency partners at the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, NJ TRANSIT, and New Jersey Department of Transportation – has been working to bring this once-in-a-generation project to life. The initial development and construction of the Greenway will be funded through a combination of state and federal appropriations.

"It is thrilling to share the initial development plans for the first almost two-mile span of the Greenway," said **John Cecil, Assistant Commissioner for State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites**. "Once complete, residents living in the two most densely populated counties in New Jersey will have access to green space that will not only allow them to experience nature, but also provide an alternate transportation route through their communities."

Design Element Themes: Relax, Gather, Play, Connect

Through the initial planning process, DEP and its consultants engaged with community stakeholders through a variety of public engagement sessions at locations including a roller rink in Branch Brook Park, a farmer's market in Bloomfield, and on the Greenway itself in Newark. These public engagement sessions were centered around four themes: relax, gather, play and connect.

Back to top

Community members used three-dimensional models of the Greenway to design and build their vision for the future state park, offered their opinions on elements to include and exclude from the Greenway, and had opportunities to ask questions and voice concerns about the project to DEP staff and consultants.

"What was once seen as impossible is becoming a reality," **said Dene Lee, Vice President of Land for the Open Space Institute.** "After decades of community efforts to create much needed greenspace in this densely populated region, it is tremendously gratifying to see the seeds of the Greenway starting to take shape in tangible ways. We congratulate Governor Murphy, the entire team at NJ DEP, and the legions of dedicated Greenway supporters who never gave up who today are building something wonderful and transformative for the people of northern New Jersey."

"The construction of these initial segments of the Greenway is a truly exciting milestone in a project that has been eagerly awaited by our communities," **said Debra Kagan, Executive Director of New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition.** "They will give us working examples of the many benefits that the completed Greenway will offer. They are the first steps in a project that will connect communities and offer countless New Jerseyans access to green spaces, alternative forms of transportation, and new economic opportunities."

"The Greenway is that rare project that has the promise to weave together economic and community development, alongside unparalleled opportunities for recreation and the enjoyment of our environment," **said Evan Weiss, President and CEO of the Newark Alliance.** "We thank Newark's champions, including those at the state level, for getting this done."

"The opening of the Greenway is more than just a walk or a bike-ride, it's a journey through the heart of New Jersey's natural beauty and urban vitality. The Greenway creates much needed open space access in the most densely populated area of the most densely populated state in the nation. The Essex-Hudson Greenway connects our communities and our environment to one another, offering a path towards a more sustainable, equitable, and vibrant future for all," **said Jennifer M. Coffey, Executive Director of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions.**

To learn more about the project or submit a comment on any of the four themes, visit dep.nj.gov/greenway (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/bmxrik/nrddit/byisu6_!!J30X0ZmC1oQtbAlMZsAVScB3b5gbnXhNlKod2j1B1Tjb2Ko7Bmq12NkY7bw7KVpy3XQ4mEG3kd45R-3tR6BwLWfS). Comments will be accepted until Dec. 17, 2023. To sign up for email updates about the Greenway, go to dep.nj.gov/greenway/#signup (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/bmxrik/nrddit/rqjsu6_!!J30X0ZmC1oQtbAlMZsAVScB3b5gbnXhNlKod2j1B1Tjb2Ko7Bmq12NkY7bw7KVpy3XQ4mEG3kd45R-3tfQVp2CdS).

Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](/governor/)

Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about\)](/governor/admin/about)

[Lt. Governor Tahesha Way \(/governor/admin/lt\)](/governor/admin/lt)

[In memoriam of Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt-sheila-y-oliver\)](/governor/admin/lt-sheila-y-oliver)

[Senior Staff \(/governor/admin/staff\)](/governor/admin/staff)

[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet\)](/governor/admin/cabinet)

[Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy \(/governor/climateaction/\)](/governor/climateaction/)

[Office of Equity \(/governor/admin/equity/\)](/governor/admin/equity/)

[Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency \(/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml\)](/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca\)](/governor/admin/bca)

[New Jersey Puerto Rico Commission \(https://www.nj.gov/puertoricocommission/\)](https://www.nj.gov/puertoricocommission/)

[Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](/governor/admin/internship.shtml)

[Governor's Fellows Program \(/governor/admin/fellows\)](/governor/admin/fellows)

[Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](http://drumthwacket.org/)

Key Initiatives

[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economy)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)

[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](/governor/initiatives/#Environment)

[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)

[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

News & Events

[Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562023/approved/news_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/news/562023/approved/news_archive.shtml)

[Photos \(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy\)](https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy)

[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/news/addresses)

[Executive Orders \(/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html\)](/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

[Administrative Orders \(/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/appointments)

[Advice and Consent Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/acappointments)

[Statements on Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press\)](/governor/news/press)

Social

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/\)](https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)

[Twitter \(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy\)](https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)

[Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/\)](https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)

[Snapchat \(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy\)](https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

[YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice\)](https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)

Contact Us

[Scheduling Requests \(/governor/contact/scheduling/\)](/governor/contact/scheduling/)

[Contact Us \(/governor/contact/all/\)](/governor/contact/all/)

Statewide

[NJ Home \(/www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)

[Services A to Z \(/www.nj.gov/njgov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/njgov/njgov/alphaserv.html)

[Departments/Agencies \(/www.nj.gov/njgov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/njgov/deptserv/)

[FAQs \(/www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](http://www.nj.gov/faqs/)

[Contact Us \(/www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)

[Privacy Notice \(/www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)

[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(/www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)

[Accessibility Statement \(/www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)

[\(/nj.gov/opra/\)](http://nj.gov/opra/)

[\(https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login\)](https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login)

[\(https://tech.nj.gov/\)](https://tech.nj.gov/)