

Chester Valley Trail Extension Project - Frequently Asked Questions

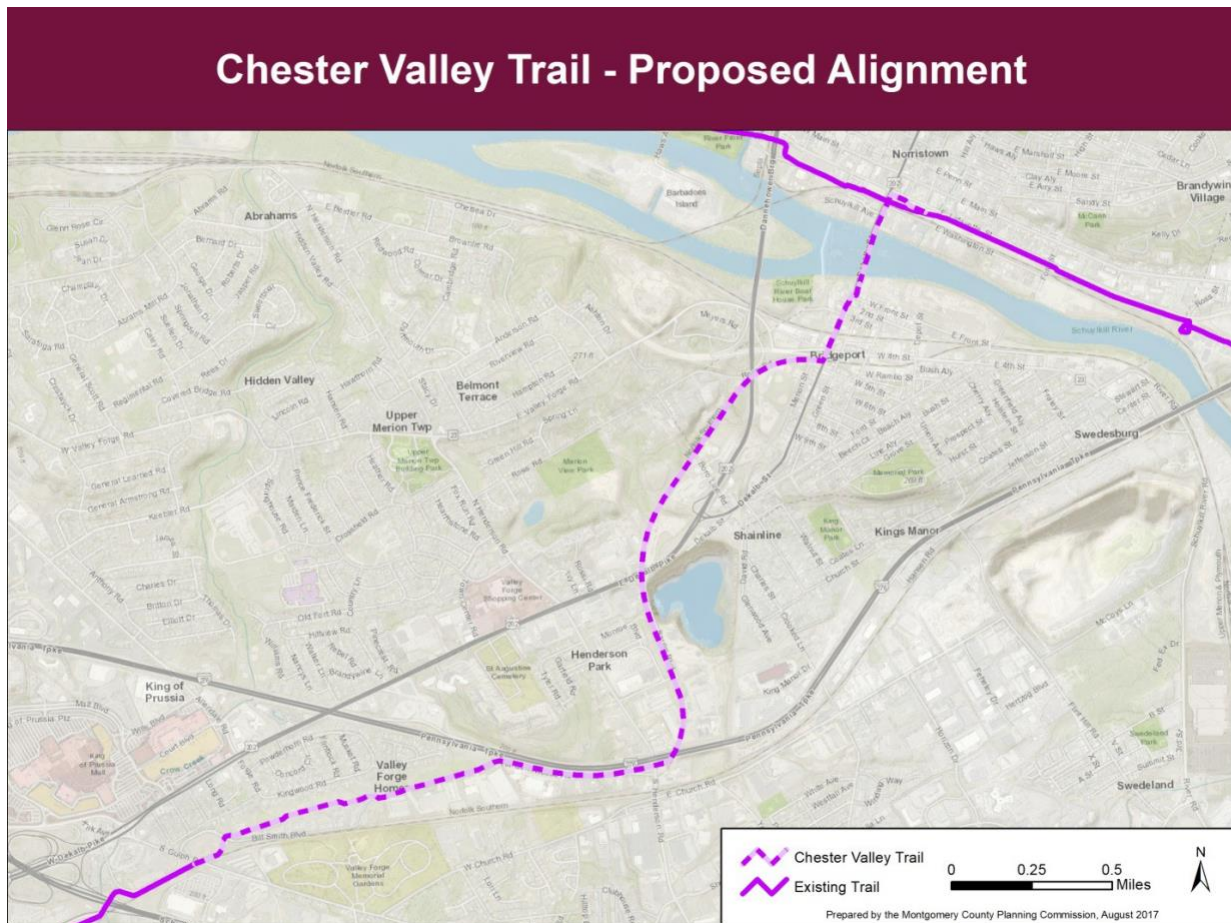
Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

What is the Chester Valley Trail?

The Chester Valley Trail is a planned multi-use trail from Downingtown to Norristown. Work on the Chester Valley Trail has been ongoing since 1991 when representatives from Montgomery County, Chester County, and PennDOT first envisioned it. To date, more than 14.5 miles of trail have been completed linking King of Prussia to Exton. The majority of the Chester Valley Trail has been built along the old Chester Valley Railroad, a branch of the Reading Railroad which ended freight service at the turn of the century.

What is the Chester Valley Trail Extension?

The Chester Valley Trail Extension is a planned 3.8-mile extension of the Chester Valley Trail. It will link the existing 14.5-mile portion of the Chester Valley Trail to the Schuylkill River Trail in Norristown. The trail will be constructed to be 10-12 feet wide with an asphalt or concrete surface.



Chester Valley Trail Extension Project - Frequently Asked Questions

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

Who will be allowed to use the trail?

The Chester Valley Trail Extension will be a multi-use trail designed for pedestrians and cyclists. It will serve as both a recreation trail as well as an important commuter link providing safe access to public transit, residential areas, and employment centers.



What is the regional significance of this project?

The Chester Valley Trail is part of “the Circuit,” a planned 750-mile network of trails throughout greater Philadelphia. Not every trail in the region is part of the Circuit; Circuit trails tend to be larger, off-road, multi-use trails that serve both recreation and transportation purposes.

The Chester Valley Trail Extension will connect the two most heavily used Circuit trails and will pass close to major residential and commercial centers, including the King of Prussia Mall and the Village at Valley Forge. Trail counts at nearby locations on the Schuylkill River Trail and the Chester Valley Trail have recorded approximately 1,000 users per day and 650 users per day, respectively. We anticipate daily use of the Chester Valley Trail Extension to fall somewhere within this range.

More information about the Circuit is available at <http://www.circuittrails.org/>

What are the benefits of trails?

When complete, the Circuit Trail Network will be one of the nation’s premier urban trail networks and will provide multiple benefits to our neighborhoods, communities, and the region. Numerous studies have indicated that trails lead to increased pedestrian and bicycle safety, improved public health, reduced air pollution emissions, increased nearby property values, and increased consumer spending in nearby communities.

Who is the project sponsor? How is the trail being funded?

The Chester Valley Trail Extension is a Montgomery County project. The engineering design phase of the trail is being managed by the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

The trail is being funded several different ways. Engineering and construction phase design services

Chester Valley Trail Extension Project - Frequently Asked Questions

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

are being funded using a combination of county, private foundation, and state funds. Right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and construction are funded by the Federal Highway Administration's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Montgomery County.

What is the total planned cost of construction? Who are the key members of the construction team?

Total construction cost is \$13,045,555.

The primary contractor is Allen Myers, headquartered in Worcester, PA.

The construction manager/inspector is JBC Associates, based in King of Prussia, PA.

How will the trail cross major roads?

The Chester Valley Trail Extension will utilize both at-grade (ground level) and grade separated (trail bridge) road crossings. The trail will cross over South Gulph Road, Henderson Road, and Boro Line Road on bridges only open to trail users.

At-grade crossings will include Bill Smith Boulevard, Saulin Boulevard, E Dekalb Pike (US 202), 5th Street/Ross Road, E Valley Forge Road (PA 23), and Falls View Drive/Dekalb Street. Bill Smith Boulevard, Saulin Boulevard, and 5th Street/Ross Road will be mid-block crossings, meaning the trail will not cross at an existing intersection. These crossings will be identified using signage, pavement markings, and rapid flashing beacons to alert motorists. E Dekalb Pike (US 202), E Valley Forge Road (PA 23), and Falls View Drive/Dekalb Street are existing signalized intersections where the trail will cross through the intersection. Each intersection will be redesigned to accommodate the trail.

How will traffic patterns between Bridgeport and Norristown be affected?

In order to cross the Schuylkill River, the trail will utilize the existing Dekalb Street Bridge between Bridgeport and Norristown.

Under the current configuration, southbound traffic on Dekalb Street is restricted to one lane leaving Norristown as the road passes under the SEPTA rail bridge. The road then widens to two lanes prior to crossing the bridge.

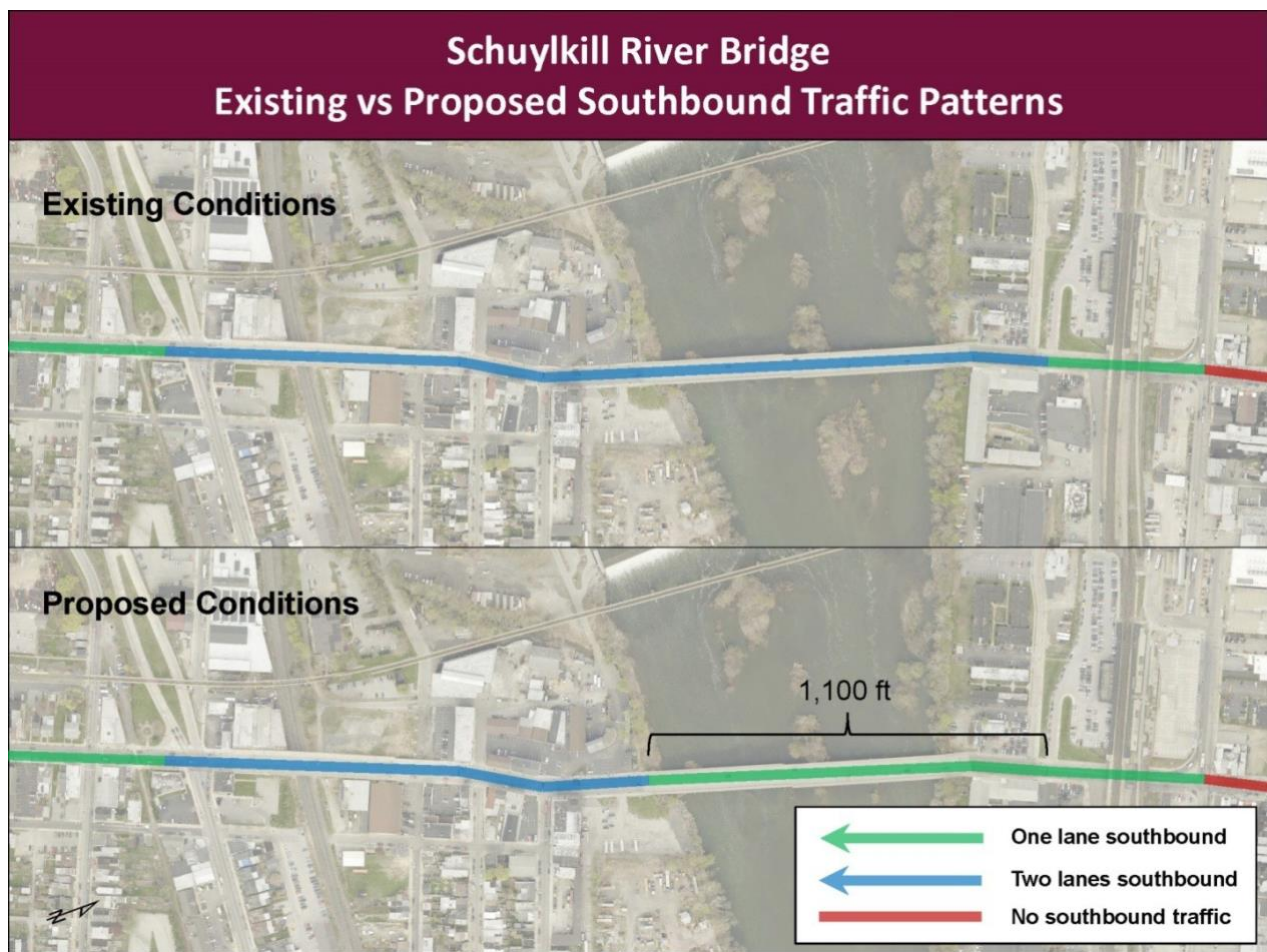
As part of the Lafayette Street Extension Project, the single southbound lane will be narrowed to 11' as it passes below the SEPTA rail bridge. This is to accommodate a new dedicated right hand turn lane onto Lafayette Street designed to alleviate northbound traffic congestion.

Chester Valley Trail Extension Project - Frequently Asked Questions

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

As part of the Chester Valley Trail Extension project, this 11' lane will widen to 13' after passing under the SEPTA rail bridge and southbound traffic will be held to one lane for an additional 1,100 feet over the bridge before expanding to two lanes prior to the intersection with Front Street. This configuration will allow the eastern (downstream) sidewalk across the bridge to be widened to accommodate the trail.

The intersection with Front Street and Falls View Drive will be upgraded and realigned to allow the signal to operate more efficiently. Northbound traffic through Bridgeport and across the bridge will remain as two lanes.



Chester Valley Trail Extension Project - Frequently Asked Questions

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission

Has PennDOT been involved in the development of the proposed traffic configuration through Bridgeport?

Yes. Originally the county proposed extending the one lane condition southbound through the Front Street intersection to Second Street and the start of the Norfolk Southern bridge which has previously been retrofitted to accommodate the trail. This would have allowed for even greater pedestrian and streetscape improvements between Front Street and Second Street.

PennDOT's Traffic Unit reviewed this concept and provided concurrence in March 2015.

Based on coordination with members of Bridgeport's Borough Council in 2016, the county performed new traffic counts and adjusted the projected growth assumptions to reflect the proposed Bridgeview Townhomes development and the Lafayette Street Extension project. The traffic analyses were revised and resubmitted to PennDOT's Traffic Unit.

In February 2017, PennDOT determined that, unless you restrict left turns onto Second Street, the existing two lane southbound condition between Front Street and the Norfolk Southern bridge should be maintained. They also determined the one lane southbound condition across the Schuylkill River Bridge is acceptable

How will the Chester Valley Trail Extension be managed once completed?

The Chester Valley Trail Extension will be managed by the Montgomery County Parks, Trails, and Historic Sites division. Maintenance practices include litter pickup, vegetation management, and regular safety patrols, among other tasks.

More information about the Parks, Trails, & Historic Sites division is available at <http://www.montcopa.org/31/Parks-Trails-Historic-Sites>

When will trail construction be completed?

Construction of the Chester Valley Trail Extension is scheduled for completion in the 4th Quarter of 2022.