



## JOHNSON TROLLEY TRAIL 2024 CORRIDOR STUDY

# PROJECT FACT SHEET

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Johnson Trolley Trail Corridor Study will identify an alignment to connect and extend two existing trail segments that will create a bicycle and pedestrian corridor between the City of Trenton and the Municipality of Princeton, and pass through Lawrence and Ewing Townships. A substantial element of the project is to investigate the historic rail right-of-way and alternative alignments to connect a safe multimodal facility to existing and planned facilities.

Goals of the project are to link areas of high economic distress with areas of increasing economic opportunity, and connect high-density residential, commercial, and institutional areas with preserved open space, parkland, and the existing Circuit Trails network.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Johnson Trolley Trail is part of the Circuit Trail Coalition's network of trails and currently has two disconnected segments. One segment extends 2.4 miles in Ewing Township and Lawrence Township along the historic Johnson Trolley corridor between Spruce Street (CR 613) onto the Rider University campus. North of Rider University and I-295, a segment of the Johnson Trolley Trail extends nearly one mile from Denow Road to Phillips Avenue in Lawrenceville.

### BACKGROUND

In 2013, WSP USA was contracted by Lawrence Township, utilizing funding from a Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) grant, to conduct a feasibility study that evaluated engineering alternatives for connecting the northern and southern sections of the existing Johnson Trolley Line. A Final Report was submitted in June 2014. In 2021, Mercer County funded an update of the preferred alternative. Mercer County's Circuit Trails Action Team has since been negotiating with NJDOT on long-term maintenance responsibility for this potential crossing.



Source: WSP

### CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES

The abandoned Johnson Trolley Line formerly connected Trenton to Princeton and carried passengers on the line into the 1930s. At its peak in 1921, it provided over 1.6 million trips. Local freight service continued to operate until 1973, when the new interstate cut off access to the line. While in operation and in the intervening years, the area has experienced residential, commercial, and institutional growth. Currently, there are 98,000 people living within one mile of the corridor and 76,000 people working within one mile of the corridor. Mercer County's two largest private employers, Princeton University and Bristol Myers Squibb, are located within one mile of the historic rail corridor. Educational institutions within one mile of the corridor include Rider University, The College of New Jersey, Princeton Theological Seminary, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Lawrenceville School, The Hun School, Princeton International School for Mathematics and Science, Notre Dame High School, and numerous other public and private grade schools.

The area is also home to several prominent regional trails, including the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park Trail, the Lawrence Hopewell Trail, and through several miles of trails located within the vast 1,600-acre Mercer Meadows.

The proposed Johnson Trolley Trail Corridor would create an important missing link and act as a spine linking other existing multimodal connectors. This spine would connect disadvantaged communities to employment opportunities, educational institutions, and local open spaces and parks. It would also allow for safer off-road connections between educational institutions and allow students the ability to travel without requiring motorized transportation and would connect the many residential, retail, and employment nodes of the County. By increasing the availability of safe alternatives to traditional motor vehicle transportation, the proposed corridor also decreases risks from carbon-fuel-based emissions, improving community health.

### WHO IS LEADING THIS PROJECT?

This project is funded by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and sponsored by the Mercer County Planning Department, with active participation by staff of the City of Trenton, Ewing and Lawrence Townships, and the Municipality of Princeton, as well as representatives from the Lawrence Hopewell Trail. WSP USA is the project's lead consultant, with Stokes Creative Group and Michael Baker International operating as sub-consultants.

### Schedule





# PROJECT FACT SHEET

## Johnson Trolley Trail Corridor Study Area

