

Recommendation Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: July 20, 2022

Prepared by: Christina Norland, Chairperson, Trails & Sidewalks Committee

Recommendation: A RESOLUTION OF THE KENNETT TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR AND COMMITMENT TO THE CHANDLER MILL GREENWAY PROJECT, AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION TO THE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION FUND PROGRAM AS THE APPLICANT AND GRANTEE, REQUESTING GRANT FUNDING FROM THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATING OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE ASSOCIATED GRANT DOCUMENTS.

Background:

This recommendation is with regards to the Chandler Mill Greenway, an 8,000 linear foot section of the Kennett Greenway along Chandler Mill Road and the west branch of the Red Clay Creek. When completed, the Kennett Greenway will be a 14-mile trail loop connecting five municipalities across two states, 10+ parks and preserves and over 1500 acres of preserved open space. The Greenway's goal is to provide accessible, multimodal transportation options to the entire Kennett community, to connect residents and visitors to each other, to community assets and to the beautiful open space and natural landscapes that the Township has preserved over the last 20 years. The Township has consistently centered an environmentally thoughtful approach with respect to design of the Greenway, including by hiring Biohabitats, a leader in ecological restoration and placemaking, as its prime trail consultant.

Over the last two years, the Township and its trails consultants have been diligently working to complete the design of the Chandler Mill Greenway. Multiple design options were considered and vetted publicly, including one lane road options and on-road advisory shoulders. During 2021 alone, there were 14 public engagement sessions, including a public survey, open house events, Trails and Sidewalks Committee and Board of Supervisor and community meetings, and a pilot project along Chandler Mill Road with an associated survey.

In June 2021, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the trail consultants to move forward with a final design, specifically the retrofit of Chandler Mill Road to include a physically separated 6' roadside path and a 2' vegetated buffer (4' along curves) installed adjacent to the existing edge of the roadway, two way vehicular and bicycle traffic, bicycle enhancements, ADA compliance for pedestrians, traffic calming, and roadside embankment improvements to incorporate the path and eliminate the threat of roadway washouts. Since that decision, the trails consultants have been completing the final engineering of the Chandler Mill Greenway.

The consultants expect to complete the final design documentation by September 2022 and obtain all required permits by March 2023. Subsequently, the project would go out to bid with construction beginning in the spring of 2023. The current cost estimate of the project, due to

rising construction costs and the extensive roadway stabilization included in the project, is \$5.5 million.

Current Matter:

At its June 7, 2022, meeting, the Kennett Township Trails & Sidewalk Committee discussed the status of the Chandler Mill Greenway and agreed unanimously that they are in favor of Kennett Township pursuing a Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant in the amount of \$1.5 million to go towards construction costs for the Chandler Mill Greenway.

The proposed resolution is included with this recommendation.

KENNETT TOWNSHIP

CHANDLER MILL GREENWAY PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT FACTS

Location: Kennett Township, Chester County

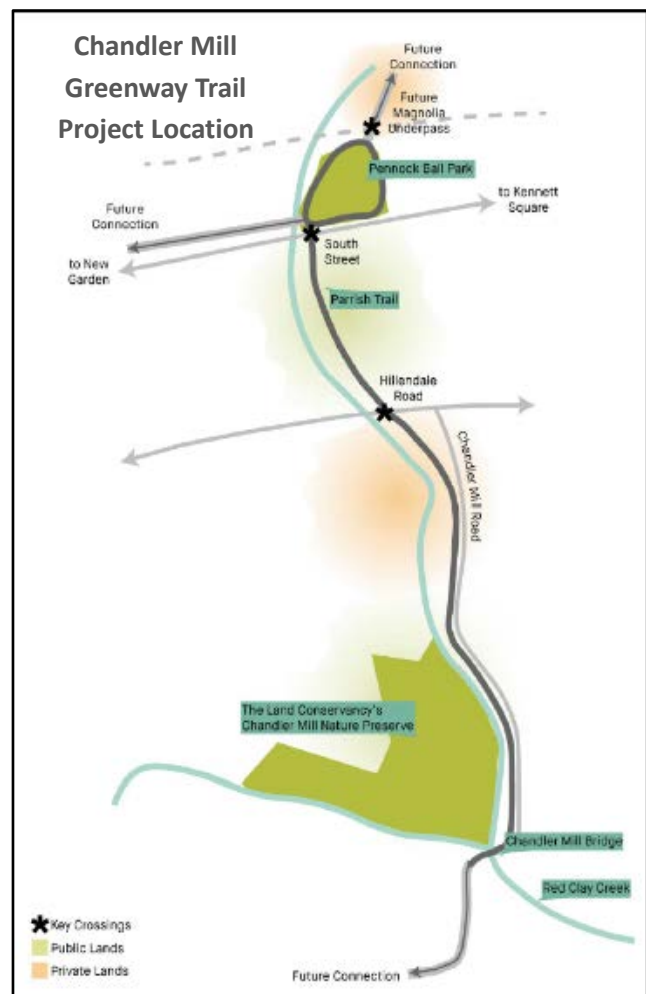
Overview: Construction of an 8,000 linear foot segment of the Kennett Greenway on Chandler Mill Road along the West Branch of the Red Clay Creek, which will improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety, stabilize existing infrastructure and promoting greater connectivity to nature, neighborhoods and amenities throughout the region.

CFA MTF Grant Request: \$1,500,000

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Kennett Township (Township) is located in southern Chester County and encompasses approximately 15.6 square miles of land area. The Township has prioritized developing its active transportation network in order to offer residents and visitors an extensive network of paths, streetscapes, bridges, and shared lanes. Most notably, over the past decade, the Township and its neighboring municipal partners have advanced the Kennett Greenway. When completed, the Kennett Greenway will be 14+ miles of continuous accessible trails spanning five municipalities in two states, consisting of 1,500+ acres of open space, containing 10+ parks and preserves, and connecting 16,000 Kennett residents.

The Kennett Greenway will provide enhanced recreational opportunities and key connections to area residents and visitors to the region. The vast majority of the Greenway work to date has involved acquiring the open space necessary to complete the Greenway loop as well as advancing the planning and engineering of various segments. The Township's current focus is on completing a key western segment of the Kennett Greenway located along scenic Chandler Mill Road and the west branch of the Red Clay Creek.



KENNETT TOWNSHIP

CHANDLER MILL GREENWAY PROJECT

Chandler Mill Greenway Project

The Township is now working to advance the Chandler Mill Greenway Project (Project) to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and promote needed connectivity through the region. The Project will construct an 8,000 linear



foot path and bicycle-friendly facilities on Chandler Mill Road along the West Branch of the Red Clay Creek. The Project will redesign Chandler Mill Road for increased safety by reconfiguring the road and implementing traffic calming measures, provide effective and safe ADA compliant zones along the road intersections and build ADA complaint rest stops for people to enjoy the surrounding nature. The Project will offer a two to four foot native vegetated buffer between the path and Chandler Mill Road. ***In addition, the Project will directly facilitate safe pedestrian and bicyclist connections between Kennett Borough and Kennett Township, including residents in Falcon's Lair, Round Hill and Hartefeld residential areas who cannot currently safely connect to everyday destinations or local nature without a car.*** The Project will provide increased access and visibility to the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance's 45-acre Chandler Mill Nature Preserve, which contains another 1.5 miles of nature trails. **Importantly, the project will address long-term infrastructure and maintenance issues by stabilizing Chandler Mill Road against ongoing streambank erosion along its western edge** and reinvigorate the natural creek landscape through removing invasives and planting riparian buffers and native understory and canopy trees.

The proposed Project directly furthers the development of the Kennett Greenway, whose mission is to “connect the Kennett community to its natural beauty while promoting health, safety, a respect for the environment and a sense of community.” The Greenway accomplishes this mission through its goals of connecting residents and visitors to each other and to community assets; connecting to nature; enhancing the community while preserving and healing natural resources; promoting health, safety, environmental stewardship and community; and inclusive and equitable design, operation, and programming.

PREVIOUS EFFORTS AND FUNDING REQUEST

In 2017, the Township was awarded a Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) Grant in the amount of \$1.7 million make significant trailway improvements, including the rehabilitation of the National Historic Chandler Mill Bridge and associated trail construction. The rehabilitation of the bridge was completed in 2021, however, due to the breadth of the required roadway stabilization and rising construction costs, the construction of the Chandler Mill Greenway is anticipated to significantly exceed the remaining funds available from the 2017 award. As a result, the Township intends to request an MTF grant in the amount of \$1.5 million from the CFA to be used towards advancing the Project, estimated at \$5.5 million.

**KENNETT TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

RESOLUTION 2022-11

A RESOLUTION OF THE KENNETT TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR AND COMMITMENT TO THE CHANDLER MILL GREENWAY TRAIL PROJECT, AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION TO THE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION FUND PROGRAM AS THE APPLICANT AND GRANTEE, REQUESTING GRANT FUNDING FROM THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATING OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE ASSOCIATED GRANT DOCUMENTS.

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, over the past several years, Kennett Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania (the “Township”) has advanced improvements to restore the Chandler Mill bridge and construct the Chandler Mill Greenway Trail; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Township was awarded One Million Seven Hundred Thousand (\$1,700,000.00) in Multimodal Transportation Funds to rehabilitate the Chandler Mill Bridge and complete trail construction in the same area; and

WHEREAS, rehabilitation of the Chandler Mill Bridge is complete, however, construction of the Chandler Mill Greenway Trail is anticipated to significantly exceed the remaining funds available from the 2017 award; and

WHEREAS, Township staff and representatives desire to submit an additional application to the Multimodal Transportation Fund Program (“MTF”), a grant program administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (“DCED”) under the direction of the Commonwealth Financing Authority (“CFA”); and

WHEREAS, construction of the Chandler Mill Greenway Trail (the “Project”) includes the construction of an 8,000 linear foot trail parallel to Chandler Mill Road, including traffic calming features, ADA compliant zones, and public safety signage; and

WHEREAS, the Project is multimodal in nature and will improve safety for trail walkers, bicyclists, and motorists;

WHEREAS, the MTF grant program requires a resolution formally requesting the grant, defining the project, designating officials to execute all documents, and identifying the grant amount requested.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Kennett Township Board of Supervisors, as follows:

1. The above recitals are incorporated herein by reference.
2. The Township hereby supports the Project and the preparation and submission of an MTF grant application for the Project, whereby the Township will serve as the Applicant and Grantee.
3. The Township hereby requests an MTF grant in the amount of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) from the CFA to be used towards advancing the Project.
4. In addition to MTF grant funds, the Township shall seek additional local, state and federal funding sources toward the Project.
5. Should the MTF grant be awarded by the CFA, and accepted by the Township, the Township pledges to provide any matching funds necessary for the Project’s completion.
6. The provisions of this resolution shall be severable, and if any of its provisions shall be held unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality, or invalidity shall not affect the validity of any of the remaining provisions of this resolution.
7. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.
8. All other resolutions or parts of resolutions inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

RESOLVED, this 20th day of July 2022.

ATTEST:

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
KENNETT TOWNSHIP**

**Eden R. Ratliff
Township Manager**

Dr. Richard L. Leff

Scudder G. Stevens

Geoffrey Gamble, Esq.

CERTIFICATION

I, _____, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Kennett Township Board of Supervisors at a meeting held July 20, 2022.

Eden R. Ratliff, Township Secretary