

# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Adopted July 2022

*Adopted by Resolution 2022-15 on July 12, 2022*



*Financial assistance for this Project comes in part from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.*

## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to all the representatives of Union City Borough and members of the Project Steering Committee who participated in preparing this Trail Town Plan.

Steering Committee members were actively involved throughout this planning process. They participated in several Steering Committee meetings, answered questions, shared their knowledge of local conditions and provided quality input and guidance as the Plan was being prepared.

The Steering Committee is credited with identifying potential Trail Routes and Trail facilities and amenities, and for bringing together and evaluating different types of information and input to help create the French Creek Trail.

### **Project Steering Committee Members**

Cindy Wells – Union City Borough Manager & Union City Pride

Natalie Wilmoth – Union City Borough Mayor

Matthew Joyce – Union City Borough Council – Parks Liaison

Damon Piper – Union City Parks & Recreation Committee

Lynora Rumm – McLane Church and Union City Parks & Recreation Committee

Diane Bowes – Union City Community Foundation

Tami Green – Union City Pride & George Fox Insurance

Doug Still – Union City Borough Resident

Melinda Meyers – Erie County Planning and Preservation Erie

Abbe Biebel – Positive Youth Development, Union City Community Foundation and Citizen of Union City

Joy Fronzoli – Planning Program Administrator, Environment and Recreation, Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development

Vi Gilson – AHN Saint Vincent Outpatient Center Union City

Erin Wiley Moyers – Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC)

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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Union City Borough wishes to thank the Planning Consultants for their efforts on this Project.



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The EADS Group, Inc. is a multi-disciplined planning, engineering, architecture, and design firm. Mark has over 22 years' experience with preparing Master Site Development Plans, Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plans, Trail Studies, Complete Streets Policies and Active Transportation Plans, Corridor Plans as well as County and Municipal

Comprehensive Plans, Land Ordinances and Recreation Plans. Mark is also an experienced grant writer. He has recently supported several communities to obtain funding through the Multimodal Transportation Fund and Transportation Enhancement Programs, PA WalkWorks, DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Programs

(C2P2) and the DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) for recreation area planning and development projects. He takes an active role in all of our public participation efforts and in preparing GIS mapping products. Learn more at <https://www.eadsgroup.com>



**Tracy Frampton, Senior Planner/Marketing Representative, The EADS Group, Inc.**

Tracy has worked on a number of community development and recreation related planning projects, including the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan in Union City Borough and Phase I and II of the

Caflich Park Improvement Projects. He has extensive experience in successfully applying for and administering a wide variety of recreation and trail related grant programs. Mr. Frampton currently

serves as the Chairman of the Slippery Rock Township Planning Commission. Learn more at <https://www.eadsgroup.com>



**Barbara J. Hauge, P.L.A., ASLA, GIP, UpStreet Architects**

Barb is a Pennsylvania Registered Landscape Architect with UpStreet Architects, Inc. Her designs include public and private landscapes, commercial designs as well as meadows, gathering spaces, educational gardens, and play spaces. She has over 20 years of experience and her expertise includes native plant designs, tree and plant selection, rain gardens and community planning. She serves on the

boards of The Allegheny Arboretum, C&I Trail Council, and the League of Women Voters of Indiana County. Barb's love of connecting with people has evolved into community engagement for planning initiatives as municipalities plan for new projects and grant applications. In addition to degrees in Horticulture (Penn State) and Landscape Architecture (City College of New York), Barb is also an ISA

(International Society of Arboriculture) Certified Arborist and a Green Infrastructure Professional (GIP) with the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program. Barb is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), PA-DE Chapter and serves on their Communications Committee. Learn more at <https://www.upstreetarchitects.com>

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# **INTRODUCTION**

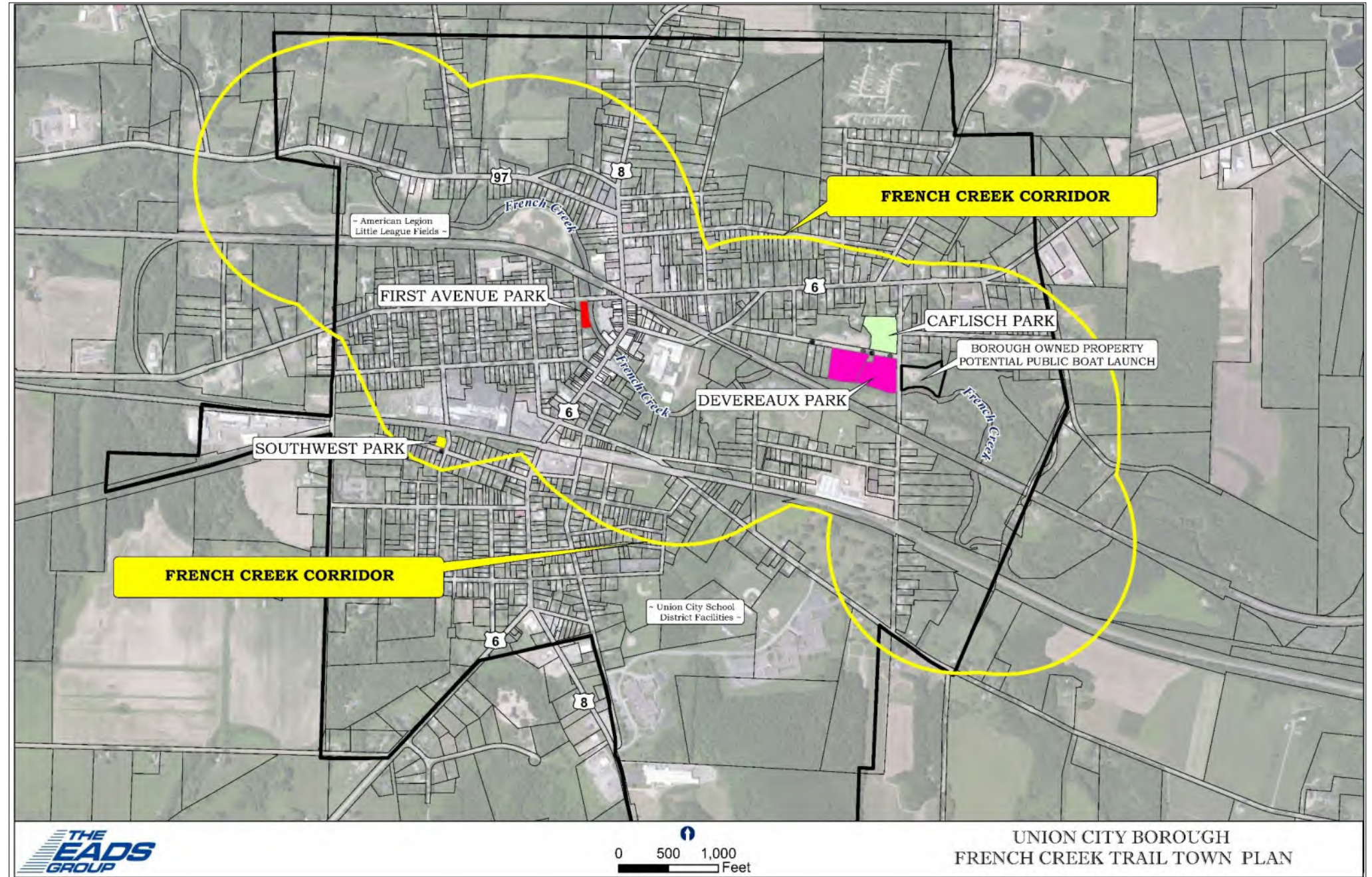
## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

Union City Borough is located approximately twenty-two (22) miles southeast of the City of Erie, which is the county seat along the shore of Lake Erie. Unlike the lakeshore municipalities, Union City Borough is located within the French Creek Watershed, specifically the South Branch French Creek Greenway. The South Branch French Creek flows for approximately 1.25 miles between Devereaux Park on the eastern side of the Borough and the American Legion Little League Fields located on the western side of the Borough. For purposes of this Plan, the French Creek Corridor is defined as extending for approximately 0.25 miles out from French Creek. The map to the right shows the location of French Creek and the French Creek Corridor in the Borough.

Union City is named for the land that William Miles founded. Originally named Miles Mills, in 1855 Union City transformed from a conglomerate of saw mills to an oil refinery-based market. Due to rapidly progressing economies, the town name was changed to Union City Borough in 1871. Union City was one of the many oil refinery and lumbering towns that flourished mainly due to the access to the South Branch of French Creek.

### About the Project

The South Branch French Creek runs through Union City Borough for approximately 2-miles. French Creek and its surrounding areas create a significant natural resource and riparian greenway zone in the Borough. The green and sustainable characteristic of French Creek and its surrounding greenway area establishes the overall theme of the French Creek Trail Town planning effort. The Borough wants to develop the French Creek Nature Trail to enhance this natural resource and to maintain the green and sustainable characteristic of French Creek as an important community asset.



Union City Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and desires to undertake a planning effort to determine how to make it a better destination, water based, recreation asset for our and our region's residents. The Borough recognizes that efforts to connect itself, its residents and visitors, its other recreation assets, and other community points of interest to the French Creek Corridor have been limited. Other than for a few locally known, non-developed, access points, toe paths and view points, the ability of our residents to properly view, access and enjoy this resource is limited. And, in addition, the ability of visitors who do use the French Creek resource to connect with the Borough and our community assets and resources, our business areas and other places of interest has been very limited. The Borough recognizes that now is the time to undertake an implementable type of planning effort that will result in the Borough becoming a destination French Creek Trail Town.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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This Union City Borough Trail Town Plan contains recommendations consistent with the Borough's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and Active Transportation Plan. Union City Borough has been very open and public about their plans to improve and rehabilitate community parks, walking and biking opportunities and the French Creek Corridor as part of a community enhancement effort. Borough residents have repeatedly indicated that the existing Park areas should have better access to French Creek and that other approaches, such as incorporating public walking trails, installing benches/seating areas for passive enjoyment, creating access points and completing place-making enhancements should be considered as top community priorities. Borough staff and officials, members of a Steering Committee and results from the public engagement process reinforced these improvements as priorities for the Borough. Public input received also indicated that enhancing the French Creek experience would increase the attractiveness of the Borough to families with younger children, families/groups outdoor enthusiasts and to other types of tourists/visitors. The Borough has a long history of forming partnerships and gathering community support to develop, complete and maintain community improvement projects. Continued support will be received from the Borough's Parks & Recreation Committee, Union City Pride, Union City Community Foundation, American Legion and the little league association, various elected officials and from other community shareholders.

### Project Goals

The overall purpose of the Union City French Trail Town Plan is to increase opportunities to create a nature trail along French Creek and for Union City Borough residents and visitors to better experience the French Creek Corridor. The following highlights the main factors considered in this trail study:

- A description of the Legal Feasibility of obtaining easements and/or acquiring land for the Trail. Evaluate land ownership, potential connections with existing recreation and other community assets, potential access points for fishing, boating and passive enjoyment, and other connectivity approaches as part of a feasibility study for developing a public use trail along French Creek.
- Public opinion for the Trail gathered through a Public Participation process.
- The potential demand for and potential use of the Trail.
- Identification of the physical characteristics and encroachments along the Trail Corridor.
- Operation, maintenance and security factors associated with the long-term operation of the Trail.
- A Trail Concept Plan that highlights the recommended Trail alignment and auxiliary facilities including methods for overcoming potential conflicts and encroachments.
- A description of the financial realities of developing, operating and maintaining the Trail.

### Project Approach

The focus of the Union City Borough Trail Town Plan goes beyond identifying a route for the French Creek Trail. The Plan defines the French Creek Greenway Corridor through the Borough; it identifies potential connections with existing recreation and other community assets; it identifies potential access points for fishing, boating and passive enjoyment; identifies areas for native vegetation plantings, habitat and riparian enhancements; and it identifies approaches for making the French Creek Corridor and the Borough a more inviting and accommodating place to attract residents and visitors. The following Focus Areas were established by the Borough early in the planning process. Each has successfully been achieved.

- *Connections – recommendations* identify how existing park and recreation areas, points of interest in the Borough and Borough neighborhood can be physically connected to the French Creek Corridor. These connections may include designated local connection routes using existing roadways, boat launches, designated fishing areas and routing within their existing Parks. ADA and accessibility designs will be considered for each. This may also include non-structure recommendations such as promotion, marketing map/brochure and signage approaches.
- *Trail Feasibility* – recommendations include concept plans and development plan drawings for a walking trail to be installed along French Creek.
- *Corridor 'Greening' Improvements* - These recommendations include locating areas and identifying projects to install native vegetation plantings/gardens throughout the Corridor and improving natural habitat areas within the Corridor. Recommendations also show appropriate riparian enhancements such as buffer plantings, site improvements and other 'green' improvements such as stormwater management, habitat improvements and runoff pollution control facilities and other similar items for making the Corridor a more naturally diverse area.
- *Community Placemaking* – approaches for making the French Creek Corridor and the Borough a more inviting and accommodating place to attract residents and visitors.
- *Erie County Outdoor Recreation Priorities* - the Trail Town Plan also advances goals described in the *Erie County Comprehensive Plan*, *Long Range Transportation Plan*, and *Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan* as well as community initiatives such as the *Destination Erie Master Plan*.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

The Community Engagement process for the Trail Town Plan provided Union City Borough an opportunity to talk with potential trail users, property owners and residents about the French Creek Trail. Participants helped to identify potential routes, connection points and other trail related facilities/amenities. It also provided the Borough an opportunity to meet with implementation partners and other shareholders. The results of the Engagement process also helped the Borough understand that there is a strong local connection to French Creek and overwhelming local support for the Trail. The following section summarizes and highlights the results of the Community Engagement process.

### Community Engagement Process Overview

Multiple Steering Committee and public engagement initiatives were completed during the planning process. These provided property owners, residents and local officials, and other stakeholders multiple opportunities and options to participate and to provide input. The public engagement process included the following:

#### Project Steering Committee Meetings

Members of the Project Steering Committee were strategically selected to provide input and to educate/communicate with others about the Plan's development. Each Committee member's occupation and/or areas of expertise were among the deciding factors for their being asked to join and serve on the Committee. Many of the Steering Committee members also participated in the planning processes for the Borough's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan as well as its Active Transportation Plan. The Committee members had an added understanding of how these plans supported each other and how implementation efforts will provide multiple benefits to the Borough. Committee members also assisted with critical sharing of information directly related to developing this Trail Town Plan.

- Steering Committee Meeting No. 1 – November 3, 2021 – On-line Meeting
- Steering Committee Meeting No. 2 – December 7, 2021 – In Person workshop with On-line Meeting access
- Steering Committee Meeting No. 3 – February 10, 2022 – On-line Meeting
- Steering Committee Meeting No. 4 – April 21, 2022 – Review Draft Trail Town Plan

Mapping and other related items were distributed to the Committee members prior to each meeting for their review. Additions and amendments were recorded during the meeting and were used to update plan materials for discussion at the following meeting. All members were individually called upon and given an opportunity to speak and to add their input at each meeting. This helped to facilitate the meetings in an orderly manner. It also helped to capture everyone's perspective on the topic being discussed. This approach resulted in highly productive meetings.

#### Field Tour

The Consultant Team conducted a field investigation and field tour with the Steering Committee on December 7, 2021. This field work was used to evaluate existing conditions along French Creek and in the French Creek Corridor. The field activities also provided an opportunity to meet with key property owners and trail advocates.

#### Key Person Interviews

The Consultant Team met with and interviewed multiple local and regionally based representatives during the planning process. These included Chris Zielinski from the Union City Little League Association, owners of the Buzz of Union City Café, Brenda Costa and Judy Acker of the French Creek Valley Conservancy, Joseph Hudson of the Erie County Conservation District, Stephen Bishop, a consultant to the Union City Community Foundation and representatives from the PA Game Commission and the PA Fish and Boat Commission.

#### French Creek Conservation Consortium - March 24, 2022

Plan consultant Barbara Hauge and Cindy Wells, Union City Borough Manager, presented information on the French Creek Trail during the 2022 French Creek Conservation Consortium. Project Steering Committee member, Joy Fronzoli- Environment & Recreation Planning Program- Erie County, also participated in the Consortium. Great support was received from the participants.

#### Community Workshop

A public Community Workshop was held on December 7, 2022 at the Union City Borough Fire Department's Social Hall. Property owners, residents and members of the Steering Committee attended in person while others participated remotely. The workshop was promoted using direct invitations, public advertising, poster displays and posting via social media.

#### Community Survey

Results from an on-line Community Survey conducted for the Borough's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and its Active Transportation Plan was incorporated into the Trail Town planning process. The results of the surveys clearly indicated that residents want a walking and biking trail opportunity along French Creek. Nearly 80% of respondents said creating new walking and biking trails/pathways was a top priority. The following comments were received as top priorities for French Creek:

- Boat launches and fishing spots to French Creek – access from Main Street
- Install facilities at French Creek for handicapped persons
- Access to and along French Creek
- Seating areas along French Creek for passive enjoyment
- Pathways, walking and biking trails along French Creek

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### Public Workshop Meeting - December 7, 2021


The following summarizes the results of the Community Workshop. The Consulting Team introduced the Trail project to the attendees, explained the French Creek Trail Town planning process and reviewed mapping of the French Creek Corridor. The following project focus areas were also discussed with attendees.

- A feasibility study for developing a public use trail along the Creek
- Areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements
- Approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.





Attendees were afforded time to communicate their opinions on current issues, opportunities, needs, as well as strengths and weaknesses within the different trail sections. An interactive discussion amongst the Team and attendees helped to identify trail priorities, different route alignments and alternatives, supporting amenities and different approaches for connecting the community to the Creek.

**Priorities and Trail Themes – the following summarizes input attendees provided about Trail priorities and the overall type of Trail and Trail amenities they foresee in the Borough. It also includes guidance for developing the Trail and various statements that highlight how residents appreciate the value of French Creek.**

- Creating a Nature Trail along French Creek has been a long-time goal – it will be a nature experience, an exercise resource and an asset to attract new residents and visitors into Union City.
- Creating “Windows” onto French Creek is desired at various places. Windows onto the Creek should be created at places where the Trail is not within eyesight of the Creek.
- An ADA compliant, five (5) foot wide, stabilized surfaced trail along French Creek would be ideal.
- This will be a Nature Trail not a running trail. The Trail will connect the Borough and residents to the French Creek resource.
- Many older residents remember playing in the creek as kids. There was a beach area near the Nature Park.
- Union City was founded because of French Creek - The Trail will bring back the major resource that built Union City.
- The focus should be to see the Creek, not just road sections.
- Desired amenities include habitat improvements and Food Islands along the Trail.
- Bike Racks and similar amenities should also be installed.
- Improving riparian zones and habitats along the Trail is a priority.
- Add benches and designate areas to attract wildlife – cranes have been observed near the Creek.
- Develop the riparian zones with protected species and create mini nature park areas.
- Install historic markers and interpretation panels along the Trail to reflect the importance of the French Creek to the early development of Union City.
- Focus on completing the Trail on both ends and then work towards the downtown area. Construct the Trail at the public parks and on the little league fields and work towards the downtown area – complete the Trail in phases.
- Get sections open, get wins – then focus on the more difficult sections.
- The French Creek Water Trail destination is a Big Deal.
- Anticipate Trail usage by seniors, kids, middle age residents.
- There is optimism that the Trail will help to bring in new businesses.
- The owners of the Buzz of UC are willing to support development of the Trail on their property.
- Most of the Trail will be located in the 100-yr floodplain.




### Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

Come join us...

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLAN

<p style="text-align: center; color: #8B4513; font-weight: bold;">WHERE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Union City Fire Department Social Hall 50 2nd Avenue Union City, PA 16438</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #8B4513; font-weight: bold;">WHEN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday December 7, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open House Session: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #8B4513; font-weight: bold;">WHAT</p> <p>Union City Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and desires to make it a better destination for residents and visitors. The French Creek Trail Town Plan will include a feasibility study for developing a public use trail along the Creek; areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements; and approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.</p> <p>It is vital that residents are meaningfully engaged as the Plan is being developed. Therefore, an Open House style Community Workshop is being held to obtain input from Borough residents. <b>Property owners along French Creek are strongly encouraged to attend.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #8B4513; font-weight: bold;">TOPICS</p> <p>Residents can attend anytime between 6:00pm and 7:00pm. Representatives from the Borough, the Plan Steering Committee and The EADS Group project team, will be available during the entire Session to discuss the project.</p>
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\*Attendees are asked to wear face masks and to observe social distancing requirements

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

- Anglers need better access to the Creek - contact fishermen to learn what they might need in terms of fishing areas (access).
- Caffisch Park is being used for Nature Studies for homeschooling – the French Creek Trail can also be used as an outdoor learning resource.
- The County is working on the Pittsburgh to Erie Trail Alliance to make regional connections.
- A lot of the Creek is now inaccessible. Creating access to the Creek would be positive for the Borough and could provide new types of entertainment options for residents.
- Large scale boating along French Creek is not a goal. It was suggested that a local 'theme-park' like water tubing amenity would be a great draw – have a put-in at the Nature Park and a take-out at the Willow Street Ballfield.

### Trail Sections – the following highlights impediments, opportunities and potential route alignments for the four (4) Trail sections.

#### Nature Park, Devereaux Park and Willow Street Ballfield -

Routes - The Trail will be aligned mainly along French Creek within the Nature Park, Devereaux Park and the Willow Street Ballfield.

Impediments - a section of the Trail will need to cross Bridge Street between the Nature Park and Devereaux Park. A pedestrian crossing point across Bridge Street near Willow Street will need to be provided. A steep bank in Devereaux Park parallel to Bridge Street will need to be overcome to maintain an ADA compliant grade on the Trail between Willow Street and French Creek.

Opportunities - The Borough owns the properties where the Trail will be located through this section. Amenities, seating areas and new vegetation can easily be added to areas surrounding the Trail to improve the Nature Trail experience.

#### Between Willow Street Ballfield and Downtown -

Routes - Two (2) options for extending the Trail beyond the Willow Street Ballfield – 1. Align the Trail up to Willow Street and have a *share the road* section for bikes/pedestrians. An alternative would be to extend the Trail along the Creek and through private property.

Impediments - Continuing the Trail along the Creek would require easements on private property – there are up to approximately eight (8) properties where easements would be needed. A major impediment is located where the Creek flows under the existing railroad line - going over the railroad tracks is a problem since it is elevated in that area and would not be ADA accessible. Attendees suggested an option for going under the railroad tracks – it is thought that the bridge pillars are constructed into the Creek and may not provide adequate clearance for a Trail section.

The following concerns were identified by residents along Willow Street:

1. There is a flood zone where water rises when snow melts
2. If we create a complete walkway, we will invite miscreants to their neighborhood
3. Someone trashed one of the parks recently – how do we avoid this on our properties
4. If we are a landowner near the route, what is our responsibility?

Responses:

1. Riparian buffer improvements along the trail will help to mitigate flooding.
2. Trail users will provide an extra set of eyes on that area and will deter miscreants. State laws exist to provide liability protection for property owners.
3. Lighting and other trail features can be installed to deter vandalism.
4. Property owners would just be responsible for maintaining the area surrounding the Trail. State Laws also provide liability protection to property owners.

Opportunities - Major opportunities in this section is the former Union City Chair property. Adjacent properties are owned by Union City Pride and Union City Borough.

#### Through Downtown -

Routes - There is an opportunity to include an elevated, cantilevered, walkway along the Creek side of the municipal parking lot. It was also suggested that attaching an elevated, cantilevered, walkway on the former Family Dollar building would create a continuous pathway from the Main Street bridge to the West High Street bridge. There is also an opportunity to create a French Creek themed Mural on the 'Pink colored' Building. Adding seating areas and Creek access adjacent to the 'Pink' Building could also connect the parking lot area to the elevated trail section.

Impediments – Bike/Pedestrian crossing would need to be installed across Main Street and W. High Street. This section may need to be designated as a bike walk through zone only.

Opportunities - Union City Borough owns property adjacent to the former Union City Chair property. Union City Borough also owns the municipal parking lot.

#### American Legion Ballfields -

Routes -

- Use First Avenue to directly access the ballfields
- Construct a walkway through the existing Memorial Park and in an area between the entrance driveway and French Creek (on the other side of the chain-link fence).
- Align the Trail up Main Street and through the Buzz of UC coffee shop. Install a pedestrian bridge (possibly a rope bridge) across the French Creek to the ballfields.

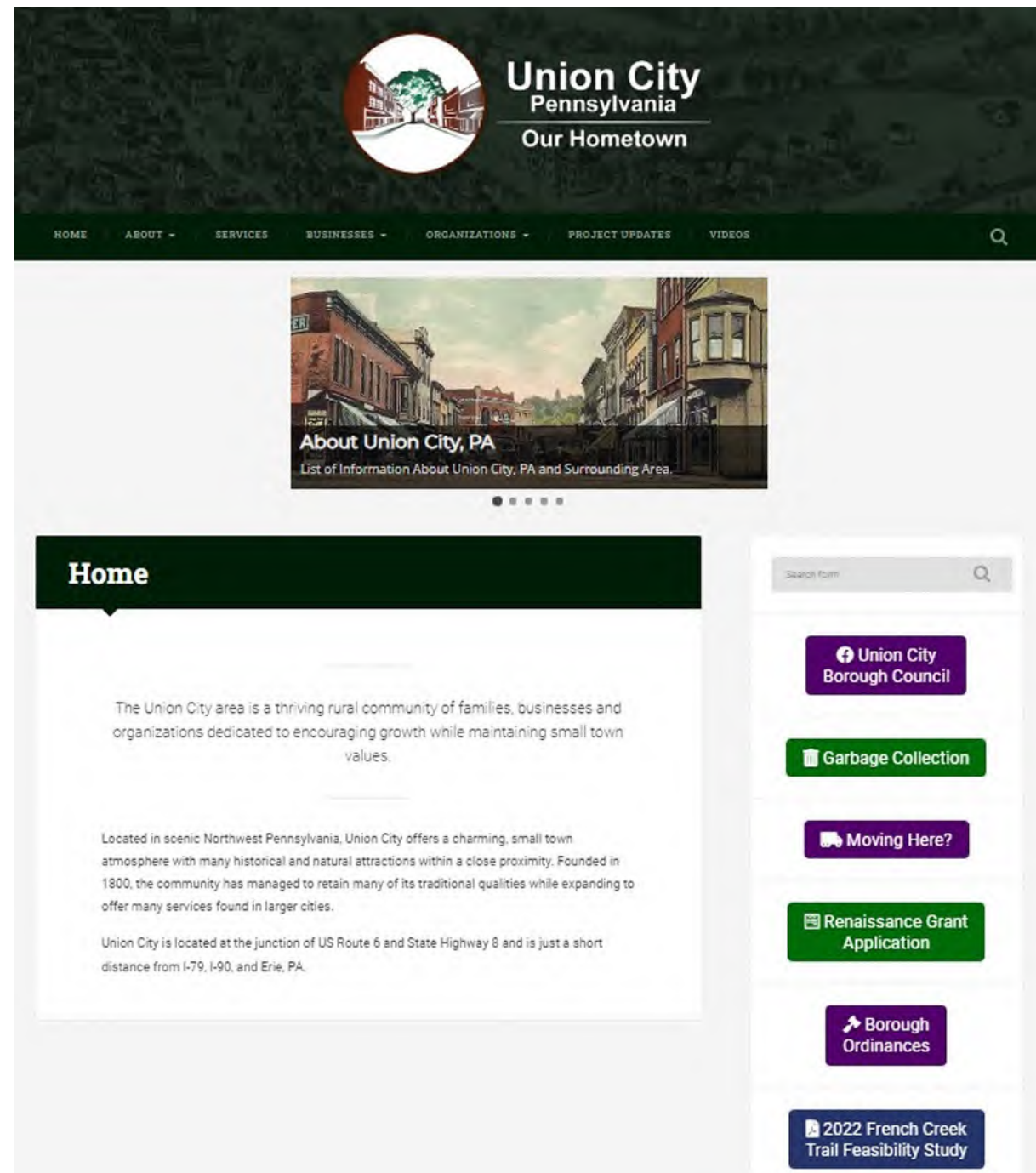
Impediments – Aligning the Trail from the West High Street area into the American Legion Little League Fields requires crossing an active railroad line. First Avenue into the fields is narrow and congested when games are being played at the fields. Crossing French Creek near the Buzz of UC will be a major project. The Creek is approximately 30' wide at that point, technical investigations will be needed – installing a Rope Bridge is a possibility.

Opportunities – The Union City Little League Association has also been considering moving forward with installing a pedestrian loop trail around the ballfields. Union City Borough and the Little League Association can work together on this project as part of implementing the French Creek Trail. Each can mutually benefit from each other on this effort. There also are opportunities to reduce erosion into the Creek and to provide riparian buffer enhancements in this area. .

# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Interactive Comment Mapping - Launched February 2022

To connect residents, organizations, officials and regional shareholders with the Trail Town planning effort and to give them a voice in the planning process, a web-based comment mapping application was prepared. The application enabled users to add site specific comments about the French Creek Corridor. The Interactive Comment Map was used to gather input on potential trail routes, access and connection points to the Creek, seating areas, areas for new native vegetation plantings and areas where overgrown vegetation is blocking views of the Creek. Opportunities to add other comments regarding trail features or development of the nature trail were provided. An introduction and link to the comment map was hosted on the Borough's website. Results of the Comments Map are highlighted on the following page. [French Creek Nature Trail - Interactive Comment Map](#)



## 2022 French Creek Trail Feasibility Study – Interactive Comment Map

Union City Borough is working with The EADS Group and UpStreet Architects to study how to best create a nature trail along French Creek. The Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and is undertaking a planning effort to determine how to make it a better destination and asset for our residents. The nature trail will generally be located between Devereaux Park and the American Legion Little League Fields. The trail will be aligned along French Creek and through the Downtown area as much as possible. Trail easements on public and private properties and on-road sections will be needed. The Study is also evaluating areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements and approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.

The Borough recognizes that efforts to connect itself, its residents and visitors, its other recreation assets, and other community points of interest to the French creek Corridor have been limited. Other than for a few locally known, non-developed, access points, toe paths and viewpoints, the ability of our residents to properly view, access and enjoy this resource is limited.

Because this is such an important community project, it is vital that residents are meaningfully engaged as the Study is being completed. Therefore, we have prepared an Interactive Comment Map to gather input on potential trail routes, access and connection points to the Creek, seating areas, areas for new native vegetation plantings and areas where overgrown vegetation is blocking views of the Creek. Other comments regarding trail features or development of the nature trail are appreciated.

You can access the Interactive Comment Map using the following link:

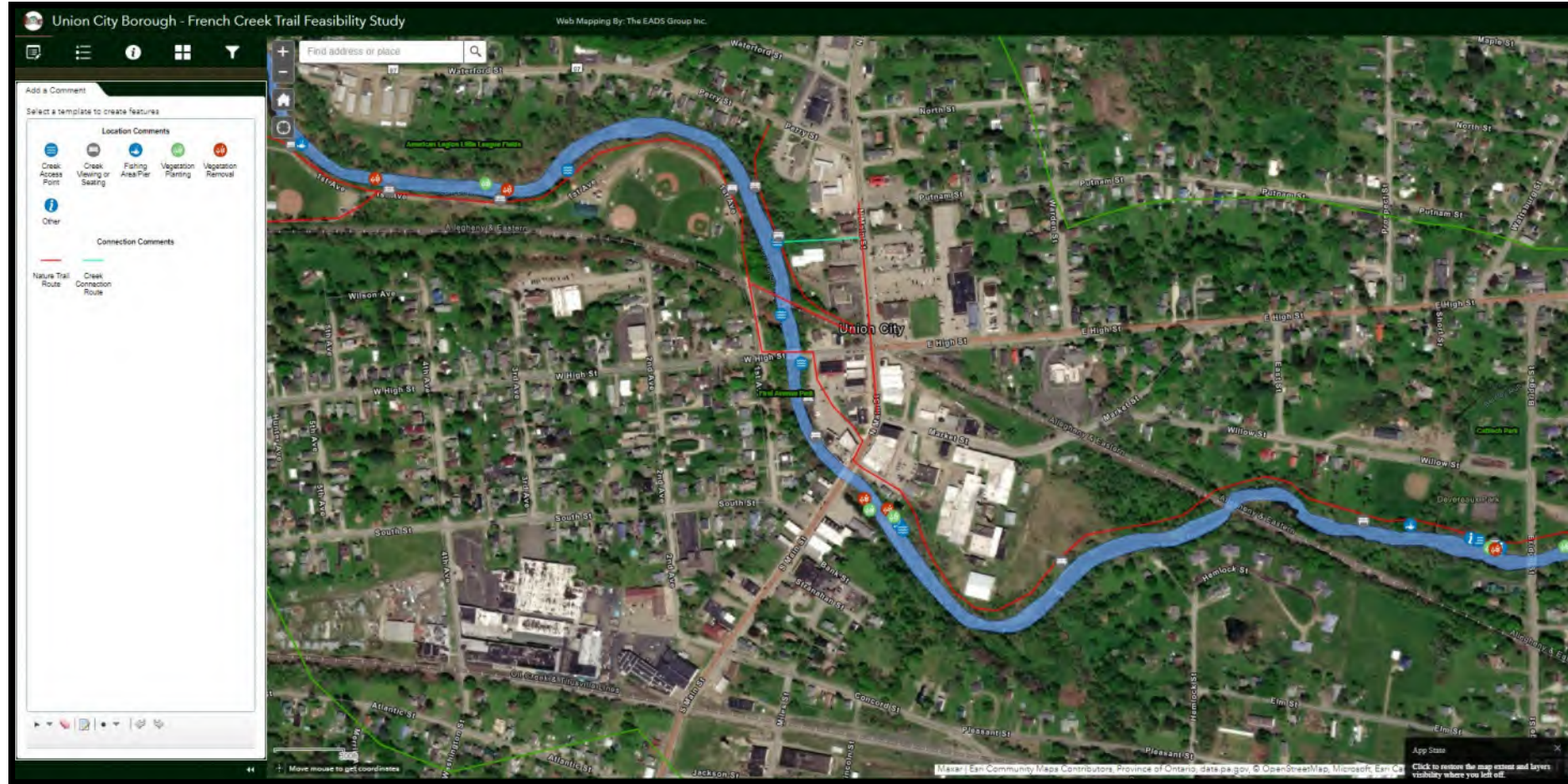
[French Creek Nature Trail - Interactive Comment Map](#)

Additional comments or questions about the Study can be directed to Mark W. Lazzari, AICP [mlazzari@eadsgroup.com](mailto:mlazzari@eadsgroup.com)

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

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# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan



# **LEGAL FEASIBILITY**

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

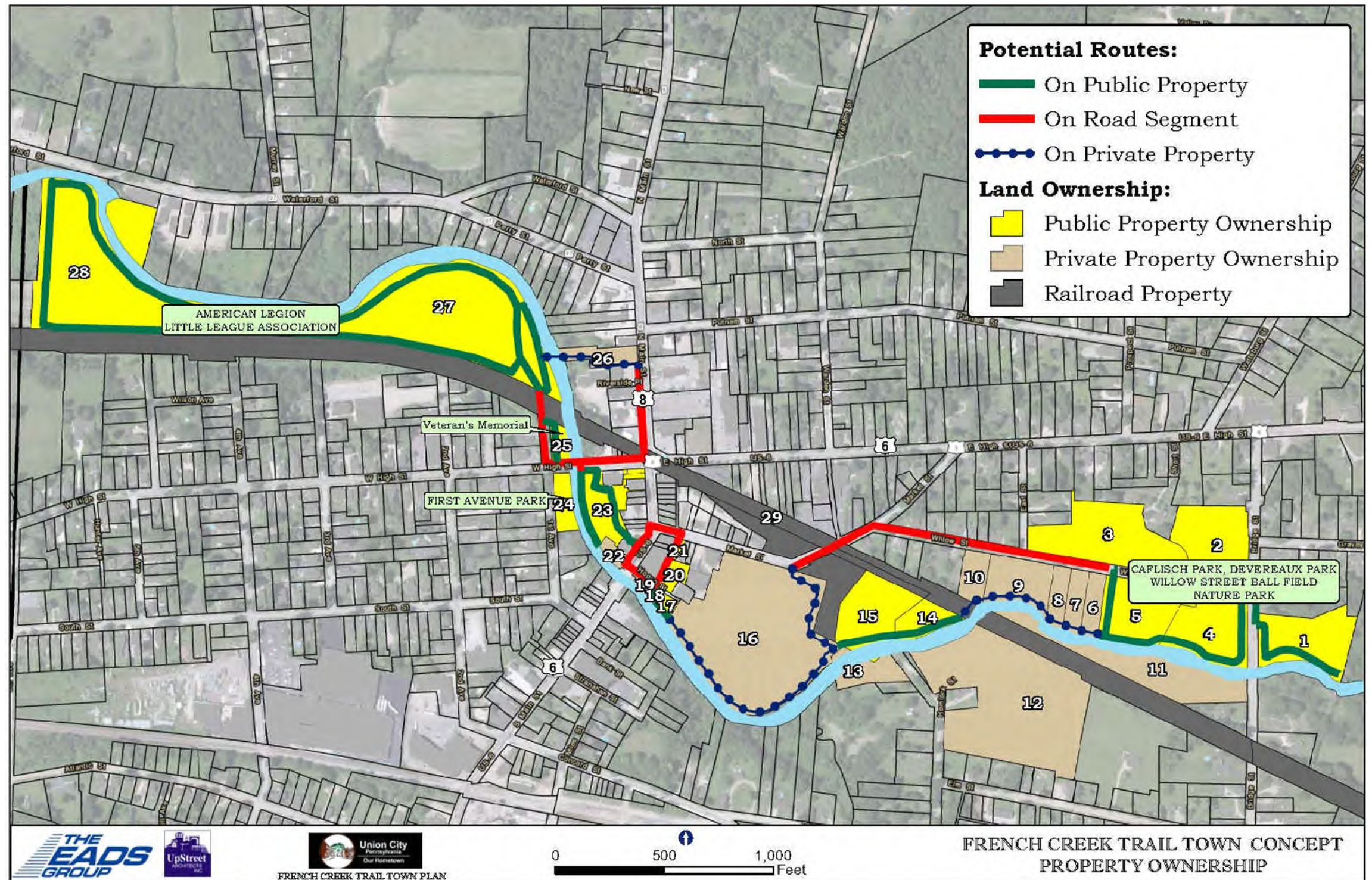
The following section identifies property owners potentially associated with development of the French Creek Trail. It also provides information on the efforts to contact the property owners and describes the feasibility of obtaining a Trail Easement or other form of agreement for the proposed French Creek Trail.

### Property Owners

The map to the right shows the 29 parcels potentially associated with development of the French Creek Trail. As shown, the Trail corridor is almost evenly split between private and public property owners. There are 16 public entity property owners and 12 private property owners. The Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad Inc. also owns multiple right-of-way sections through the trail corridor.

Private property owners were sent a letter to introduce the project and to suggest having a telephone conversation to discuss the trail alignment and the potential for a Trail Easement through their property. An option to submit a written response via e-mail was also provided. Union City Borough also telephoned most of the private property owners to discuss the project and to answer questions.

A matrix highlighting parcel type, ownership information, parcel size and the potential for the property owner to enter into a trail Easement is provided on the following page. Parcels are ordered generally from the Devereaux Park area to the American Legion Little League fields. The Map No. shown on the map to the right is also provided in the Matrix for further identification purposes.



## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### Potential for a Trail Easement

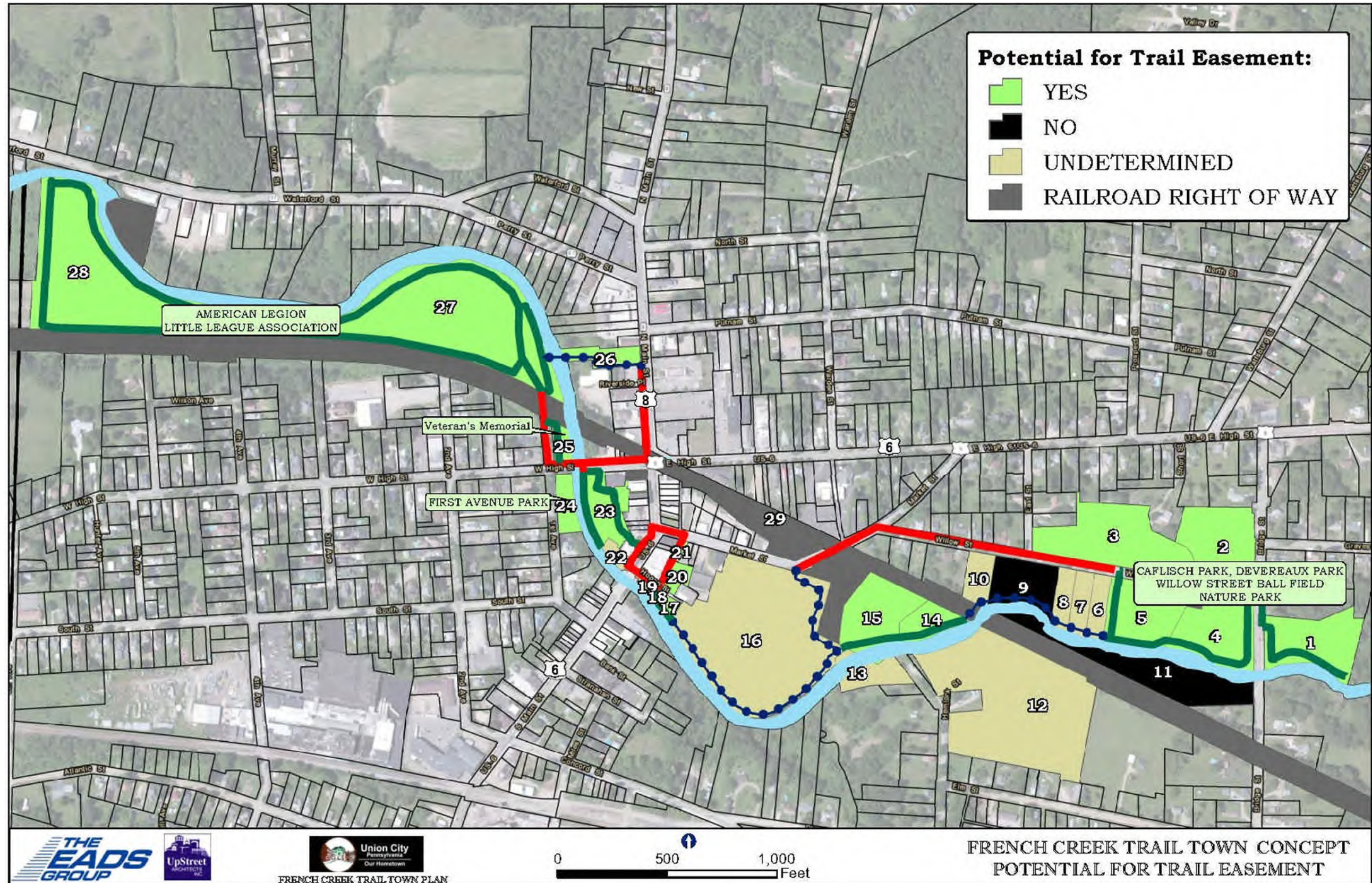
- Union City Borough has indicated that land owned by the Borough itself is fully available for the French Creek Trail. The other public property owners are all project partners of Union City Borough. The Borough has determined that these properties are available for developing the Trail. All public property owners are therefore shown as a 'YES' to the potential for entering into a Trail Easement.
- One (1) private property owner, the owners of the Buzz of Union City Café, outright indicated their willingness to enter into a Trail Easement. This property owner is also shown as a 'YES' to the potential for entering into a Trail Easement.
- Only two (2) private property owners outright indicated they were not favorable to entering a Trail Easement. These property owners are shown as a 'NO' to the potential for entering a Trail Easement.
- Seven (7) property owners generally indicated their favorability to the Trail. However, they did raise some concerns and had questions over potential impacts the Trail could have on their properties. Additional coordination with these property owners will be needed. Because of this uncertainty, these property owners are identified as 'UNDETERMINED' to the potential for entering a Trail Easement.
- Two (2) property owners did not respond. These properties contain buildings and not trail useable land. The preferred Trail alignment will not directly use these properties.

Map No.	Parcel No.	Type	Description	Address	Ownership	Parcel Size (acre)	Potential for a Trail Easement
1	41012048001700	PUBLIC	PARK	BRIDGE ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	2.10	YES
2	41011044001600	PUBLIC	PARK	49 WILLOW ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	2.51	YES
3	41011044001601	PUBLIC	MUNICIPAL	35 WILLOW ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	3.53	YES
4	41011043001100	PUBLIC	PARK	48 WILLOW ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	2.38	YES
5	41011043000900	PUBLIC	PARK	38-46 WILLOW ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	2.83	YES
6	41011043000800	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	34 WILLOW ST	WALLACE AND MARY EHRHART	0.48	UNDETERMINED
7	41011043000700	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	30 WILLOW ST	SHIRLEY MAE OWENS	0.48	UNDETERMINED
8	41011043000600	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	28 WILLOW ST	MAK HOMES LLC	0.43	UNDETERMINED
9	41011043000500	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	26 WILLOW ST	KYLE AND JESSICA PRICE	1.50	NO
10	41011043000401	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	14-16 WILLOW ST	DONALD AND CHERYL MOSHER	0.61	UNDETERMINED
11	41011043001300	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	30 BRIDGE ST	ALICE ROSS	2.93	NO
12	41011038001102	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	HEMLOCK ST	DONALD AND CHERYL MOSHER	7.40	UNDETERMINED
13	41010038002900	PRIVATE	RESIDENTIAL	31 HEMLOCK ST	EDWARD MCNABB	1.00	UNDETERMINED
14	41011038000900	PUBLIC	VACANT LAND	HEMLOCK ST	ERIE COUNTY	0.95	YES
15	41010038006601	PUBLIC	VACANT LAND	MARKET ST	UNION CITY PRIDE INC.	2.52	YES
16	41010038000800	PRIVATE	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	20 MARKET ST	FORMER UNION CITY CHAIR	7.69	UNDETERMINED
17	41010038006400	PUBLIC	VACANT LAND	3 HOGANS ALY	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.58	YES
18	41010038006700	PUBLIC	FOOD PANTRY	1 HOGANS ALY	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.05	YES
19	41010038006500	PRIVATE	PARKING LOT	1 3N MAIN ST	NEWMAYER REALTY LLC	0.12	NO RESPONSE
20	41010038000600	PUBLIC	PARKING LOT	N MAIN OFF ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.22	YES
21	41010038000300	PUBLIC	PARKING LOT	8 MARKET ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.04	YES
22	42007023001400	PRIVATE	COMMERCIAL	2 6N MAIN ST	NEWMAYER REALTY LLC	0.18	NO RESPONSE
23	42007023000900	PUBLIC	PARKING LOT	N MAIN STREET	UNION CITY BOROUGH	1.22	YES
24	42007023000100	PUBLIC	PARK	23 FIRST AVENUE	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.56	YES
25	42007022000100	PUBLIC	PARK	1ST & HIGH ST	UNION CITY BOROUGH	0.38	YES
26	42007015004100	PRIVATE	COMMERCIAL	62-64N MAIN STREET	GNKB PROPERTIES LLC	0.55	YES
27	42007015004600	PUBLIC	RECREATION	FIRST AVE	AMERICAN LEGION	10.42	YES
28	42007015004700	PUBLIC	RECREATION	FIRST AVE	UNION CITY LITTLE LEAGUE	7.90	YES
29	MULTIPLE RIGHT-OF-WAY SEGMENTS			BUFFALO & PITTSBURGH RAILROAD INC			



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

The map below visually summarizes the potential of property owners to enter into a Trail Easement.



# **PHYSICAL INVENTORY**

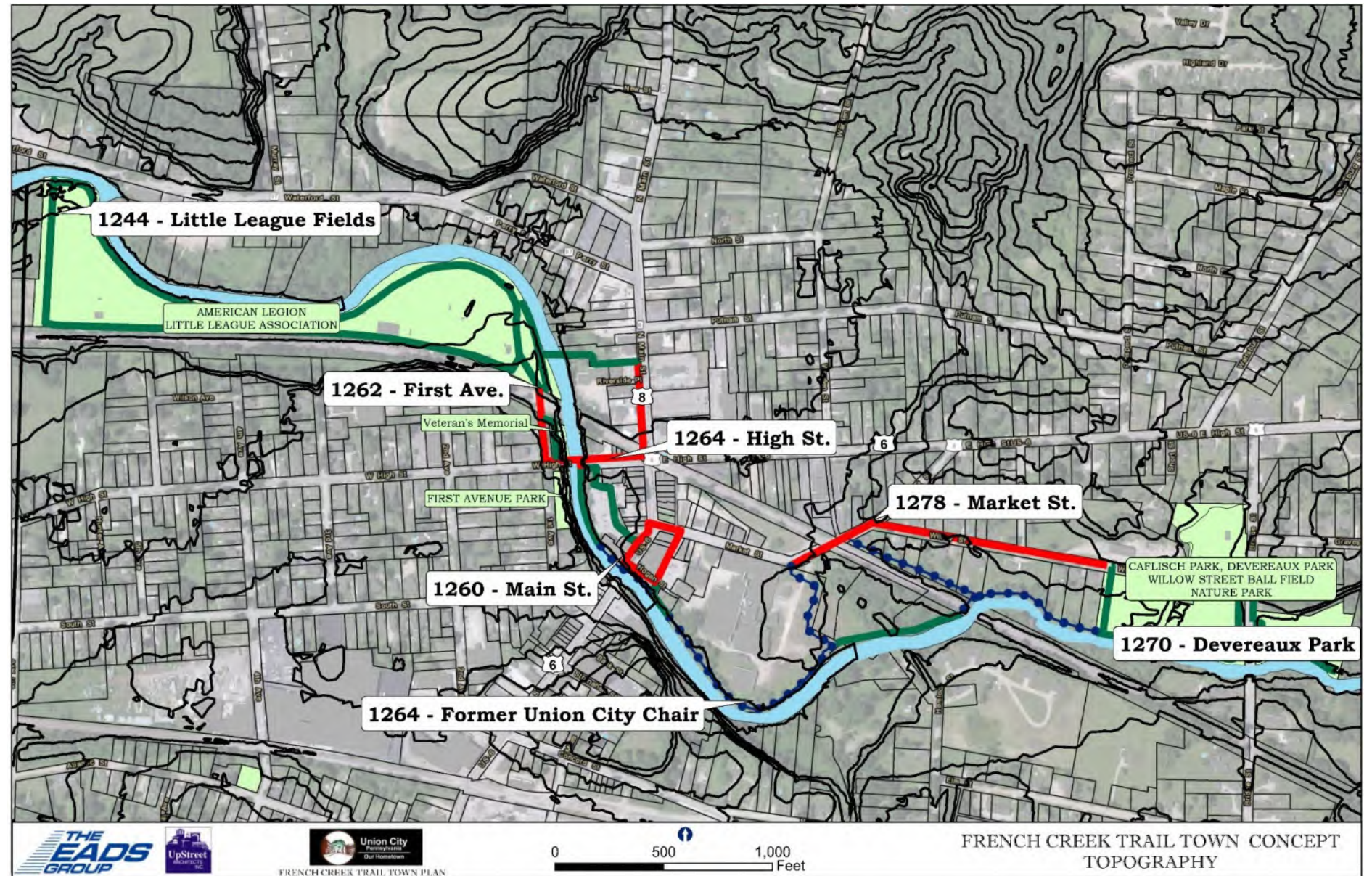
## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

The following section summarizes the results of a physical inventory and assessment of the French Creek Trail Corridor between the Devereaux Park area and the American Legion Little League Fields. The inventory and assessment focused on existing features including dimensions of the right-of-way and surrounding land use, natural and wildlife features, structures within the Corridor, the location and capacity of infrastructure and utilities, intersection and access points and other environmental features. The Physical Inventory was completed using a combination of secondary sources and field investigations.

### Topographic Analysis

The French Creek Trail will be aligned along the South Branch French Creek to the extent possible. Therefore, there will be no significantly steep or abrupt grade changes along the linear alignment of the Trail. Steeper slopes were identified along the riparian zones and stream bank area along French Creek. However, no steep slope areas were identified along the immediate potential Trail routes. Overall, the change in elevation between Devereaux Park area and the American Legion Little League Fields is approximately 26-ft. The elevation near Devereaux Park is approximately 1270-ft and the elevation near the far end of the Little League Fields is approximately 1244-ft. When factoring the Trail is approximately 2.56 miles in length, the overall slope between the Devereaux Park area and the far end of the Little League Fields is well below 0.50%. The following chart provides the approximate distance, elevation change and overall slope at select locations along the Trail corridor.

Section	Elevation Change (ft)	Overall Slope (%)
Devereaux Park to Former Union City Chair	6	0.25
Devereaux Park to Market St.	8	0.40
Market St. to Former Union City Chair	14	1.08
Former Union City Chair to Main St.	4	0.50
Main St. to High St.	4	1.60
High St. to First Ave.	2	0.34
1st Ave to Little League Fields	18	0.69



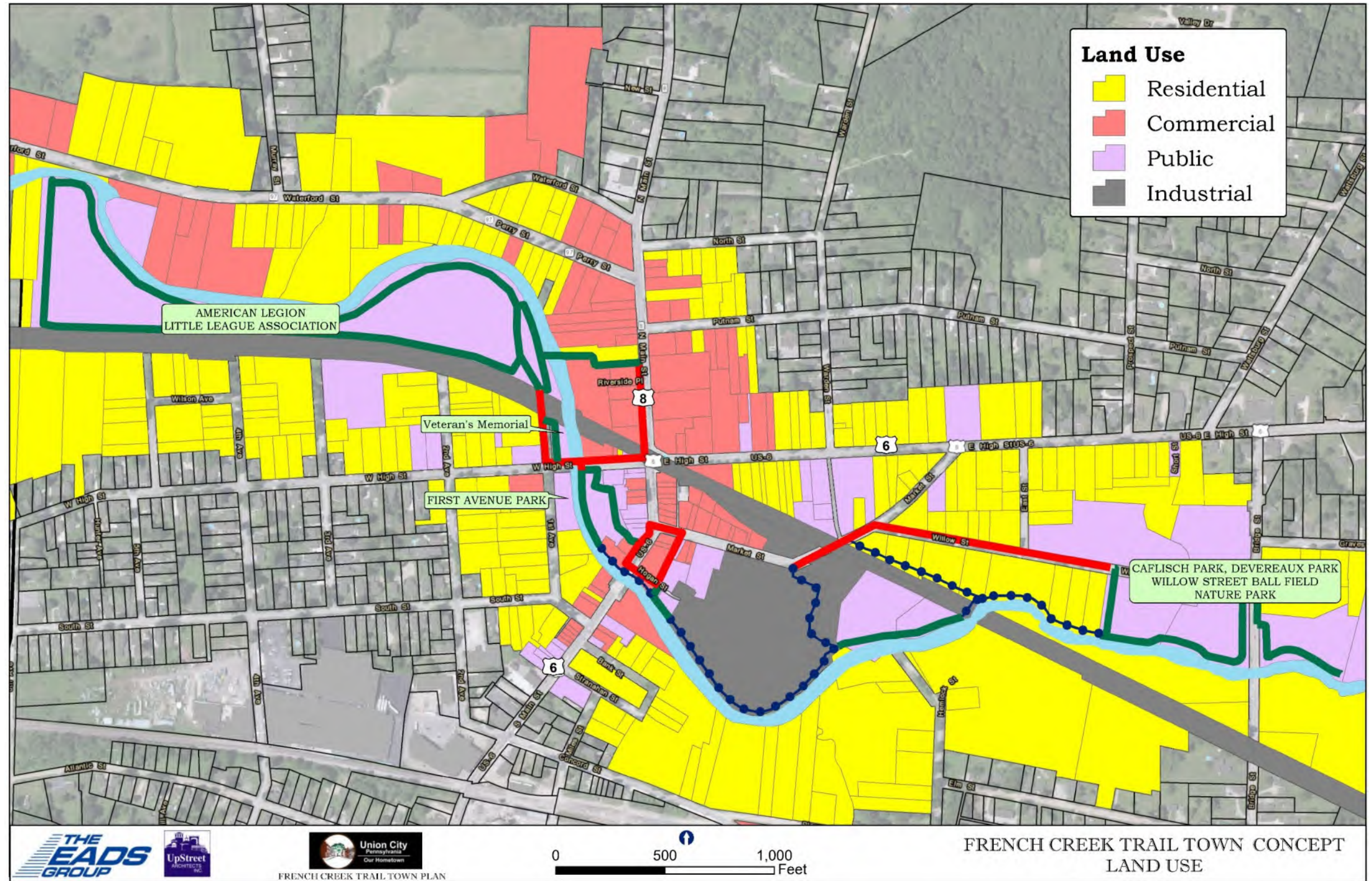
### Erosion and Drainage Problems

No areas of noticeable erosion were observed around the potential the Trail route. Some streambank erosion was identified downstream of the American Legion Little League Fields in a location where the Creek makes a noticeable bend. This area is not directly related to the potential Trail corridor. Wet areas and areas with soggy soils were observed within Devereaux Park, Willow Street Ball Field and the American Legion Ball Fields. These areas are seasonal and are confined to areas near French Creek. Drainage facilities and related design features will be considered during final design stages of Trail development. The Consultant Team has coordinated with the French Creek Conservancy and the Erie County Conservation District throughout development of this Plan. Riparian improvements and new vegetative plantings will be incorporated as appropriate into final designs for each Trail segment. Final designs will be reviewed with the Conservancy and Conservation District to ensure consistency with preservation goals established for the French Creek Watershed.

# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Land Use

Land uses along the Trail Corridor include a mix of residential, commercial public and industrial uses. Industrial areas include the former Union City Chair manufacturing facility and the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad. Commercial areas are primarily centered in the downtown area generally around US Route 6 and Pennsylvania Route 8. Public land and residential areas are found throughout the Trail Corridor. No direct impacts from the French Creek Trail on the surrounding land uses (or vice versa) were identified during this planning process. In fact, the abundance of Public land provides a major advantage to developing the Trail. Union City Borough has indicated that all public lands in the Trail Corridor are available for developing the Trail.

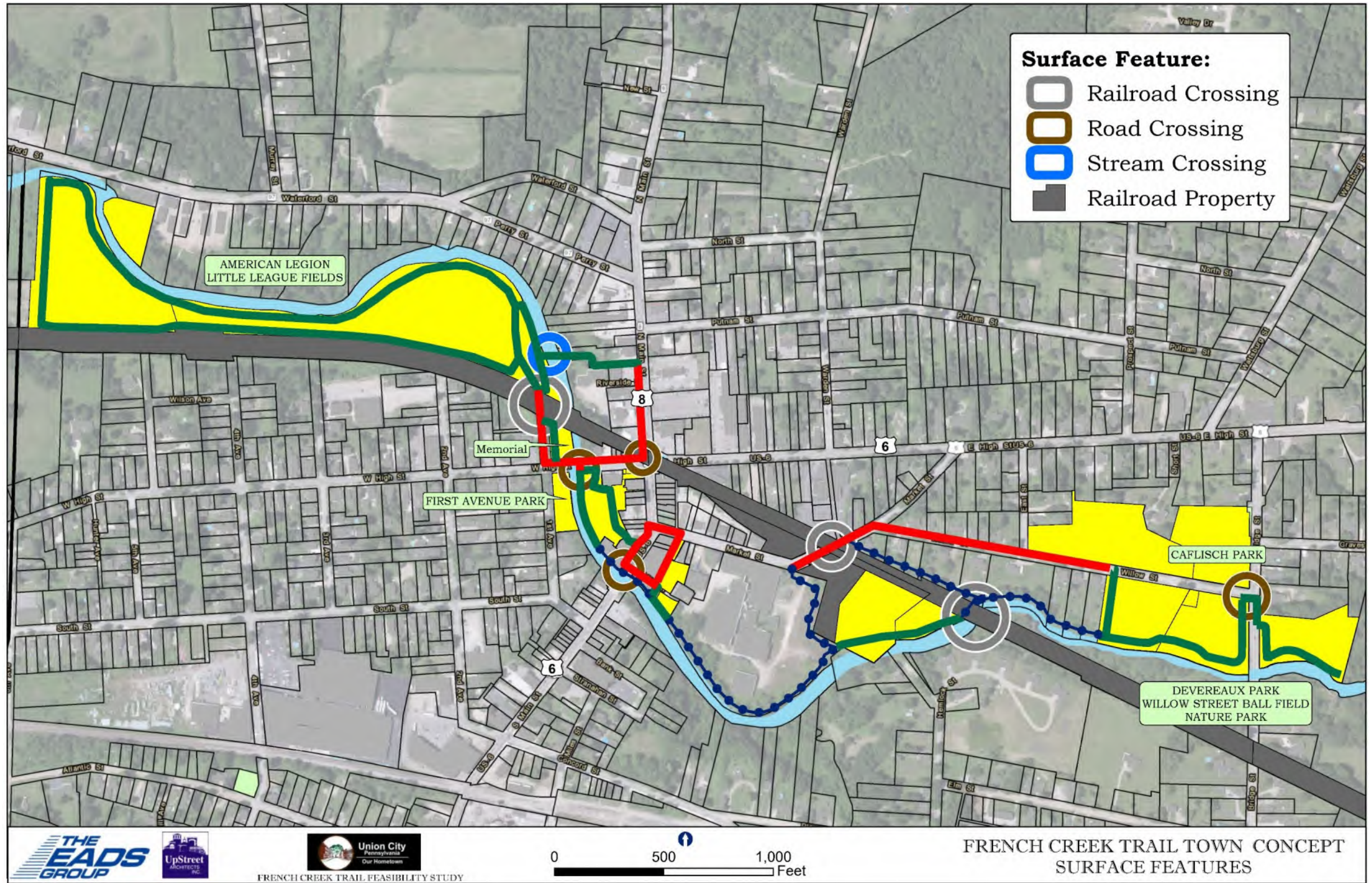


# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Surface Features

The South Branch French Creek flows westward across Union City Borough. Bentley Run, a tributary to the South Branch flows by Caflisch Park, Devereaux Park and the Willow Street Ball Field. French Creek is considered one of the most biologically diverse streams east of the Mississippi River providing habitat to over 80 species of fish and 26 species of freshwater mussels. It contains more species of fish and mussels than any other similarly sized streams in Pennsylvania. Consequently, it has been a focus of much ecological research and conservation efforts.

Other surface features that will need to be considered when creating the French Creek Trail include U.S. Route 6 and PA Route 8, Bridge Street, Willow Street, Market Street, High Street and First Avenue. Approximately 8,229 cars and trucks a day use Route 8 and 7,548 cars and trucks use Route 6, making these roads the main gateways to the Borough. In addition, an active rail line of the Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad Inc. is located through the Trail Corridor. The map to the right highlights the surface features and shows the location of potential road, railroad and stream crossings.



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Floodplain

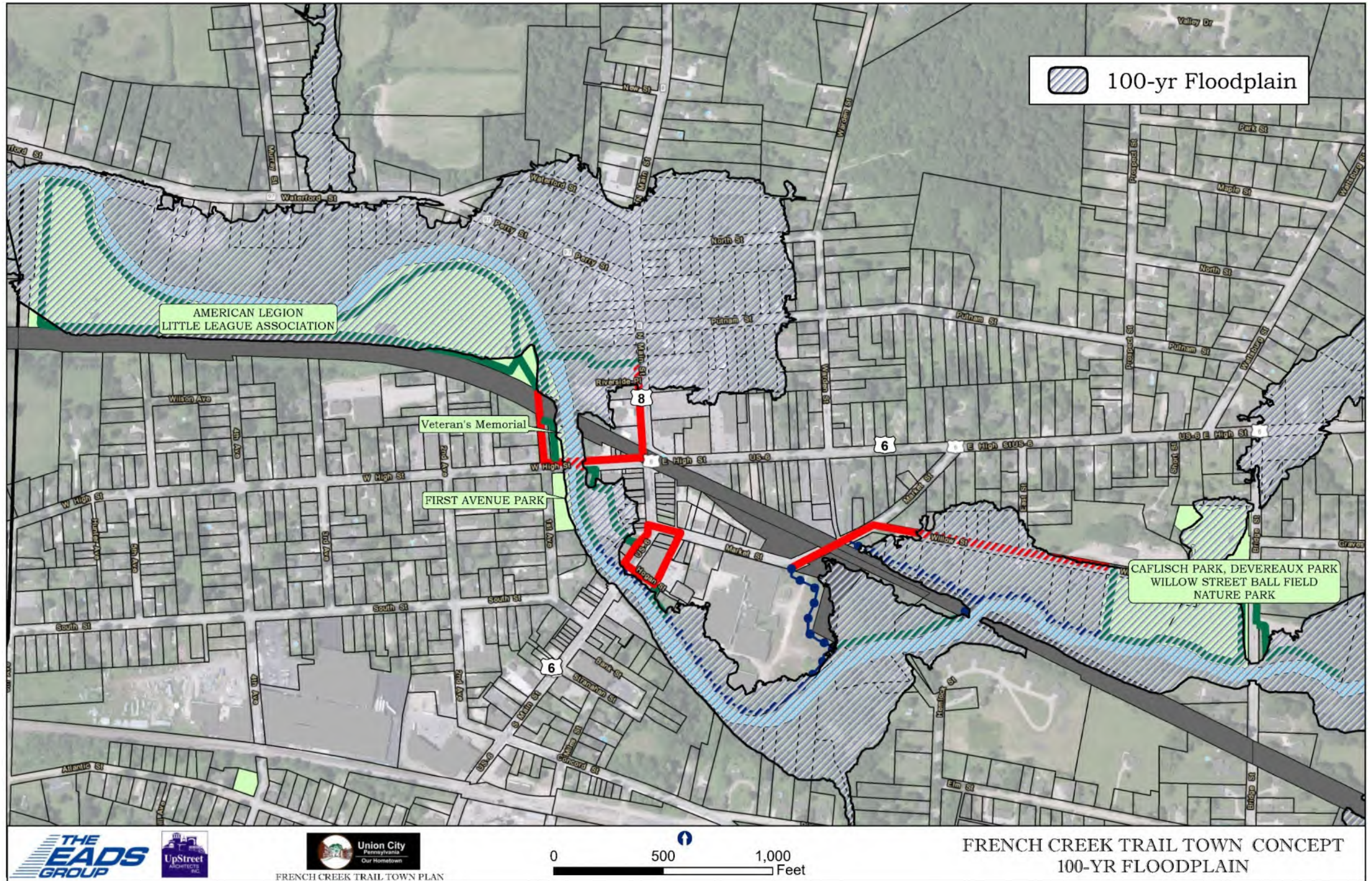
A majority of the French Creek Trail will be developed within the Creek's 100-yr Floodplain. Guidance from the French Creek Valley Conservancy suggests that the surface of the Trail should be stabilized and able to withstand period flooding. The Conservancy encourages that the Trail surface should not contribute pollution to the Creek during high water events.

## Wetlands

A National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) search was conducted on the Trail Corridor. No wetland areas other than the South Branch French Creek were identified along potential Trail routes.

## Natural Diversity Habitat

A Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) search was conducted for the Trail Corridor location. The Conservation Report indicated there are no known impacts.



# TRAIL DEMAND AND USE

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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The following section describes the anticipated demand for-, potential use of- and benefits of- the French Creek Trail. The section also describes the want and need for the French Creek Trail. A description of local and regional connections and how the Trail will address the outdoor recreation needs of area residents as expressed during the Public Participation portion of this planning effort is also provided.

### Wants and Needs

Union City Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and is undertaking this trail study to determine how to make the French Creek Corridor a better recreation and destination asset. The Borough recognizes that efforts to connect itself, its residents and visitors, its other recreation assets, and other community points of interest to the French Creek Corridor have been limited. Other than for a few locally known, non-developed, access points, toe paths and viewpoints, the ability of Borough residents to properly view, access and enjoy the Creek is limited. And, in addition, the ability of visitors who do use the French Creek resource to connect with the Borough and existing community assets and resources, business areas and other places of interest has been very limited. The Borough recognizes the importance of becoming a destination French Creek Trail Town. Local officials and residents agree that the Borough needs to identify and implement effective approaches to better attract residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor and that the Borough needs to be better prepared to accommodate their outdoor recreation needs.

### Trail Demand

The demand for more outdoor recreation opportunities and walking/biking trails is well established in Union City Borough. Union City Borough has been very proactive in encouraging and soliciting public input and participation for this trail study and other recent recreation-based planning efforts. Public input has been received through Open House meeting sessions, Steering Committee meetings, community surveys, interactive comment mapping and through direct interactions with residents at community events. The *Union City Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan of 2020* identified the need for a public use trail along French Creek. It also established that making connections with existing recreation assets and creating access points for fishing, boating and passive enjoyment as part of the French Creek Greenway as top community priorities. Public input received for the *Union City Borough Active Transportation Plan of 2021* echoed these findings. This Plan identified creating a pathway along French Creek and creating “Windows” onto French Creek as important community priorities. Participants in this trail study further described a sense of urgency for creating a walking trail along French Creek. Residents identified walking trails along French Creek, and better access for fishing, boating and passive enjoyment, as important community improvement priorities.

Union City Borough conducted a recreation-based Community Survey to better understand the types of walking/biking facilities/amenities that residents want in the Borough. There were 131 responses to the Survey. The responders represented households containing over 400 residents. Nearly 90% of the responders were either from Union City Borough (57%) or Union Township (31%). Responses were also received from residents living in various other Erie County communities. The responders represented households with a good range of age groups. This included Pre-School (16%), School-Age Children (24%), Young Adults (18%), Middle Age Adults (27%) and Mature Adult members (15%). This is important because it ensures that the input provided addresses the needs, wants and priorities for many different segments of the community. It also balanced out the types of responses received. Responses that represented younger residents likely were oriented towards more active types of facilities while those representing older residents likely suggested more passive leisure types of facilities. The following highlights responses specifically related to the French Creek Trail. The responses reflect a strong demand for the French Creek Trail.

- **Respondents were asked to note their agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements on access, areas, facilities and programs (i.e. playgrounds, fields, parks, trails, etc.) in the Park.** The results reveal an overwhelming need to provide better access to French Creek. Over 70% of the responders agreed that there is not adequate access to French Creek.
- **Respondents were asked to identify the types of recreation facilities they feel are needed in the Borough.** The top recreation facility needs include walking and biking trails and pathways (along French Creek) and fishing and passive access connections to French Creek. Nearly 80% of the responders want walking trails/pathways; nearly 70% want biking trails/pathways and over 50% want boating/fishing access to French Creek.
- **Respondents were also afforded the opportunity to suggest other improvements and to provide other comments and ideas related to French Creek. The following are the top five (5) responses:**
  - Boat launches and fishing spots to French Creek – access from Main Street
  - Install facilities at French Creek for handicapped persons
  - Access to and along French Creek
  - Seating areas along French Creek for passive enjoyment
  - Pathways, walking and biking trails along French Creek



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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## Anticipated Trail Users

The Trail is anticipated to serve Union City Borough residents, residents in surrounding communities and visitors to the area. The Borough is anticipating Trail usage by seniors, school-aged children and middle age residents. The Trail will also be used by players and families participating on games at the American Legion Little League Fields. It is anticipated that the French Creek Trail will also attract users of the envisioned Corry to Erie segment of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. Public input received for this Trail Study and other recent recreation plans suggest that the French Creek Trail will appeal to residents of all ages and abilities. The Trail is envisioned to be used during all four seasons of the year for walking, biking, jogging, nature watching, passive viewing of the Creek, cross-country skiing and snow shoeing. It is anticipated that most of the use will occur during the spring, summer and fall months.

## Trail Benefits

The French Creek Trail will advance many recommendations and priorities in the following Erie County planning efforts.

- **Erie County Long Range Transportation Plan**  
The Erie County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) addresses local and regional issues related to roads, trails, transit, and rail service. It prioritizes transportation investments in Erie County and develops a financially constrained project listing based on anticipated funding levels.
- **Erie County Parks Trails and Recreation Plan**  
The purpose of the Plan is to set a new direction for the involvement of Erie County government in the planning and support of parks, trails and recreation throughout the county. Specific actions relate to improving the health and well-being of county residents and its overall economy.
- **Erie County Comprehensive Plan**  
The Plan focuses on improving communities, assisting municipalities and supporting economic development. The Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development maintains the Erie County Comprehensive Plan.
- **Destination Erie Master Plan**  
This regional master plan includes strategies for making Erie County a place where businesses, neighborhoods and families thrive. It focuses on Arts, Culture & Recreation, rural downtowns, the environment and community facilities.

The French Creek Trail will implement several important recommendations of the 2020-2024 PA Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Trail will serve older residents, residents with disabilities and residents wanting a passive walking opportunity along French Creek. These segments of the community have historically been underserved by recreation amenities and opportunities in the Borough. The project will create walking and biking networks that provide safe, close-to-home access to recreation and encourage healthy behavior. The French Creek Trail will provide accessible connections and passive enjoyment amenities that will attract visitors and residents to the French Creek resource in the Borough.

The French Creek Trail will also implement several important recommendations of the 2020-2024 Pennsylvania Land and Water Trail Network Strategic Plan. Creating the French Creek Trail will strengthen connections between outdoor recreation and health in communities for people of all ages and abilities. The project will install ADA walkways and an ADA fishing pier that will attract and accommodate users of all ages and abilities. The project will also install passive recreation facilities and amenities including the accessible walking trail as well as benches and seating areas that will provide scenic views of French Creek.

The French Creek Trail will implement a priority in the Union City Borough Active Transportation Plan. The Plan identified that the French Creek Trail will provide health, safety, environmental, and economic benefits to Union City Borough and will help the Borough become a better walkable community.

The French Creek Trail will implement recommendations coming out of the Borough's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The Plan recommends that existing Park areas should have better access to French Creek and that other approaches, such as a public walking trail, installing benches/seating areas for passive enjoyment as well as non-physical improvements and place-making enhancements should be considered as prioritizes for connecting residents and visitors to French Creek.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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### Local and Regional Connections

The following identifies the types of local and regional connections that will be created through development of the French Creek Trail.

Regional Connections - The French Creek Trail will connect Union City Borough to a regional trail system, a designated Pennsylvania and multi-state Bike Route, a Heritage Corridor and a Regional Greenway and Water Trail.

- **The Erie To Pittsburgh Trail Realignment: Erie To Corry Trail Feasibility Study** - The French Creek Trail will become an integral part of Erie County's proposed City of Erie to Corry Trail. The French Creek Trail will become part of the Union City portion of the regional Corry to Erie Trail network. Erie County is assessing the feasibility of realigning the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail so that the Erie to Corry segment is routed through central Erie County including through Union City Borough. Creating the Erie to Corry Trail is a key recommendation of the Erie County Parks, Trails & Recreation Plan, adopted by Erie County Council as part of the County's comprehensive plan in 2020. Development of the trail connection between the City of Corry, through Union City Borough, and the City of Erie will positively impact Union City Borough as well as other County communities by generating economic activity and connecting rural Erie with key destinations such as Pittsburgh, Erie City, and other regional and local recreational assets. It will also serve as a vital trail artery with which the County can encourage development of a greater network of trails.
- **Bicycle Routes – PA Route Y and US Bike Route 36** - PA Route 6 through Union City Borough is PA Bicycle Route Y and US Bike Route 36. BicyclePA Route "Y" is the second longest route in PA at over 400 miles. This route enters Erie County on US Highway 6/19 and follows north to the intersection with PA Route 6 where it turns east going through Union City Borough and Corry, then on to Warren County. PA Bicycle Route Y is also designated as United States Bike Route (USBR) 36. USBR 36 connects cyclists across Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York to Union City Borough.
- **Heritage Corridor – PA Route 6** - The French Creek Trail will be located within the designated PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor. Pennsylvania's Route 6 covers over 400 miles within northern Pennsylvania and focuses on efforts to preserve, enhance and promote the transportation heritage of one of the nation's first transcontinental highways; to sustain and enhance the small rural communities linked by the highway, like Union City Borough; and to preserve and enhance the natural, scenic beauty of one of America's favorite road trips.
- **South Branch French Creek Greenway and Water Trail** - The French Creek Trail will be located within the nationally recognized South Branch French Creek Greenway. The total length of the Greenway corridor is nearly 24 miles and varies in width from less than 1,000 feet wide through Union City Borough, to nearly a mile near the City of Corry. An associated Water Trail network is also located through the Borough. French Creek is nationally recognized as one of the most biologically and recreationally important waterways in the entire country.

Local Connections - The French Creek Trail will also be connected to many local assets and opportunities.

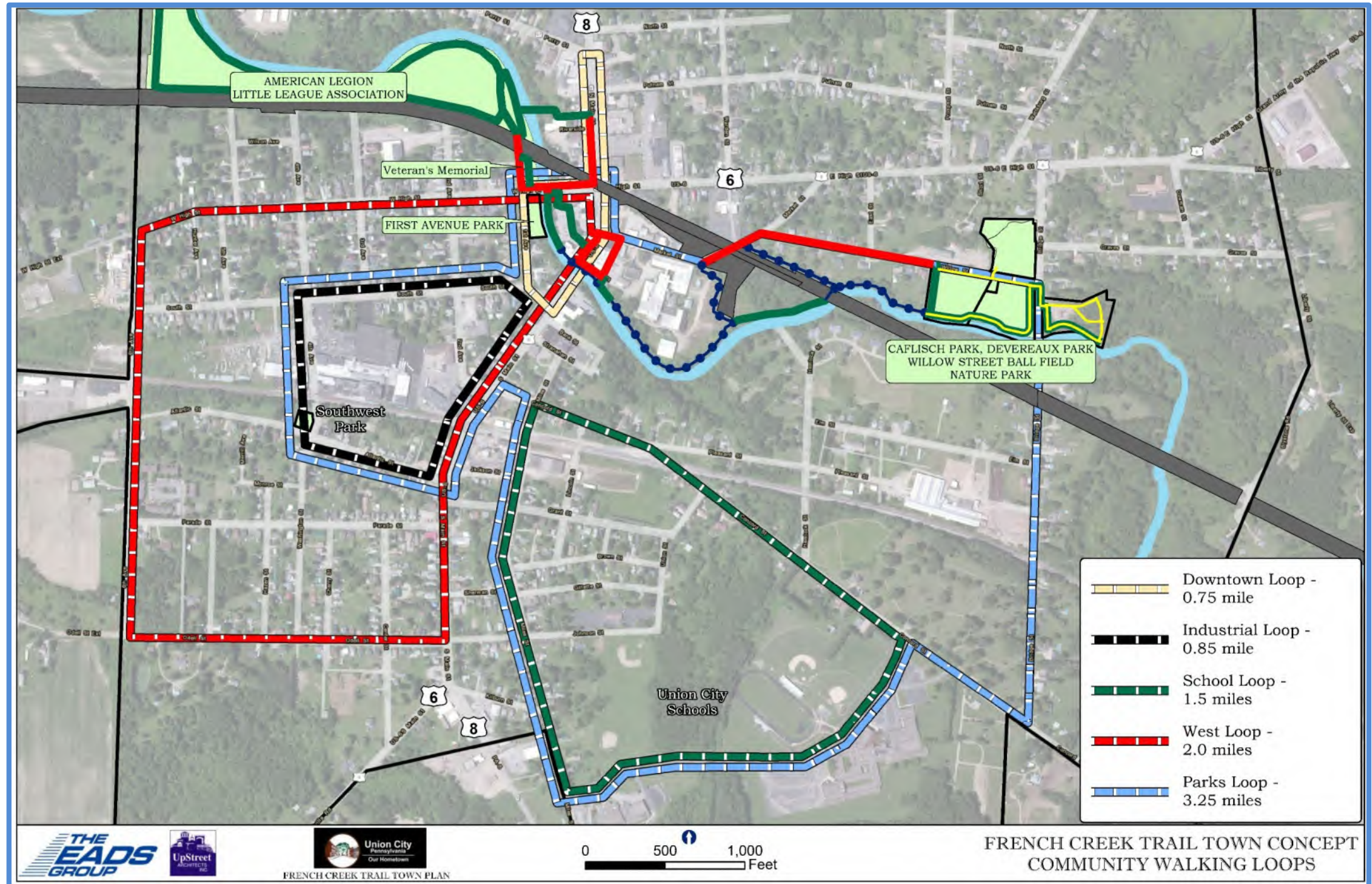
- **Union City Borough Parks** - The French Creek Trail will connect users to the Borough's Cafilisch Park, Devereaux Park, Willow Street Ball Field, First Avenue Parks
- **American Legion Little League Fields** - The French Creek Trail will connect users to the American Legion Little League Fields. The fields are located in the northwest corner of the Borough and are in close proximity to the Borough's First Avenue Park. Access to these fields is provided off of First Avenue.
- **Union City School District Facilities** - The French Creek Trail will be located near the Union City Sports Complex. The Complex is located in the southern portion of the Borough and are in close proximity to the Borough's Cafilisch and Devereaux Parks and the Willow Street Ball Field. The District maintains a variety of large play fields, courts and other types of play equipment adequate for school related purposes.
- **Union City Borough Downtown** - The French Creek Trail will be aligned through the Borough's Historic Downtown area. The Trail will be enhanced by the recent installation of street trees, a new parking lot, sidewalk history panels and historic markers in the downtown area and installation of residential National Register signage.
- **Union City Mural** - The French Creek Trail will be aligned near the Borough's new mural that commemorates the 150th anniversary of the naming of Union City in 1871. The mural pays tribute to the community's rich cultural heritage and reflecting the town's manufacturing, milling, agricultural, and recreational traditions, as well as its most celebrated natural resource - French Creek. The mural was installed on the south-facing wall of Dai Salon at 28 S. Main St in 2021.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### Community Walking Loop

The French Creek Trail will connect to six (6) Walking Loops of various lengths and themes designated in Union City Borough. Five (5) of the loops will use existing streets and sidewalks while the remaining loop will be located within existing public parks in the Borough. The Walking Loops create safe walking and biking routes within the community. They are also intended to encourage walking and biking for residents. The Walking Loops use portions of the Priority Connection Routes described previously in this section. They are places where bike and pedestrian friendly amenities should be located. The following further describes each of the Walking Loops.

- **Downtown Loop** – 0.75 mile. Uses sections of Main Street, High Street, First Avenue and South Street to take users around a portion of downtown Union City Borough. This Loop connects users to First Avenue Park, Banks, Retail Stores and Restaurants.
- **Industrial Loop** – 0.85 mile. Uses sections of South Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Atlantic Street and Main Street to take users around an Industrial Park area. This Loop connects users to Southwest Park.
- **School Loop** - 1.5 miles. As the name implies, the loop incorporates the Union City Junior/Senior High School and Elementary School campuses. This route also connects back to the downtown area.



- **West Loop** - 2.0 miles. This longer Loop extends within the western side of the Borough. This Route passes through residential areas and the downtown area.
- **Parks Loop** – 3.25 miles. This is the longest Walking Loop in the Borough. An important feature of this route is that it connects users to all of Union City Borough’s existing Parks.

# TRAIL OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND SECURITY

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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The following section describes the realities of operating and maintaining the French Creek Trail. The potential role Union City Borough and other supporting agencies and organizations could have in the operation and maintenance of the Trail and sources of in-kind services are also described. An overview of suggested maintenance tasks and equipment, safety and security, liability protection and insurance needs are also discussed.

### **Trail Operation**

Union City Borough will own and operate the French Creek Trail. The Borough will be responsible for day to day functioning of the Trail. This will include administration activities, coordination legal and accounting aspects, addressing issues from landowners and maintenance tasks. The Borough will also manage all activities associated with the Trail including advertisement and promotion, special Trail programming and/or events, maintaining consistency in the look and level of service along the Trail and most importantly obtaining and maintaining adequate funding levels for these activities. The Borough will also likely be responsible for obtaining the Trail Easements and acquiring land required for the Trail.

The Borough has a long history of forming partnerships and gathering community support to develop, complete and maintain recreation projects. Continued support for the operation and maintenance of the French Creek Trail is expected from Borough Council, the Borough's Parks & Recreation Committee, Union City Pride, Inc. (UCPI), the Union City Community Foundation, the Union City Little League Association, residents, various elected officials and from other community shareholders who have advocated for this project.

### Liability Protection

Union City Borough and Trail Easement holders will assume liability associated with the Trail. Although liability cannot be eliminated entirely, it can be controlled by eliminating unsafe conditions and known hazards along the Trail. In addition, Pennsylvania's Recreational Use of Land and Water Act ("RULWA"), creates an incentive by limiting the traditional duty of care that landowners owe to entrants upon their land. This law limits the legal liability of landowners who make their land available to the public for free recreation. Holders of Trail Easements are protected under RULWA if they exercise sufficient control over the land to be subject to liability. So long as no entrance or use fee is charged, the Act provides that landowners owe no duty of care to keep their land safe for recreational users and have no duty to warn of dangerous conditions. Excepted out of this liability limitation are instances where landowners willfully or maliciously fail to guard or warn of dangerous conditions. Volunteers working on the Trail are protected by the Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997. This Act protects volunteers of nonprofit organizations or governmental entities. The Act states that such volunteers are not liable for harm caused by their acts of commission or omission provided the act was in good faith.

### Insurance

The Borough will ensure that their General Liability and Directors and Officers Liability Insurance include coverage of the Trail. General Liability Insurance covers instances where trail users may suffer some form of bodily injury or property damage caused by use of the Trail. It is recommended that at least \$1.0 million per occurrence and \$2.0 million in aggregate General Liability covered be maintained by the Borough. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance will protect Council members if suit is brought against them by a user or otherwise in conjunction with the performance of their duties as they relate to operation of the Trail.

### **Trail Maintenance**

Trail maintenance will be completed by the Borough with support from local volunteers. Maintenance activities will focus on keeping the trail open, clean and safe. A well-maintained French Creek Trail will enhance a user's experience which will lead to good word of mouth promotion and increased usage levels. Specific maintenance objectives for the French Creek Trail will include:

- Eliminating unsafe conditions and potential sources of liability
- Limiting impacts the Trail has on the surrounding environment
- Reducing inconveniences to Trail users
- Ensuring proper functioning of the Trail surface, Trail access points and Trail related facilities.
- Removing invasive species along the Trail and maintaining open views to the Creek at various locations.

The Borough will continually need to monitor Trail conditions to identify future maintenance needs and time frames.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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### Maintenance Tasks, Schedule and Responsibilities

The French Creek Trail will basically be a linear park and therefore will require the same kinds of maintenance required for any of the other Borough parks. Maintenance tasks that will need to be completed on the French Creek Trail fall into four primary categories including Trash, Vegetation, Surface and Structures. The following describes individual tasks within each maintenance category.

- ❑ Trash - This includes picking up and removing trash and debris found along the Trail itself and within reason, in areas adjacent to the Trail that are visible to users.
- ❑ Vegetation - This includes maintaining riparian zones adjacent to the Trail, pruning trees and tree limbs back away from the Trail to allow unobstructed passage and cutting back areas with unwanted weeds or invasive species. Additional tasks can include improving the visual attractiveness of the Trail by planting vegetated areas with attractive plants and flowers and/or establishing garden areas around Trail and at access points. Habitat enhancements may be added as species of special concern are identified and habitat opportunities become important.
- ❑ Surface - As the name suggests, tasks in the category focus on maintaining the integrity of the Trail and access points. Activities can range from routine inspection to periodic grading to spot surface repairs to entire resurfacing efforts.
- ❑ Structures - Installed structures along the Trail corridor including signage, bollards, drainage structures, fencing, benches and bridges will need to be inspected and repaired as required. Activities will range from routine inspection of the structures to periodic repair and replacement.

The scope and frequency of individual tasks within each maintenance category will vary and evolve over time and will most likely be based on available resources and volunteers. The Borough will need to be prepared to address a variety of emergency situations as they arise. Emergency situations that will require immediate attention may include removing fallen tree limbs blocking the Trail or access point, stabilizing a major washout event or anything else that creates an immediate unsafe condition along the Trail.

### Maintenance Equipment

Maintenance of the French Creek Trail will be more efficient if proper equipment is available for use. It is anticipated existing Borough maintenance equipment will be adequate to complete routine maintenance tasks. Recommended equipment includes some type of blower to remove leaf buildups and debris piles along road sections, tractor with mower and a drag or roller to maintain compressed areas around the perimeter of the Trail, a small truck or utility vehicle that can transport supplies and that can be used to remove larger debris along the Trail, power equipment such as chain saws, trimmers and other tools such as hand saws, pruners, rakes and shovels.

### **Trail Security**

The following section describes aspects of safety and security for the French Creek Trail. Maintaining a safe and secure Trail is critical to ensure Trail users have an enjoyable experience while on the Trail and to protect easement holders from potential liability claims. Three (3) primary safety and security items including crime prevention, injury prevention and reducing motorized users in the Trail Corridor will need to be addressed. The following describes these three items.

### Crime Prevention

The Union City Borough Police and Fire Departments should be made aware of the Trail's location and access points. The following crime prevention activities should be considered as operation of the Trail evolves.

- Conduct organized volunteer patrols through a *French Creek Trail Watch* program similar to a neighborhood crime watch program.
- Provide telephone or other contact information for Borough, Police and other emergency responders in a Trail Brochure and along the Trail itself. Instructions for reporting incidences of concern or to provide suggestions for improving security along the Trail should also be provided.
- Conduct activities/programs along the Trail to get an extra set of eyes on the Trail. This can include organized group walks, 5K runs, geocaching stations and environmental education programs.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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### Injury Prevention

Proper design and active maintenance and inspection of the Trail will significantly reduce the chances of a user getting injured while using it. Maintenance and inspection of the Trail should occur on a regular schedule and documenting that any identified issues were addressed should be maintained and regularly reviewed by the Borough. In addition, the French Creek Trail will be aligned around and away from obvious and not so obvious obstacles and hazard areas. Signage will be installed warning users of any potential dangers along the Trail and efforts should be taken to minimize users' exposure to those areas. Conducting annual meetings with local emergency responders to review emergency access points, response procedures and changing conditions along the Trail is also recommended. Trail users should also be provided with a list of rules and regulations that clearly define what is expected of them. It is recommended that a set of rules and regulations be prepared and provided on signage at trail access points and in a Trail brochure distributed at various local outlets including the Borough building, the Buzz of Union City Café and other public places in the Borough. The following is a list of suggested rules and regulations:

- The Trail is open from Dusk to Dawn
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the Trail
- Fires are prohibited along the Trail
- Disorderly conduct is prohibitive
- ATV's, trail bikes and other motorized users are prohibited from using the Trail
- Pets must be leashed at all times.
- Fishermen should obey all laws of the PA Fish & Boat Commission
- Carry out all litter
- Respect the rights and privacy of adjacent property owners
- Trail users must stay on the Trail at all times

### Reduce Motorized Users

There is always a chance that motorized users may attempt to access and use the Trail. Efforts to reduce motorized users should be incorporated with Trail development and as operation of the Trail evolves. The Trail will be aligned away from any known motorized use area. Signage will be installed at access points to indicate use of the Trail is for non-motorized use only, installing bollards at access points and at select locations along the Trail to discourage motorized use on the Trail and that some type of Trail User Education Program focused on how motorized users are not permitted on the Trail can be developed.

# **TRAIL CONCEPT PLAN**



## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

The following describes the envisioned characteristics of the French Creek Trail. Information from various sources was gathered and reviewed including results of the Physical Inventory and Assessment, the Public Participation Process and input from the Project Steering Committee. The interpretation, application and use of this information was critical in developing a realistic Trail Concept Plan that incorporates wants and needs identified through the planning process.

### Trail Characteristics

The French Creek Trail will be developed as a single tread non-motorized nature trail primarily serving pedestrians, joggers, hikers, nature enthusiasts and off-road bicyclists. The following Trail characteristics emerged from the planning process. These characteristics will help to guide the development of the French Trail and will help to define what the Trail will be when created.

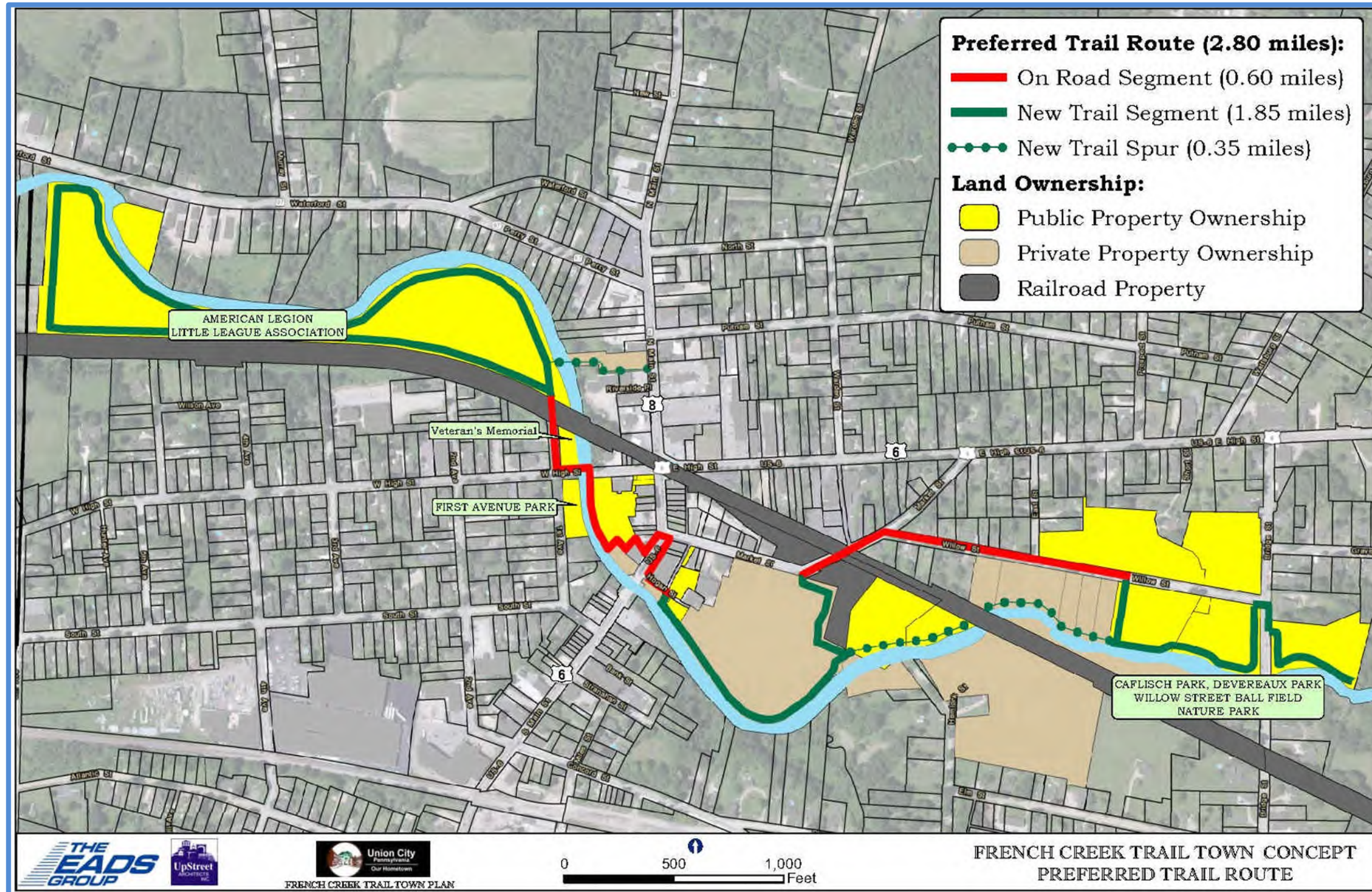
- A Nature Trail – South Branch French Creek and its surrounding Greenway creates a significant natural resource and riparian greenway zone in the Borough. The green and sustainable characteristic of French Creek and its surrounding greenway area establishes the overall theme of a French Creek Trail Town. The Borough desires to develop the Trail to enhance these characteristics in the Borough. Construction of the Trail will include invasive species removal, native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements. The Trail will be naturally incorporated within the French Creek Greenway. Green practices and design approaches will be considered to enhance the natural resources surrounding the Trail so that users feel connected to French Creek and its Greenway. The development of the French Creek Trail will follow green and sustainable practices while providing passive recreation opportunities along the beautiful and environmentally important French Creek. The French Creek Trail can also be used as an outdoor environmental learning resource.
- A Trail for All Ages and Abilities – Results from the Community Engagement process indicate that the Trail should serve all residents. An emphasis of the French Creek Trail will be to connect different types of users and users of all ages and abilities to the French Creek resource. This will be accomplished by designing the Trail, fishing piers, direct points of Creek access, riparian and aquatic habitat improvements, seating areas and scenic overlooks along French Creek to be ADA compliant. The Borough intends to construct as much of the Trail as possible to be five (5) foot wide with a stabilized surface with grades not exceeding 1:20 and cross slope not steeper than 1:48. Pathways connecting to Trail facilities and amenities will also be designed to comply with ADA requirements.
- A Heritage Trail – Union City was founded because of French Creek. The French Creek Trail will bring back the major resource that built Union City. The French Creek Trail will reconnect Union City back to French Creek. Historic markers and interpretation panels will be installed along the Trail to reflect the importance of the French Creek to the early development of Union City.



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Preferred Trail Route

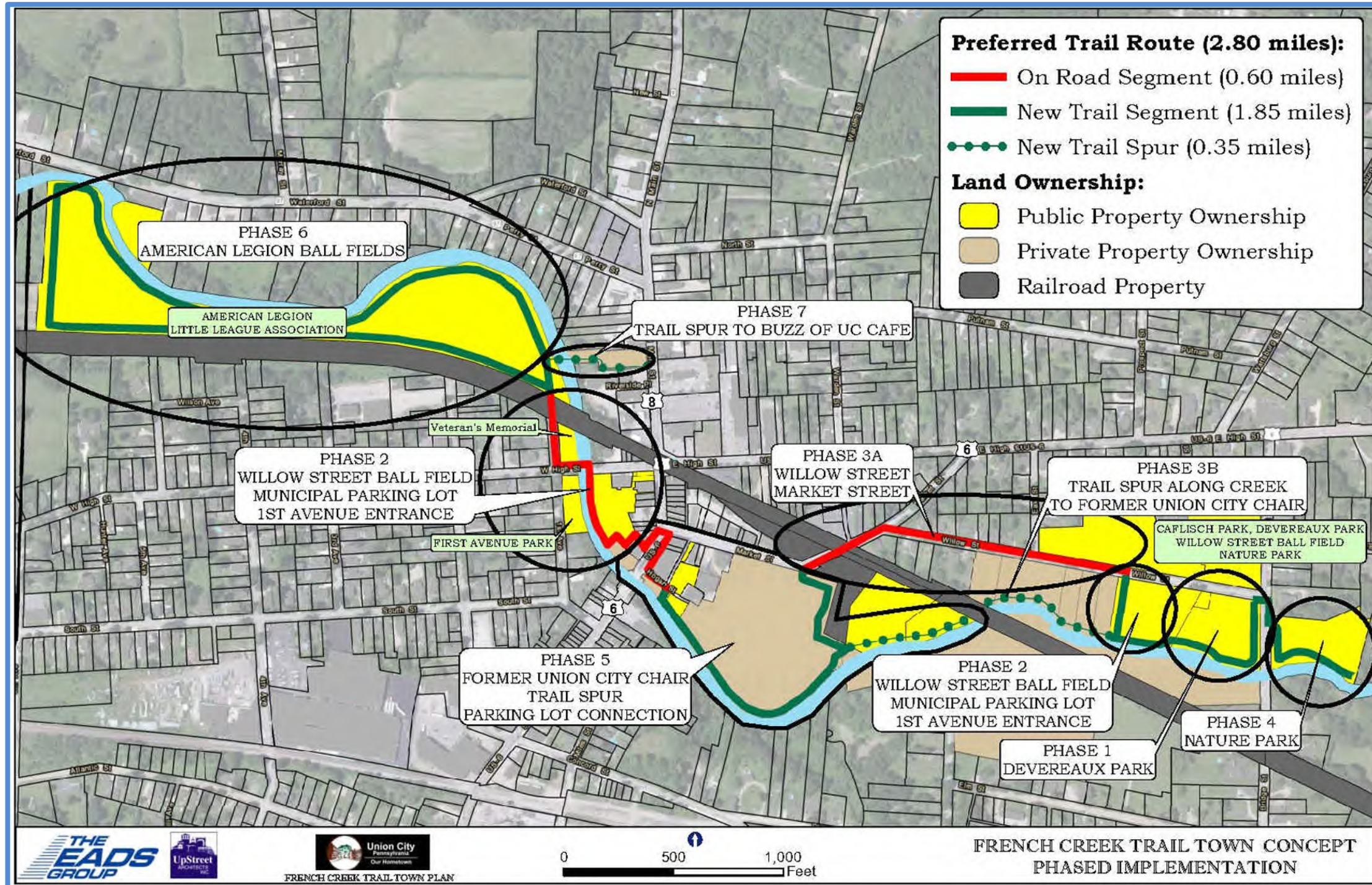
The map below shows the Preferred Route of the French Creek Trail. This route takes into consideration the Determination of Feasibility described in Section 9.0 and the desired Trail Characteristics described above. The Preferred Route also takes into consideration ease of construction factors including where portions of the Trail can be aligned through public property and on existing roadways. Three (3) Trail Spurs are also included in the Preferred Route to further connect the Trail to French Creek. As shown on the map, the total length of the French Creek Trail is approximately 2.80 miles. New Trail construction will total 1.85 miles. An additional 0.35 miles of New Trail will be needed to create the three (3) Trail Spurs. Approximately 0.60 miles of the Trail will be aligned on an existing road.



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Phased Implementation Approach

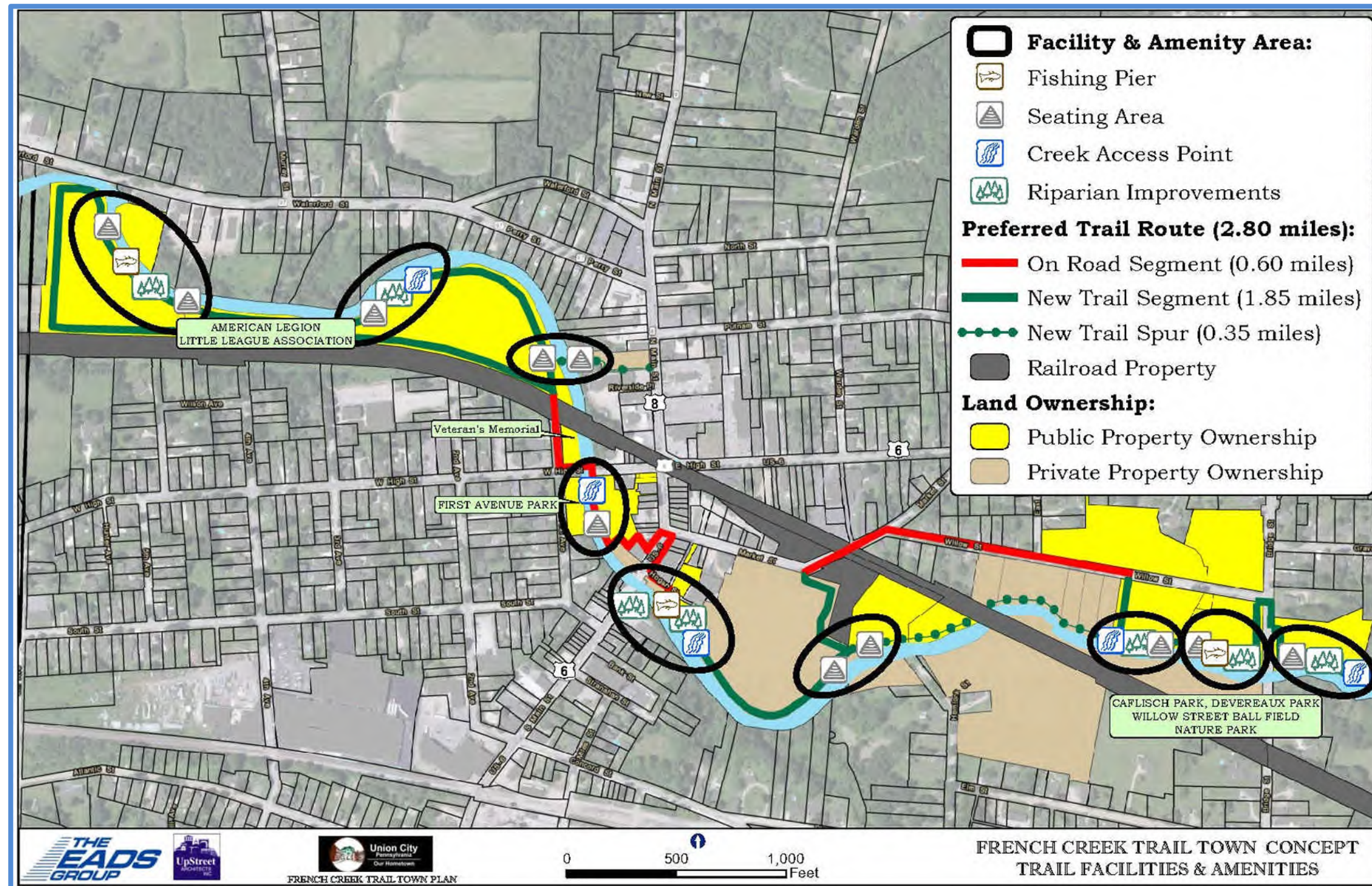
The French Creek Trail will be developed in seven (7) separate Phases. The map below shows the approximate location of each Trail Phase. Trail phases were identified based on construction cost and location. It is the intent of the Borough to keep the construction costs for each section in the \$200,000 - \$300,000 cost range to be better aligned with grant funding limits and local cash match opportunities. The Project Steering Committee emphasized the importance of constructing the Trail in sections to get sections open so that progress and enthusiasm for completing the Trail could be sustained. The Committee also emphasized the need to construct the first sections of the Trails in the Devereaux Park area and in the downtown area and then complete the remaining sections. The first four (4) phases are also consistent with recommendations included in the Borough Parks and Recreation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Phased Facilities and Amenities

Results of the Community Engagement process and the Interactive Comment map were used to identify wanted types of Trail related Facilities and Amenities and their wanted locations. Residents indicated they want Fishing Piers, Seating Areas, Creek Access Points and Riparian Improvements. The map below highlights the Facilities and Amenities and their preferred locations. As shown, the Facilities and Amenities are clustered in nine (9) locations. Final Trail designs will incorporate the wanted types of Facilities and Amenities. The exact location will be determined during field investigations conducted during the final design process.



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Riparian and Habitat Improvements

Results of the Community Engagement process and the Interactive Comment map were used to identify areas where Riparian and Habitat Improvements should be completed along French Creek. The improvements include the removal of invasive plant species, the planting of native trees, shrubs and other vegetation and installation of aquatic habitat features. Final Trail designs will incorporate Riparian and Habitat improvements. However, Riparian and Habitat improvements can also be completed independent of developing the Trail. A short list of suggested native Trees, Shrubs and Native Grasses, Ferns and Forbs that should be considered for the Riparian improvements is provided below. The exact location(s) of the Riparian improvements, selection of native plants and extent of habitat improvements will be determined during field investigations and thru collaboration with the French Creek Valley Conservancy and Erie County Conservation District during the Final Design process. A set of graphic concepts are provided on the following pages to highlight proposed locations and types of Riparian and Habitat improvements. The graphics concepts also highlight how Riparian and Habitat improvements can be incorporated into development of the French Creek Trail.

### Native Trees:

- Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)
- Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)
- Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)
- Common Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*)

### Native Shrubs:

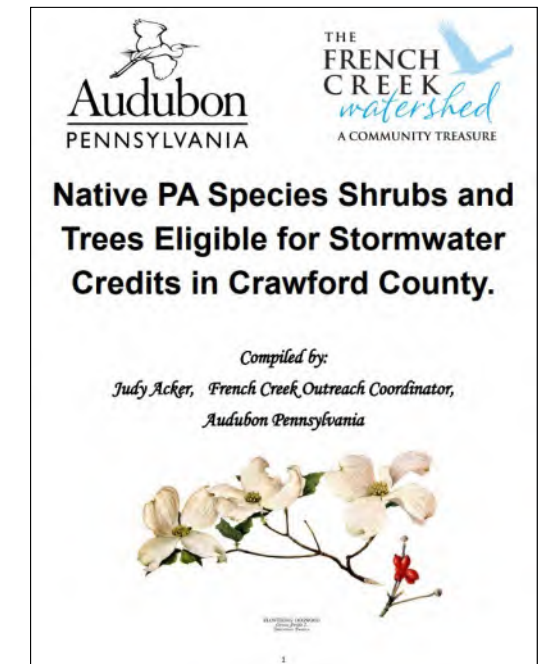
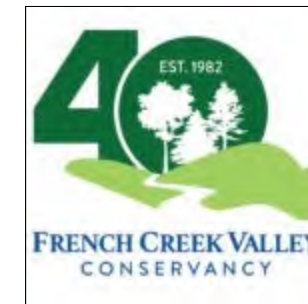
- Black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)
- Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
- Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
- Common Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)
- Lowbush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*)

### Native Grasses, Ferns, and Forbs:

- Bush Clover (*Lespedeza hirta*)
- Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Wool Grass (*Scripps cyperinus*)
- Common Ladyfern (*Athyrium filix-femina*)
- Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepius incarnata*)
- Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*)
- Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*)
- Blue Vervain (*Verbena hastata*)
- Golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*)

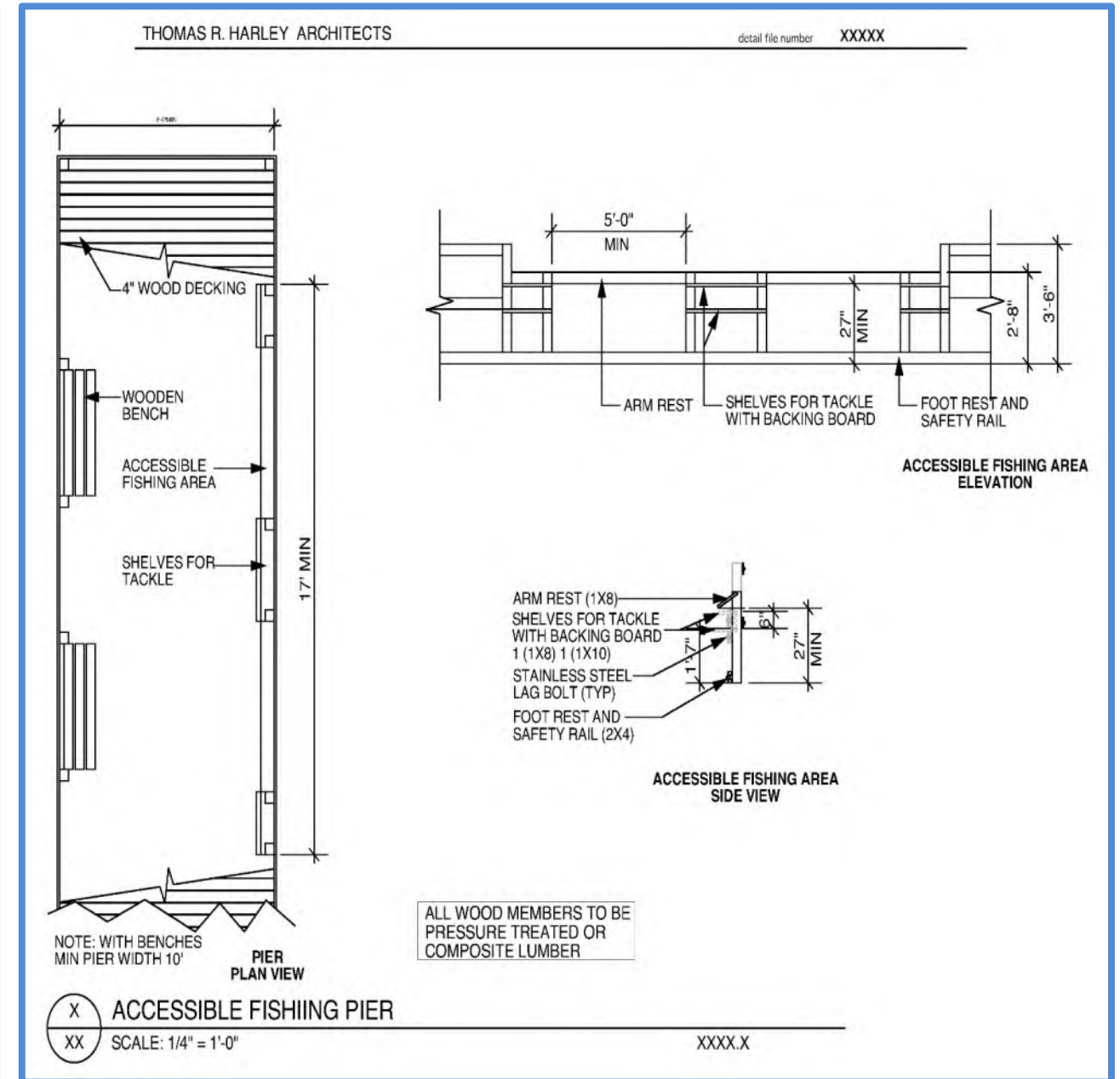
Information on French Creek, native plant descriptions and conservation efforts in the French Creek Watershed included in the following resources should be consulted when developing Riparian and Habitat Improvements in Union City Borough.

- French Creek Valley Conservancy - <https://www.frenchcreekconservancy.org/>
- *Pennsylvania Native Plants of the French Creek Watershed - Culture and Use Guide* – a booklet by Judy Acker, Education & Outreach Specialist with the French Creek Valley Conservancy
- *Audubon Pennsylvania - Native PA Species Shrubs and Trees Eligible for Stormwater Credits in Crawford County* - compiled by Judy Acker Education & Outreach Specialist with the French Creek Valley Conservancy  
[https://pa.audubon.org/sites/default/files/crawford\\_trees\\_and\\_shrubs\\_eligible\\_for\\_stormwater\\_credits.pdf](https://pa.audubon.org/sites/default/files/crawford_trees_and_shrubs_eligible_for_stormwater_credits.pdf)



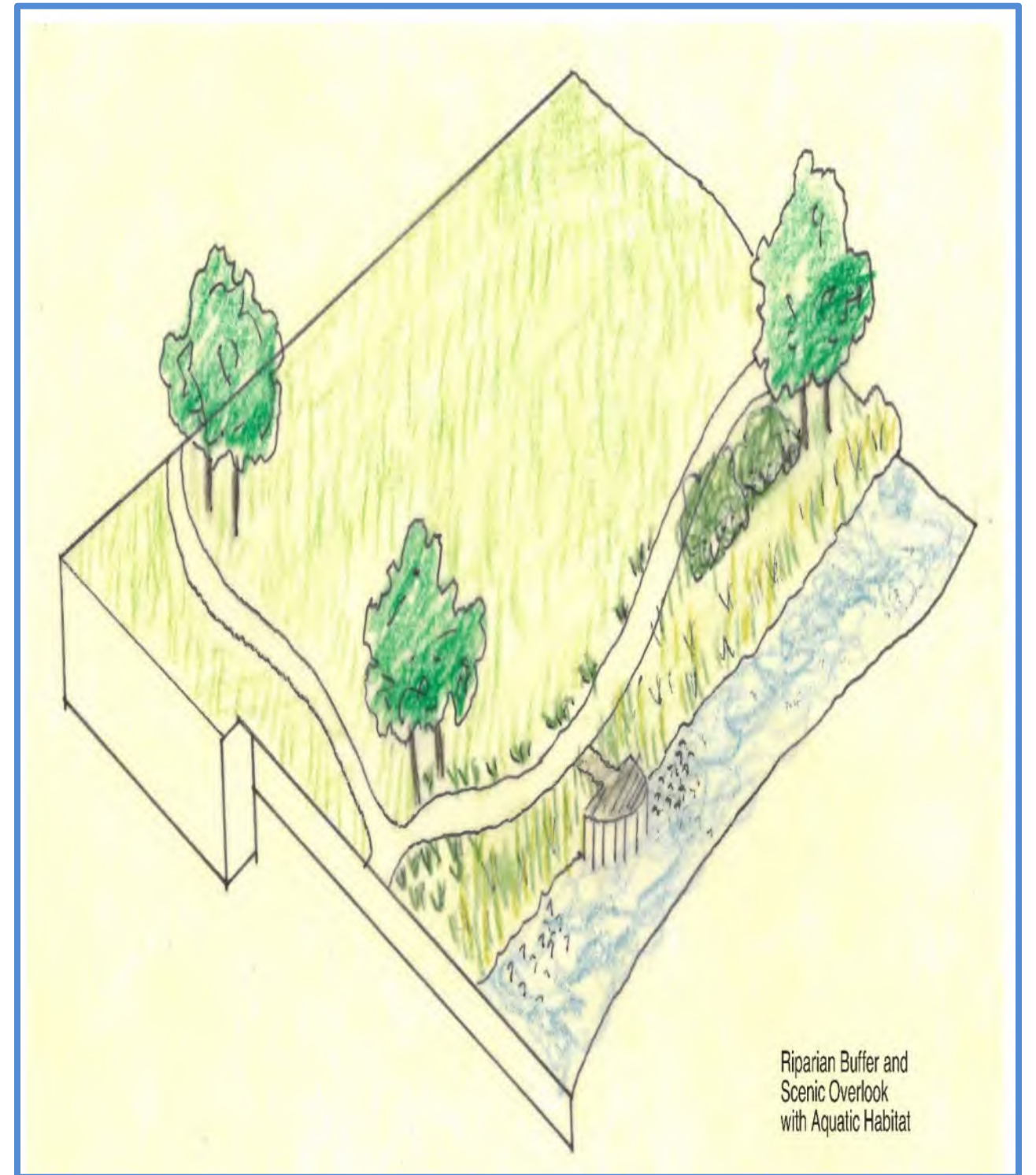
# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Fishing Pier and Habitat Improvements



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Devereaux Park, Willow Street Ball Field and Nature Park Area



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

Union City Pride, Inc. and Former Union City Chair Property Area





# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Downtown and Municipal Parking Lot Area



# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## American Legion Little League Fields Area



# **FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY**

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 1 - DEVEREAUX PARK

The Devereaux Park section of the Trail will improve and expand recreation opportunities in the Park. Adding a section of the French Creek Trail will establish the Park as a destination for walking, outdoor play, picnics and related events. Installing a section of the Trail in the Park will also implement recommendations made in the Borough's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and its Active Transportation Plan. The Trail section compliments a recently constructed walking path in the adjacent Cafilisch Park. This section of the Trail is highlighted by the proposed installation of an ADA fishing pier with aquaitc habitat improvemetns, benches and a gazebo, and completion of riparian improvements. Users of this Trail section will have access to a new restroom comfort station that was recently installed in the adjacent Cafilisch Park.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.12 miles
Connections	Bridge Street, Willow Street, Devereaux Park
Slope	Less than 0.25%
Surface	5'- wide concrete
Land Ownership	Public – Union City Borough

Trail Facilities and Amenities	
Fishing Pier	One (1) ADA Fishing Dock
Seating Area	3-benches; 28' Gazebo
Riparian Improvements	Invasive vegetation to be removed and replaced with native vegetation



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	Concrete Walkway, Aprons and Bench areas	600	SY	\$150.00	\$90,000.00
2	Concrete slab for Gazebo	90	SY	\$150.00	\$13,500.00
3	Curb Ramp	2	LS	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
4	ADA Fishing Dock	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
5	ADA Fishing Dock Handrail	20	LF	\$100.00	\$2,000.00
6	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	3	EA	\$395.00	\$1,185.00
2	Bike Rack	1	LS	\$750.00	\$750.00
3	Project Sign	1	LS	\$50.00	\$50.00
<b>C. Park Items</b>					
	28' Gazebo	1	LS	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
<b>D. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$182,485.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 2 - WILLOW STREET BALL FIELD, MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT, 1<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE ENTRANCE

The Willow Street Ball Field, Municipal Parking Lot, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Entrance section includes construction of the French Creek Trail in the Willow Street Ball Field and new sidewalk along the municipal parking lot frontage along French Creek and from High Street to the Legion Park along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. This Phase will extend the French Creek Trail beyond Devereaux Park. This Phase will also establish a Trail section in the Downtown Area and will create a proper entrance into the American Legion Little League Fields. This section of the Trail will also connect to many designated Community Walking Loops. Establishing a connection to the American Legion Fields will encourage players and families to use the Trail to access many retailers and businesses located in the Downtown Area. This section of the Trail is highlighted by the proposed installation of a community seating area with 'windows' on to the Creek and a direct access point to the Creek for public use.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.32 miles
Connections	Devereaux Park, Main Street, High Street, American Legion Little League Fields
Slope	Approximately 1%
Surface	5'- wide stabilized aggregate, 5'-wide concrete, existing asphalt in Parking Lot
Land Ownership	Public – Union City Borough

Trail Facilities and Amenities	
Seating Area	7-benches
Creek Access	Public access from Municipal Parking Lot to French Creek



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	5' wide Trail with Trail Surface Aggregate	470	SY	\$120.00	\$56,400.00
2	5' wide sidewalk	500	SY	\$150.00	\$75,000.00
3	Curb Ramp with DWS	4	EA	\$4,000.00	\$16,000.00
4	Concrete Curb	425	LF	\$100.00	\$42,500.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	7	EA	\$500.00	\$3,500.00
2	Municipal Lot Restoration and Striping	150	SY	\$85.00	\$12,750.00
3	Unpaved Restoration	1	LS	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
4	Riparian Restoration with Erosion Control	1	LS	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
5	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
6	Native Vegetation Planting and Removal of Invasive Species	2	EA	\$1,100.00	\$2,200.00
7	Traffic Control	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>C. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$26,801.00	\$26,801.00
2	Contingency	1	10%	\$24,365.00	\$24,365.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$297,016.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 3A - WILLOW STREET AND MARKET STREET – ON ROAD OPTION

The Willow Street and Market Street section will be an on-road section. This phase includes sidewalk rehabilitation and new sidewalks to fill sidewalk gaps. The plan is to replace existing sidewalks 'in-place' at their current width of 4-ft so as to avoid utility conflicts and the need for additional right-of-way. Bump outs will be provided at appropriate intervals. ADA curbs ramps with detecable warning surfaces (DWS) will be installed at all intersections and crosswalks. This section will connect the Willow Street Ball Field with the former Union City Chair property.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.30 miles
Connections	Willow Street Ball Field, Devereaux Park, Bridge Street, Market Street, Union City Chair property
Slope	Approximately 1%
Surface	4-ft wide sidewalks – in-replacement of existing
Land Ownership	NA – on road section



### PHASE 3B –WILLOW STREET BALL FIELD TO FORMER UNION CITY CHAIR – ALONG CREEK OPTION

This section will also connect the Willow Street Ball Field with the former Union City Chair property. The Willow Street Ball Field to Former Union City Chair Trail Spur will create a more leisurely and intimate route along French Creek. This section will include places to sit and enjoy the Creek, 'windows' on to the Creek and riparian improvements. The Borough wants to open both the On-Road section and the Creek Spur route to provide different types of experiences. The On-Road section will be a more direct route to the Parks areas while the Creek Spur will give users more opportunities to connect with French Creek.

Item #	Work Item Description – PHASE 3A	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	4' wide concrete sidewalk	700	SY	\$200.00	\$140,000.00
2	Curb Ramp with DWS	9	SY	\$5,000.00	\$45,000.00
3	Concrete Curb	167	LF	\$100.00	\$16,700.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Excavation of Grading	1	LS	\$16,700.00	\$16,700.00
2	Unpaved Restoration	1	LS	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
3	Traffic Control	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>C. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	10%	\$23,140.00	\$23,140.00
2	Inspection	1	12%	27,768.00	27,768.00
3	Contingency	1	10%	\$23,140.00	\$23,140.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$305,448.00</b>

Item #	Work Item Description – PHASE 3B	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	5' wide Trail Surface Aggregate	1000	SY	\$120.00	\$120,000.00
2	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	3	EA	\$395.00	\$1,185.00
2	Native Vegetation Planting and Removal of Invasive Species	1	LS	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00
3	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>C. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$157,285.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 4 - NATURE PARK

The Nature Park section of the Trail will be the furthest extent of the Trail on the eastern side of the Borough. Adding a section of the French Creek Trail to this area will be the initial development of the Nature Park. Installing a section of the Trail in this area will also implement recommendations made in the Borough’s Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan and it’s Active Transportation Plan. This section of the Trail is highlighted by the proposed community seating area with ‘windows’ on to the Creek, a direct access point to the Creek for public use and completion of riparian improvements. Users of this Trail section will also have access to a new restroom comfort station that was recently installed in the adjacent Caffisch Park.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.14 miles
Connections	Bridge Street, Devereaux Park
Slope	Approximately 1%
Surface	5'- wide concrete
Land Ownership	Public – Union City Borough

Trail Facilities and Amenities	
Creek Access	Access for public wading and boat launching
Seating Area	3-benches
Riparian Improvements	Invasive vegetation to be removed and replaced with native vegetation



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	Concrete Walkway	1000	SY	\$150.00	\$150,000.00
2	Curb Ramp	2	LS	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
3	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	3	EA	\$395.00	\$1,185.00
2	Creek Access	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
3	Riparian Restoration	1	LS	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
4	Native Vegetation Planting and Removal of Invasive Species	1	LS	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00
5	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>D. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$217,285.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 5 – FORMER UNION CITY CHAIR, TRAIL SPUR AND PARKING LOT CONNECTION

This section of Trail will be aligned almost in its entirety along the Creek. Portions of this phase will be constructed on private property. A Trail Easement will be needed prior to starting work on the main Trail section. The proposed Trail Spur will be constructed on public property and will offer users unobstructive views to the Creek. This section of the Trail is also highlighted by two (2) proposed community seating areas with 'windows' on to the Creek, an ADA Fishing Pier, a direct access point into the Creek for wading and boat launching and completion of riparian improvements.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.53 miles
Connections	Market Street, Main Street
Slope	Approximately 1%
Surface	5'- wide compacted aggregate
Land Ownership	Private – Former Union City Chair; Public Property – Erie County and Union City Pride, Inc.

Trail Facilities and Amenities	
Fishing Pier	One (1) ADA Fishing Dock. Aquatic habitat improvements to be completed with Fishing Dock
Seating Area	2-benches
Creek Access	Access for public wading and boat launching
Riparian Improvements	Invasive vegetation to be removed and replaced with native vegetation at two (2) sites.



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	5' wide Trail Surface Aggregate	1000	SY	\$120.00	\$120,000.00
2	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
3	ADA Fishing Dock with Aquatic Habitat Improvements	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
4	ADA Fishing Dock Handrail	20	LF	\$100.00	\$2,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	2	EA	\$395.00	\$790.00
2	Riparian Restoration	2	LS	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
3	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
4	Creek Access	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>D. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$207,790.00</b>



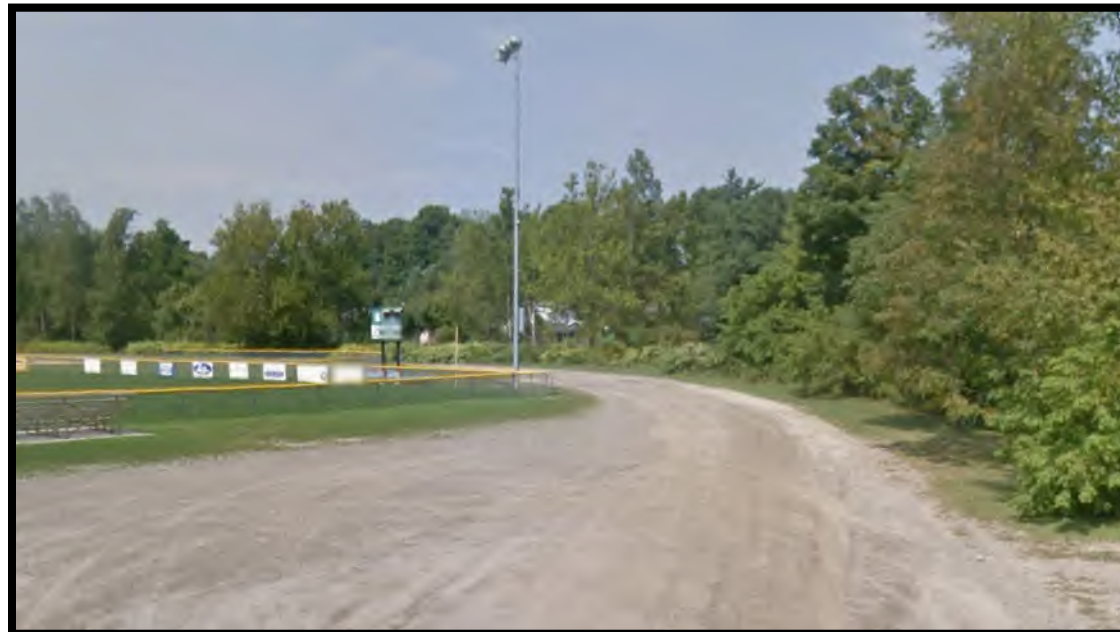
## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 6 – AMERICAN LEGION BALL FIELDS

This section of Trail will be located within the American League Ball Field area. This section of the Trail is highlighted by three (3) proposed community seating areas with ‘windows’ on to the Creek, an ADA Fishing Pier, a direct access point into the Creek for wading and boat launching.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	1.14 miles
Connections	1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue
Slope	Less than 1%
Surface	5'- wide concrete
Land Ownership	Public – American Legion, Union City Little League Association.

Trail Facilities and Amenities	
Fishing Pier	One (1) ADA Fishing Dock
Seating Area	3-benches
Creek Access	Access for public wading and boat launching
Riparian Improvements	Invasive vegetation to be removed and replaced with native vegetation at two (2) sites



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	5-ft wide Concrete Walkway, Aprons and Bench areas	2,000	SY	\$150.00	\$300,000.00
2	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
3	ADA Fishing Dock	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
4	ADA Fishing Dock Handrail	20	LF	\$100.00	\$2,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Benches	3	EA	\$395.00	\$1,185.00
2	Riparian Restoration with Plantings and Erosion Control	2	EA	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
3	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$15,000.00	\$10,000.00
4	Creek Access	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>D. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$383,185.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### PHASE 7 – TRAIL SPUR TO BUZZ OF UNION CITY CAFE

This section of Trail will be a Trail spur connecting the American Legion Ball Fields and the Buzz of Union City Café. This spur will provide access to players and families at the Ball fields to the Café and surrounding railors.

Trail Characteristics	
Length	0.10 miles
Connections	American Legion Ball Fields
Slope	Less than 1%
Surface	Pedestrian Bridge
Land Ownership	Private – Buzz of Union City, Public – American Legion



Item #	Work Item Description	#	Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<b>A. Trail</b>					
1	50-ft pedestrian Bridge	50	LF	\$2,000.00	\$100,000.00
2	Mobilization/Demobilization	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
<b>B. Site items</b>					
1	Geotechnical Investigation	1	EA	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00
2	Clearing and Grubbing	1	LS	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
<b>D. Professional Services</b>					
1	Engineering	1	LS	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
2	Permitting	1	LS	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Estimated Project Cost:</b>					<b>\$170,000.00</b>

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

### Trail Development Cost Summary

The French Creek Trail will extend for a total of approximately 2.80 miles between the Devereaux Park area and the American Legion ball Fields. It is estimated that creating the French Creek Trail, incorporating Trail facilities and amenities and completing the riparian improvements will cost approximately \$1.9 million dollars. The following summarizes the total cost per Phase.

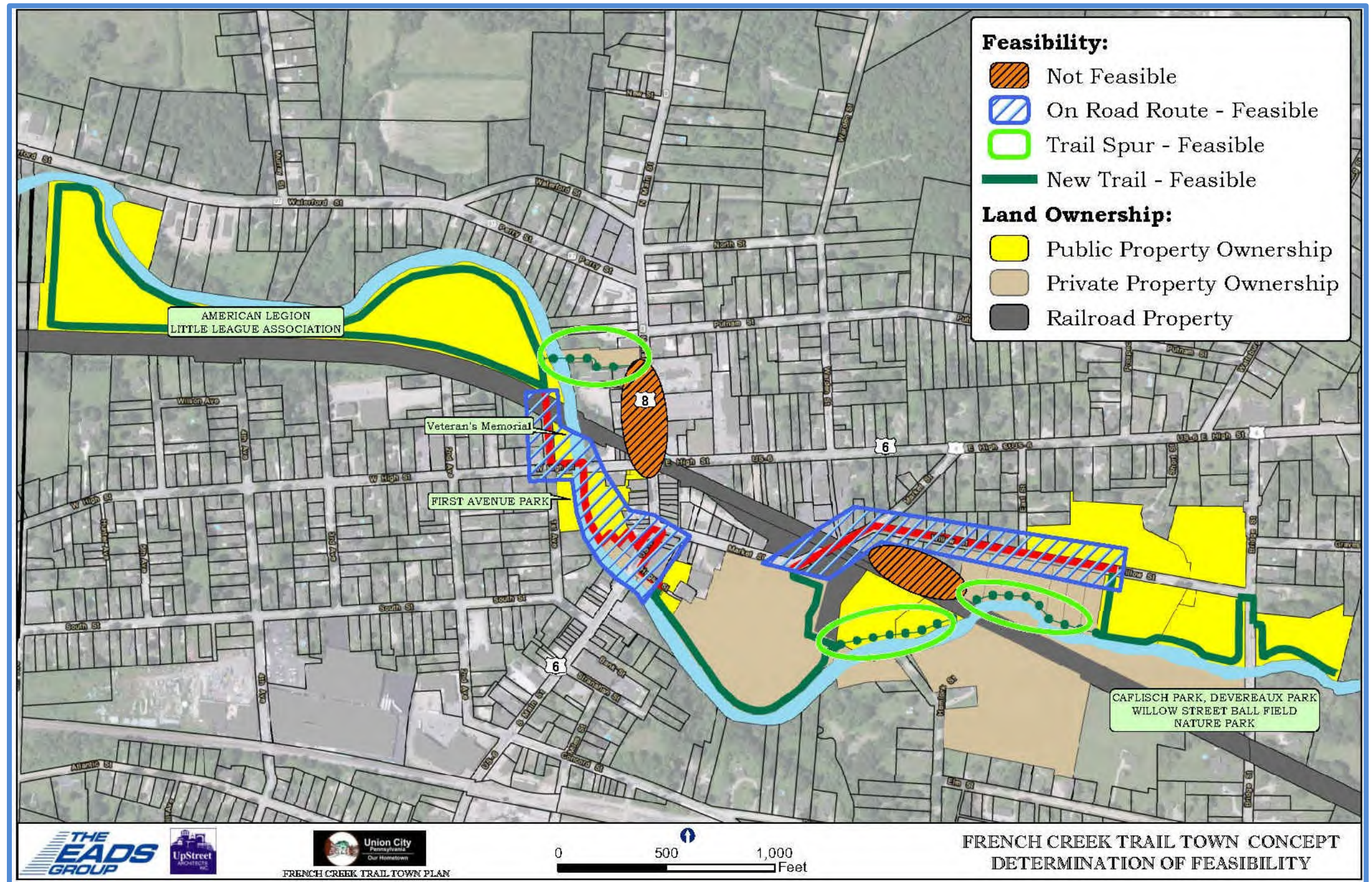
Segment	Length (miles)	Cost
PHASE 1 – DEVEREAUX PARK	0.12	\$182,485
PHASE 2 – WILLOW STREET BALL FIELD, MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT, 1 <sup>ST</sup> AVENUE ENTRANCE	0.32	\$297,016
PHASE 3 A – WILLOW STREET, MARKET STREET – ON-ROAD OPTION	0.30	\$305,448
PHASE 3 B – WILLOW STREET BALL FIELD TO FORMER UNION CITY CHAIR – TRAIL SPUR ALONG CREEK OPTION	0.15	\$157,285
PHASE 4 – NATURE PARK	0.14	\$217,285
PHASE 5 – FORMER UNION CITY CHAIR, TRAIL SPUR, PARKING LOT CONNECTION	0.53	\$207,790
PHASE 6 – AMERICAN LEGION BALL FIELDS	1.14	\$383,185
PHASE 7 – TRAIL SPUR TO BUZZ OF UC CAFE	0.10	\$170,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>\$1,920,494</b>

# DETERMINATION OF FEASIBILITY

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

The French Creek Trail study was completed to determine the feasibility of developing the French Creek Trail between the Devereaux Park area on the eastern side of the Borough and the American Legion Ballfield on the western side of the Borough. This study provides an overview of the issues and opportunities and realities associated with developing the French Creek Trail so that informed decisions can be made regarding its future. As summarized below, it was determined that the French Creek Trail is feasible to develop.

- **Legal Feasibility** – As described in Section 3.0, there are 16 public entity property owners, 12 private property owners, and one (1) railroad right of way owner located in the Trail corridor. Union City Borough has indicated that land owned by public entities is available for the French Creek Trail. Two (2) options for connecting the Willow Street Ball Field and the former Union City Chair property will be developed. An on-road section using Willow St. and Market St. can be opened in the short-term while the Borough continues to work with property owners and develops the Trail Spur along the Creek. The Borough wants to open both routes to provide different types of experiences. The on-road section can be used by active users wanting to directly access the Park areas. The Creek route can be used by passive users wanting a more leisurely route with more intimate connections to the Creek. The property owner across the Creek from Devereaux Park indicated they were not able to enter into a Trail Agreement. Attempts to route the Trail through this property is considered Not Feasible. All other Trail Routes shown on the map to the right are considered Feasible.



- **Technical Feasibility** – Potential Trail routes using a portion of PA Route 8 between E High Street and the Buzz of Union City Café was determined to be Not Feasible based on high traffic counts and anticipated difficulties installing a safe walking and bike pathway along Route 8. The wanted connection to the Buzz of Union City Café can still be accomplished by creating a Trail spur from the American Legion Ball Field, across French Creek, and onto the Café property. A Trail route that will pass under the Buffalo and Pittsburgh rail bridge downstream of the Willow Street Ball Field was deemed Not Feasible due to flooding concerns in the area and lack of adequate Trail clearance between the Creek and the rail bridge. A potential Trail route along French Creek in this area will still be accomplished by creating a Trail spur on publicly owned land adjacent to the Union City Chair property.

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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- Demand for the Trail - Demand and support for the French Creek Trail was overwhelmingly positive during this planning process. No significant opposition to a Trail was received from the public participation process. The Trail will not be located on properties where the owners have expressed a Trail is not wanted. The French Creek Trail will expand recreational opportunities for residents and will attract visitors to the Borough. The French Creek Trail will provide more outdoor recreation opportunities and will encourage more physical activity by residents of all ages. The French Creek Valley Conservancy also expressed great enthusiasm and support for creating the Trail and for completing the riparian zone and aquatic habitat improvements
- Physical and Natural Features – Most of the French Creek Trail will be in the 100-yr floodplain. Local investigations and local flood accounts indicate the flooding is seasonal and would not significantly jeopardize use of the Trail. Three (3) main flooding areas were identified along the proposed Trail route. These include around the Devereaux Park area, along the Creek behind Willow Street and around the American Legion Little League Fields. The Devereaux Park area and the American Legion Little League Fields area are currently developed as recreation areas and used by the Public. Safeguards in place to protect current users in these areas will be adequate to protect users of the French Creek Trail. Flooding events on properties along the Creek to the rear of Willow Street are considered hazardous for Trail users. Therefore, the Trail route in this area is considered not feasible.
- Operation, Maintenance and Security – Union City Borough will operate and maintain the French Trail as they do their other existing Park areas. Operation, Maintenance and Security costs and activities are not a deterrent to creating the French Creek Trail.
- Financial Feasibility - The French Creek Trail will be created using a multi-phase approach. Section 8 provides an opinion of probable construction costs for each phase. The cost of each phase is less than the maximum total project cost levels of typical state level trail construction grants. Union City Borough has a proven capacity to form partnerships and to obtain grant funding and local matching dollars to implement projects. Overall, since 2009, the Borough has invested over \$3-million towards community improvement projects. The Borough has determined that the estimated cost of each phase is within reason and can be obtained. Trail construction costs are not a deterrent to creating the French Creek Trail.

The Borough is committed to creating the French Creek Trail because they understand that it provides an extraordinary opportunity to develop the kinds of amenities, access options and facilities that will best allow the Borough to take full advantage of the important French Creek resource. The Borough will need to collaborate with community partners and will need to be creative, flexible and relentless when it comes to securing funding from local, private, state or federal sources. Overall, the French Creek Trail as shown on the Trail Concept Plan is determined to be feasible.

# TRAIL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

Potential Trail funding options are provided below. Options generally include direct grant funding from State and Regional sources, direct municipal funding including in-kind services, and local donors providing financial contributions and volunteer support. This is not a complete list of funding options. Various local and regional grants, other 'non-state grants', foundations and other sources should be explored and considered during implementation. Projects may need to be funded in stages (i.e. Design/Engineering then follow up submissions for construction) or in phases (completion of a walking path segment then riparian improvements etc.), based on the funding available. Due to ever changing grant funding requirements, availability of funding and the variety of funding levels, it is difficult to predict with certainty or to describe an exact funding path for each project. What can be said with certainty is that Union City Borough and its partners must relentlessly seek funding from multiple sources/options. What can also be said with certainty is that funding sources will require a level of local match (cash), in-kind service contributions, maintenance agreement(s) and/or other documentation and the Borough will need to creatively combine and match multiple types of funding awards with multiple priorities.

### STATE GRANT SUMMARY

Criteria	DCNR – C2P2	DCNR - PRT	DCED CFA - GTRP	PennDOT – TA-Set Aside	PennDOT – MTF	CFA– MTF
Grant Award Amounts	varies	varies	Up to \$250,000	\$50,000 – \$1,000,000	\$100,000 – \$3,000,000	\$100,000 – \$3,000,000
Funding Level	single source	supplemental	supplemental	supplemental	single source	single source
Local Match Requirement	50%	20%	15%	All Pre-Construction Activities	30%	30% (The 30% match requirement may be waived)
Typical Submission Cycle	Annually April	Annually April	Annually May	2-yr cycle	Annually Fall	Annually Spring

PennDOT - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation  
 DCNR - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
 DCED - Department of Community and Economic Development

CFA - Commonwealth Financing Agency  
 C2P2 - DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program  
 PRT – DCNR's Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program

TA-Set Aside – PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program  
 GTRP – CFA's Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program  
 MTF – Multimodal Transportation Fund

Common among potential grant funding sources is the requirement of a local cash or in-kind service match. Ultimately a local source of funding or contribution of services will need to be documented prior to submitting grant applications. The responsibility for providing local match funding will fall to Union City Borough, if other sources of leverage match from another funding source are not readily available. Local organizations and groups must be prepared to contribute financially and/or with services to cover the match requirement.

### Local Funding

Creating the French Creek Trail cannot all be accomplished through State level grant sources. Local organizations and groups must be prepared to contribute financially. Local cash contributions and/or in-kind service matches will be needed to complete projects independently or as a match contribution to grant awards. Local funding can also be used to install elements of a larger project. The following are creative ways for attracting local donations and funding.

- ❑ Adopt-a-Project – Similar to PennDOT's Adopt-a-Highway Program, Union City Borough businesses, civic organizations, families and groups/clubs can formally adopt a section of the Trail to provide funding or volunteer efforts for maintaining that specific section. This type of program will be focused on building community pride for the Trail by connecting residents and organizations to its long-term sustainability. Recognition of the adopter can be through the placement of a plaque or placing the adopters name on a sign.
- ❑ Sponsorship Program – A Sponsorship Program allows annual donations to be received from individuals, organizations and businesses and provides a sense of ownership to the sponsor. Sponsorships for a portion of the Trail including signage, benches, picnic tables and trail section development can be obtained. As an example, selling of 'in-memory' benches can be used as fund raiser and, again, as a way to connect residents to the Trail.
- ❑ French Creek Trail Development Fund – Establishing a Trail Development Fund allows smaller donations to be accepted and pooled together. Various funding levels could range from \$25 to \$500 but would allow donors to contribute any amount.



## Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

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- Erie County Greenways Program (Act 13) - The Erie County Greenways program is designed to improve the quality of life in Erie County through the preservation and enhancement of the region's natural, scenic and recreational resources for public use and enjoyment. Erie County created the Greenways program to fund eligible projects throughout the county, using its allocations from the state Marcellus Legacy Fund.
- Union City Community Foundation - The Union City Community Foundation assists a diverse group of donors in improving the quality of life in and around Union City. The Union City Community Foundation also manages and distributes the income from a number of other funds that work to improve the quality of life in the Union City area.
- ECGRA (Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority) - ECGRA's mission is to elevate Erie County by empowering municipalities, nonprofits and small businesses toward economic and community development.
- Erie Insurance Giving Network - Erie Insurance believes in the value of a strong community. The Erie Insurance Giving Network supports this belief through their annual giving to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for various services and programs, including Community Building, Safety and Environmental Responsibility.
- Northwest Bank Charitable Foundation - The Northwest Foundation makes contributions to nonprofit organizations to fund large-scope and large-impact programs and/or projects. The Foundation is part of Northwest's overall charitable giving initiative, which enables us to support programs that improve quality of life in areas of Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York where our customers, associates and shareholders live and work.
- Northwest Commission's Greenways Block Grant - This program leverages grant funds through the partnership of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and has in the past also included the resources of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
- Erie Community Foundation - The Foundation has established and continues a tradition of mindful, effective grant-making addressing a variety of needs throughout Erie County. These include but are not limited to, Arts and Humanities, Community Development, Education, Environment, Health and Social Services and Youth Services.
- ERIEBANK - Has been a generous supporter of local communities and is committed to making every effort to further their involvement within Erie County communities. Donations must be used to benefit Health, Education, Community Service, Youth Activities, Cultural, Special Community Projects, or Environmental purposes.
- Other Private Foundation/Donors – the following opportunities should be explored to support implementation of the French Creek Trail.
  - People Bikes
  - Rails to Trails Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund Grant
  - Clif Bar Family Foundation
  - Pittsburgh Foundation – Trail Volunteer Fund
  - National Fuel Gas Company Foundation
  - Home Depot Foundation
  - American Legion
  - T-Mobile Hometown Grants
- Fundraising Opportunities – Union City Borough should also consider the following local fund-raising opportunities. It is more likely that donations received through these sources can support Trail related features and amenities including benches, signage, riparian improvements and access points.
  - Bonfire
  - Custom Ink Fundraising
  - Funding Factory
  - Fund Monkey
  - Go Fund Me
  - Facebook Fundraiser

# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## APPENDIX


**Adopted July 2022**

*Adopted by Resolution 2022-15 on July 12, 2022*



*Financial assistance for this Project comes in part from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.*

## Steering Committee Meeting Agendas





**Union City Borough French Creek Trail Feasibility Study  
Steering Committee Meeting No. 1 – November 3, 2021**

**To prepare a trail study for the French Creek Trail Corridor in Union City Borough**

- 1. Project Team and Steering Committee Introductions** 5 minutes
- 2. Plan Expectations, Scope Overview and Outcomes** 10 minutes
  - DCNR Funding for the Study
  - Consistency with Active Transportation and Recreation Plans, Caflich Park Improvements and proposed Safe Routes to School Project
- 3. Schedule** 10 minutes
  - Inventories and Assessments (November – March)
  - Public Engagement:
    - Steering Committee Meetings (monthly)
    - Interactive Comment Mapping (November)
    - Field Tour/Public Education Session – (December)
    - Community Outreach Session (Festival of Trees, Other Community Event)
    - Open House Review Session - (February 2022)
  - Plan Development (March 2022)
  - Approval – (April 2022)
- 4. Focus Areas** 10 minutes
  - Define the French Creek Corridor and Assets/Opportunities
  - Evaluate Land Ownership, Connections/Access Points, and Passive Approaches to Enjoy the Creek
  - Approaches for Making the Corridor a More Naturally Diverse Area
  - Approaches for Making the Borough a More Inviting Place to Attract Residents and Accommodate Visitors
- 5. Steering Committee Input and Priorities – related to Focus Areas** 20 minutes

**Schedule Next Committee Meeting/Public Engagement Session/Field Tour** 5 minutes






**Union City Borough French Creek Trail Feasibility Study  
Steering Committee Meeting No. 2 – December 7, 2021**

**To prepare a trail study for the French Creek Trail Corridor in Union City Borough**


- 1. Review Field Investigation** 10 minutes
- 2. Focus Areas** 10 minutes
  - Section 1 – Nature Park, Devereaux Park, Willow Street Ball Field
  - Section 2 – Into Downtown
  - Section 3 – Through Downtown
  - Section 4 – American Legion Fields
- 3. Steering Committee Input and Priorities** 10 minutes

**Schedule Next Committee Meeting**

**Interactive Comment Mapping**



## Steering Committee Meeting Agendas





**Union City Borough French Creek Trail Feasibility Study  
Steering Committee Meeting No. 3 – February 10, 2022**

To prepare a trail study for the French Creek Trail Corridor in Union City Borough

1. Review Potential Routes Map	10 minutes
2. Review Implementation Approach	10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Section 1 – Devereaux Park, Willow Street Ball Field (Early Action Item)</li> <li>▪ Section 2 – Nature Park</li> <li>▪ Section 3 – American Legion Fields</li> <li>▪ Section 4 – Downtown to American Legion Fields</li> <li>▪ Section 5 – Downtown</li> <li>▪ Section 6 – Willow Street Ball Field to Downtown</li> </ul>	
3. Update on Coordination with French Creek Conservancy and Erie County Conservation District	5 minutes
4. Interactive Comment Map (review draft)	10 minutes
5. Steering Committee Input	15 minutes

Schedule Next Public Engagement Meeting/Committee Meeting






**Union City Borough French Creek Trail Feasibility Study  
Steering Committee Meeting No. 4 – April 21, 2022**

To prepare a trail study for the French Creek Trail Corridor in Union City Borough

1. Review Draft Plan	10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preferred Trail Route Map</li> <li>▪ Riparian and Habitat Improvements</li> <li>▪ Trail Characteristics</li> <li>▪ Determination of Feasibility</li> </ul>	
2. Approve Preferred Trail Route - Map	10 minutes
3. Approve Implementation Approach – Project Phases	10 minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Section 1 – Devereaux Park</li> <li>▪ Section 2 – Willow Street Ball Field, Parking Lot, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Ent.</li> <li>▪ Section 3A – Willow Street and Market Street (on-road)</li> <li>▪ Section 3B – Willow Street Ball Field to Former Union City Chair (alt.)</li> <li>▪ Section 4 – Nature Park</li> <li>▪ Section 5 – Former Union City Chair to Parking Lot</li> <li>▪ Section 6 – American Legion Ball Fields</li> <li>▪ Section 7 – Trail Spur to Buzz of Union City Cafe</li> </ul>	
4. Steering Committee Input	15 minutes

Plan to be presented for Adoption by Union City Borough at their May 10, 2022 Meeting



Interactive Comment Map – Introduction on Borough Website

## 2022 French Creek Trail Feasibility Study – Interactive Comment Map

Union City Borough is working with The EADS Group and UpStreet Architects to study how to best create a nature trail along French Creek. The Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and is undertaking a planning effort to determine how to make it a better destination and asset for our residents. The nature trail will generally be located between Devereaux Park and the American Legion Little League Fields. The trail will be aligned along French Creek and through the Downtown area as much as possible. Trail easements on public and private properties and on-road sections will be needed. The Study is also evaluating areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements and approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.

The Borough recognizes that efforts to connect itself, its residents and visitors, its other recreation assets, and other community points of interest to the French creek Corridor have been limited. Other than for a few locally known, non-developed, access points, toe paths and viewpoints, the ability of our residents to properly view, access and enjoy this resource is limited.

Because this is such an important community project, it is vital that residents are meaningfully engaged as the Study is being completed. Therefore, we have prepared an Interactive Comment Map to gather input on potential trail routes, access and connection

points to the Creek, seating areas, areas for new native vegetation plantings and areas where overgrown vegetation is blocking views of the Creek. Other comments regarding trail features or development of the nature trail are appreciated.

You can access the Interactive Comment Map using the following link:

[French Creek Nature Trail - Interactive Comment Map](#)

Additional comments or questions about the Study can be directed to Mark W. Lazzari, AICP [mlazzari@eadsgroup.com](mailto:mlazzari@eadsgroup.com)

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

*Financial assistance for this Project comes in part from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.*

## Community Workshop Poster Property

**Community WORKSHOP**

**Union City Borough  
French Creek Trail Town Plan**

Come join us...

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLAN**

**WHERE**  
Union City Fire Department  
Social Hall  
50 2nd Avenue  
Union City, PA 16438

**WHEN**  
Tuesday  
December 7, 2021

Open House Session:  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**WHAT**  
Union City Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and desires to make it a better destination for residents and visitors. The French Creek Trail Town Plan will include a feasibility study for developing a public use trail along the Creek; areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements; and approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.

It is vital that residents are meaningfully engaged as the Plan is being developed. Therefore, an Open House style Community Workshop is being held to obtain input from Borough residents. **Property owners along French Creek are strongly encouraged to attend.**

**TOPICS**  
Residents can attend anytime between 6:00pm and 7:00pm. Representatives from the Borough, the Plan Steering Committee and The EADS Group project team, will be available during the entire Session to discuss the project.

*\*Attendees are asked to wear face masks and to observe social distancing requirements*

Financial assistance for this Project comes in part from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation

## Owner Contact Letter (example)

**THE EADS GROUP**  
ENGINEERS ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN SERVICES

March 31, 2022

(property owner)  
(property address)

**RE: French Creek Trail Feasibility Study – Property Owner Contact**

(property owner):

Union City Borough is working with The EADS Group to study how to best create a nature trail along French Creek. The Borough recognizes French Creek as an important community asset and is undertaking a planning effort to determine how to make it a better destination and asset for our residents. The nature trail will generally be located between Devereaux Park and the American Legion Little League Fields. The Trail Study is also evaluating areas for native vegetation plantings and riparian enhancements and approaches for attracting residents and visitors to the French Creek Corridor.

The trail will be aligned along French Creek and through the Downtown area as much as possible. **Trail easements on public and private properties may be needed to complete the trail. Your property has been identified as being one of those segments where a trail easement may be needed. A trail through your property would of course require your permission via a Trail Easement.**

We are sending you this letter to introduce the Trail Feasibility Study and to suggest having a telephone conversation to discuss the trail alignment and the potential for a trail easement through your property. **No final decisions on the trail alignment have been made.** Decisions about the alignment will be made soon and it is important for us to relay all the information to you and to hear your concerns and questions. Your input will be used to help develop a trail alignment with the least possible opposition and impacts to surrounding property owners.

Please contact me at your soonest convenience between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm at (814) 944-5035. Written input may also be sent to [mlazzari@eadsgroup.com](mailto:mlazzari@eadsgroup.com). We respectfully ask for a response no later than April 8. We thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,  
**The EADS Group**

Mark W. Lazzari

by: Mark W. Lazzari, AICP  
Planning Department Manager

1126 Eighth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602 814.944.5035 | [www.eadsgroup.com](http://www.eadsgroup.com)

Altoona PA • Clarion PA • Johnstown PA • Lewistown PA • North Huntingdon PA • New Brighton PA • Somerset PA  
Cumberland MD • Morgantown WV

## Interactive Comment Map – Welcome Screen

Union City Borough – French Creek Trail Feasibility Study

Web Mapping by The French Creek Inc.

### Welcome to the Union City Borough French Creek Nature Trail Interactive Comment Map

Union City Borough is completing a DCNR funded feasibility study for a public use nature trail along French Creek. The nature trail will generally connect Devereaux Park to the American Legion Little League Fields. The trail will be aligned along French Creek and through the Downtown area as much as possible. On-road sections and trail easements through public and private properties will be needed. The feasibility study will also identify facilities and approaches for better connecting residents and visitors to French Creek.

**Please use this Interactive Comment Map to help identify:**

- Potential trail routes
- Access routes **and** connection points to the Creek
- Seating areas
- Areas for new native vegetation plantings
- Areas where overgrown vegetation is blocking views of the Creek.

Other comments regarding trail features or development of the trail are appreciated.

Please leave your comments by using the mapping tools provided.

Instructions are found in the 'HELP' tab to the left.

**Note** that Gray Areas show properties associated with Railroad Assets,  
Please limit proposed development in these areas.

Simply zoom in or out and scroll to view areas of the Borough. Place comments on any part of the map using the "Add a Comment" tool.

The icons on the left side of the screen provide information about the map, and allow you to filter and search the existing comments.

If you have questions about the map, please contact [mazzoni@francsborough.com](mailto:mazzoni@francsborough.com)

Thank you for your input!

Enter Map

# Union City Borough French Creek Trail Town Plan

## Interactive Comment Map

The screenshot displays a web-based interactive map titled "Union City Borough - French Creek Trail Feasibility Study". The map shows an aerial view of the town of Union City, with French Creek flowing through it. Key landmarks include the American Legion Little League Fields, First Avenue Park, and Calibsoh Park. The map is overlaid with various colored lines and icons representing proposed trails and features. A sidebar on the left provides tools for adding comments and features, categorized into "Location Comments" (Creek Access Point, Creek Viewing or Seating, Fishing Area/Pier, Vegetation Planting, Vegetation Removal, Other) and "Connection Comments" (Nature Trail Route, Creek Connection Route). The map interface includes a search bar at the top, navigation controls on the left, and a scale bar at the bottom. The URL in the browser address bar is <https://eadsgroup.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a9d5565a36254f9eb9f592e45280abf1>. The map is powered by Esri and includes a copyright notice for Esri Community Maps Contributors, Province of Ontario, data.pa.gov, OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri Canada, and Esri.