

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

INTRODUCTION

Use the instructions below to provide the requested information on the separate Application Form for Construction. DO NOT submit these instructions with your application. Complete all sections of the application. Provide ALL the information requested into one comprehensive document. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

1) NAME OF PROJECT, APPLICANT INFORMATION & SIGNATURES

- a) Provide the name of the project
Then, provide the name, contact information, and signatures for:
- b) Municipal representative who will serve as the project primary point-of-contact
- c) Project Designer
- d) Mayor

→ *Note: The project primary point of contact for all grant related efforts shall be a municipal employee. Consulting professionals and volunteers are not eligible for this role.*

2) PROJECT CATEGORY & TYPE

Select the category of the proposed trail project as either Major Construction or Minor Construction category.

2.1) Major Construction – This category is meant for all projects that do not meet the criteria for Minor Construction. Identify the type of project proposed for construction by checking either New Construction or Trail Enhancement. One or both may apply.

- a) New Construction – entirely new facility, no trail facility or otherwise currently exists.
- b) Trail Enhancement – provides a demonstrated enhancement of an existing trail either by increasing capacity and/or accessibility via the improvement.

→ *In-kind replacement and/or deferred maintenance are not eligible.*

2.2) Minor Construction – This category is meant for small projects meeting select criteria. Identify the type of project proposed for construction by checking either New Construction or Trail Enhancement. One or both may apply.

- a) New Construction – entirely new facility, no trail facility or otherwise currently exists.
- b) Trail Enhancement – provides a demonstrated enhancement of an existing trail either by increasing capacity and/or accessibility via the improvement. Applicants must demonstrate how the project will achieve this requirement as part of Section 3i of this application.

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

2.2.1) Minor Construction Criteria

Applicants applying for the category of Minor Construction shall submit verification of the following: Applicants must meet **ALL** seven (7) criteria in order to qualify for the Minor Construction category.

- a. **Pre-Approval** – Applicants seeking to apply for Minor Construction project must receive prior approval from Program Staff. Provide verification of completing a pre-application meeting, including the date of the meeting.
- b. **Project Costs** – Using the Approved Program Cost Estimate Form (on website), provide a cost estimate verifying construction costs of the trail project is between \$10,000 and \$70,000.
- c. **Length** – Using legible and appropriate scaled mapping provide a project plans that verify the trail project is 1-mile or less in length.
- d. **Surface** – Use of natural trail surface. Provide a typical cross-section and detail showing how the natural trail surface will be constructed. Note material type and dimensions.
- e. **Slope** - Using topographic mapping information of the proposed trail project area provide verification that the trail project does not include steep slopes (12% or above).
- f. **Major Features** – Provide verification that construction of the trail project requires minimal to no major features such as bridges, walls, boardwalks, etc.
- g. **Agency Review** – Provide summary of permitting requirements. Verify that construction of the trail project requires minimal to no permits.

Applications that do not provide sufficient verification supporting the above may be deemed ineligible.

3) PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Complete all sections to provide a description of how the design of the proposed trail project intends to address the following **DO NOT EXCEED THE AVAILABLE SPACE ON THE FORM – (Use a separate document if additional space is required)**:

- a) **General Goals** - Provide a brief description of the overall proposed trail project including goals
- b) **Access** - If applicable, describe how the project expects to meet accessibility standards.
- c) **Access** - If applicable, describe how the project expects to provide access to major destinations and/or significant natural, cultural or historic features.
- d) **Diversity** – Identify the user type(s) the project will accommodate. (If a single user type, which type? If multiple user types, which types?)
- e) **Connectivity** - If applicable, describe how the project expects to connect with an existing trail(s).
- f) **Connectivity** – Describe how the project will provide for logical termini.
- g) **Concurrency** – Describe how the project is consistent with existing local and/or regional planning and policy initiatives.
- h) **Concurrency** – Describe how the design of the project is of regional significance.

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

4) PROJECT MAPS & SITE PHOTOS

Provide maps and photos in PDF format as requested below. Insert each within the appropriate section of the overall application form. Include the location of the preliminary trail alignment of the proposed trail project on all maps. Include appropriate labels and legends to identify specific features of each map and photograph, and identify which section of the application applies to (i.e. 4a, 4b, etc.).

- a) **Project Location Map** - Provide a project map (in color) that clearly illustrates the following information:
- Property Lines with Block & lot labeled
 - Street names labeled
 - Location of proposed and existing trails (local & regional)
 - North arrow & scale
 - Major destinations labeled
 - Locate and label structures and amenities (existing and proposed)
 - Identify existing natural features such as wetlands, topography, water bodies, etc.

Separate from the above, provide maps for each of the following. All maps shall include the location of preliminary trail alignment of the proposed trail project, and identify all environmental features in Section 5.

- b) **NJDEP GeoWeb Database Map** – Using [Bureau of GIS \(nj.gov\)](https://www.nj.gov/dep/geoweb/) as a resource, create a map of the project location, preliminary trail alignment and immediate surrounds. Include relevant data layers such as historic, environmental, natural and/or cultural resources that may impact the design and/or construction of the proposed trail project.
- c) **National Wetlands Inventory** – Using [National Wetlands Inventory \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/national-wetlands-inventory/) as a resource, create a map of the project location, preliminary trail alignment and immediate surroundings to show designated wetland and riparian areas.
- d) **Project Location Photos** – Provide a minimum of 6 photos (with captions) highlighting existing features of the project location as described in Section 3. Include a key sheet noting specific location of each photo. **Minimum of 2 photos per page**
- e) **Project Video (OPTIONAL)** – Provide a digital video (10-minute max) highlighting existing conditions of the project location, preliminary trail alignment and proposed features as described in Section 3. Please include dialog describing video content.

➔ *Reminder: Applications submitted without the requested information and resources will be considered incomplete and deemed ineligible.*

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

5) PROJECT READINESS

Projects must be construction ready, meaning final design has been completed including permit approval. Complete all sections below to provide a brief description, and maps, to support the responses. Utilize and reference maps prepared in Section 4 to document and verify responses and/or provide separate maps as necessary to best illustrate response. The section can also be used to help demonstrate how the project design solves and/or mitigates existing environmental impacts, and other physical constraints in the project area.

Utilize the NJDEP links below to assist in demonstrating how the proposed trail project may be regulated by the NJDEP and to determine which permits might be required.

- a) Will any part of the proposed trail project impact streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, flood plains, flood ways, riparian zones, and/or freshwater wetlands?
 - i. If yes, is this an area regulated by NJDEP?
 - *NJDEP online resources: “Common Project Activities, Trails, Boardwalks, and Bikes,” and “Before You Buy, Before You Build” via [NJDEP Division of Land Use Regulation](#)*
- b) Will any part of the proposed trail project be built in areas with steep slopes (12% or above)?
 - i. If yes, identify areas of steep slopes (12% or above) within the project area. Provide separate map(s) as necessary.
- c) Are there additional environmental constraints located within the area of the proposed trail project not listed above? Provide separate map(s) as necessary.
 - *NJDEP online resource: “Before the Permit Process Begins” via [NJDEP-Division of Land Use Regulation-Home](#)*
- d) Provide the estimated square feet of the proposed trail using dimensions outlined in Section 9c (trail length) and 9d (trail width). Estimates shall include width of clearing.
- e) Separate from the trail, provide the estimated square feet of the proposed developed areas such as parking, trailheads, etc.
 - i. Does the combined total of items d & e (above) exceed ¼ acre?
 - ii. If yes, describe how stormwater management is addressed?
 - iii. If no, explain generally how drainage will be handled.
- f) Identify all permits obtained for the construction of the proposed trail project.

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

6) CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Applicants applying for the category of Major Construction shall submit completed construction documents, signed and sealed by a licensed professional, verifying that the project is ready to build and include the following:

- a) **Final Design Plans** – Provide detailed final design plans that clearly illustrate all means, methods, and materials to be used.
- b) **Specifications** – Provide detailed specifications of the materials and processes that are to be used in the construction of the trail project.
- c) **Engineer's Construction Cost Estimate** – Provide an up to date Engineer's Cost Estimate prepared in accordance with the submitted plans and specifications. A maximum contingency of 10% is allowable, and shall only be applied to total project costs, not individual line items. Permit fees are not eligible for funding. All costs for project amenities shall be listed separately in cost estimate.
- d) **Permit Approvals** – Provide copies of all permit approvals.
- e) **Construction Schedule** – Provide a construction schedule, including all major tasks from the bidding phase through and including completion. Projects awarded a grant will have 2-years to complete construction.

Plans & cost estimate shall include final estimated quantities.

Final plans shall be consistent and in accordance with the designated trail use, trail class, and design standards identified in Section 9 of this application.

All submissions shall be signed and sealed by the licensed professional preparing the documents.

→ *If awarded:*

- *Additional funds will not be authorized to account for unanticipated costs. Applicants will be required to incur these costs.*

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

7) PROJECT COSTS, MATCH & REQUESTED GRANT

Provide the following information regarding the project construction costs, required match and the grant amount being requested.

- a) **Construction Costs** – Provide the total cost of construction as detailed in Section 6 of this application.
- b) **Matching Funds** – List the matching funds being provided as detailed in Section 8 of this application. Applicants must provide a minimum of 20% match of the total construction costs.
- c) **Requested Grant** – Summarize the requested grant amount by subtracting the required match from the total construction costs.

→ *Applications lacking adequate documentation of costs may be deemed ineligible.*

8) FUNDING STRATEGY

Provide a description of the funding strategy and resources that will be used to meet the required 20% matching funds. The match can be in the form of cash, other grant sources, in-kind services, or in-direct costs, all of which require verification with this application.

- a) **Matching Funds (20% minimum)** – Provide the total amount of matching funds being provided as detailed in Section 7.

Provide a description of how a matching funds (minimum of 20%) will be achieved using the sources below.

- i. If using cash, describe what specific funding source will be used and the amount.
 - ii. If other grant resources are being used to fulfill the required match, provide the grant and the amount. Applicants must provide the name of the grant and awarding agency, along with a copy of the award letter verifying the amount of award with this application.
 - iii. If using in-kind services to fulfill required match, applicants must provide detailed description of services to be provided, manpower allocated and breakdown of associated costs. An “Evidence of Resource Commitment” letter must also be submitted with this application authorizing staff time and resources to be dedicated, as requested in Section 10b.
 - iv. If using indirect costs to fulfill required match, applicants must include a copy of the approved agreement, where the municipality authorizes specific professional services to be performed for the project, including associated fees.
- b) **Long-Term Funding** – if the project is being completed in multiple phases, provide a brief description of the anticipated strategy to fund the construction costs of future phases.

INSTRUCTIONS - 2026 CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION

9) TRAIL DESIGN INTENT & STANDARDS

Provide the following information related to the design intent of the proposed trail project. Use the U.S. Forest Service Trail Fundamentals-Design Parameters matrix that can be found on Trail Grant Program webpage to assist with the selection of the below Trail Class and Designated Use: [Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives \(morriscountynj.gov\)](https://www.morriscountynj.gov/Trail-Fundamentals-and-Trail-Management-Objectives)

- a) **Trail Class** – trail class generally reflects the scale of the trail development and represents the intended design approach. There are five Trail Classes, ranging from the least developed (Class 1) to the most developed (Class 5).

Select the Trail Class that most closely represents the trail of the proposed project. A project may have more than one Trail Class. Select all that apply.

- b) **Designated Use** – Identify the designated user type(s) that will be accommodated in the design of the proposed trail. There can be more than one designated type of user, which is defined as mixed use. Relevant design standards shall be applied to specific user type(s).
- c) **Surface Type** – Provide details related to the type(s) of surfaces that plan to be used and length of each type. These features should be consistent with design parameters identified for the selected trail class and user type.
- d) **Design Features** – Provide details for the design features proposed. These features should be consistent with design parameters identified for the selected trail class and user type, including: i. trail width, ii. target grade, iii. clearing width, iv. shoulder width.
- e) **Design Standards** – Identify the specific design standards the project was prepared in accordance with.

10) SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

Provide the following information related to the support and approval of the proposed trail project and grant submission.

- a) **Governing Body Resolution** – Provide a Governing Body Resolution supporting the advancement of construction for the proposed trail project and approval to apply to the Morris County Trail Construction Grant. The Resolution shall include an acknowledgement that the municipality is responsible to provide advanced funding of the entire project, and that the grant will be distributed as a reimbursement upon the satisfactory completion of construction project. [Microsoft Word - Sample Resolution.docx \(morriscountynj.gov\)](#)
- b) **Agency Authorization** – If applicable, provide a letter from the agency of ownership confirming approval to allow the proposed trail to cross a public road/public right-of-way.