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Environmental Impact Assessment Outline

As part of the Green Acres funding proposal, each applicant must collect, evaluate, and present pertinent environmental information necessary to ascertain the suitability of the site for the activities proposed. Please review and consider the applicable Landscape Project maps and reports, developed by DEP Fish and Wildlife, during the preparation of the environmental assessment. Information can be found on the Landscape Project website or by emailing Fish and Wildlife.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

a. Briefly describe the total development project
b. State objectives of the project
c. Fully describe multi-phase projects

The work proposed at Woodrow Wilson Memorial Park Pond includes the dredging and aeration of Wilson Park Pond. The city proposes creating a wet pond with multiple vegetated sediment forebays. Next, this project will regrade the eroding banks and stabilize them using vegetation and natural materials. Lastly, it will improve existing fishing access. The intent of this project is to address the community's concerns about visually "muddy" water and erosion while maintaining resident access.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Describe existing environmental features:

a. vegetation
b. wildlife, including State and federal threatened and endangered species and critical habitats
c. geology, topography, and soils
d. water resources/hydrology
e. historic/archeological resources
f. transportation/access to site
g. adjacent land uses/description of the surrounding neighborhood

Woodrow Wilson Park Pond is an aerated, oblong pond with natural banks. The July 1969 design plans provided by the City show that the pond receives stormwater from at least three stormwater pipes located on the north side of the pond along Orchard Terrace as well as overland drainage from the neighboring educational facility to the east.

The park property is mostly lawn, with some trees surrounding the perimeter and some trees within the park. Wildlife consists of small animals typically found within fully developed, high density residential development, such as squirrels, possums, racoons, foxes, regional bird species, and geese. The implemented vegetation around the pond will help maintain the overactivity of such wildlife that could negatively affect the pond. The property has no exceptional geology, topography, or hydrologic characteristics that are of concern to environmental factors in this project as this project site is located at a fully developed park that includes tennis courts and basketball courts. The project location also has a tennis court.

There are no historic resources within the project area.

The City of Linden has the Linden Station, which is a stop on the NJ Transit Northeast Corridor Line. It also has two NJ Transit bus stops that provide transportation in multiple directions and multiple routes that provide access to most of the city. These bus stops travel towards Linden's Train Station, on the Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast lines, which travel towards New York City and Trenton/Philadelphia, and the majority of the city of Linden. In fact, only one block away, these bus routes intersect at a bus stop. The city also operates an internal transportation system that serves senior residents and those with disabilities.

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3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION

Impacts are defined as direct or indirect changes to the existing environment, whether beneficial or adverse, that are anticipated to result from the proposed action or related future actions and uses. Any off-site impacts, such as increased traffic on neighborhood roads or increased noise levels in surrounding areas, should be described. Whenever possible, environmental impacts should be quantified (i.e., number of trees to be removed, cubic yards of cut/fill, etc.).

a. Discuss all affected resources and the significance of each impact

Woodrow Wilson Park Pond is an aerated, oblong pond with natural banks. Currently, the pond receives stormwater from at least three stormwater pipes which are eroding its banks and making the water appear "muddy." The City would like to restore and enhance this feature by creating a wet pond with multiple vegetated sediment forebays and stabilizing the eroding banks using vegetation and natural materials.

b. Discuss short-term and long-term project impacts

The goal of this project is to restore this natural resource withing Woodrow Wilson Memorial Park and stabilize this stormwater feature. Not only will this project retore the pond itself by helping restore the banks or this pond, but it will increase access to this pond for residents by improving the existing fishing access.

c. Discuss anticipated increase in recreation and overall use of site over time

As mentioned, this project will increase the recreation and overall use of this site by allowing additional access to this natural resource by restoring the banks.

d. Identify adjacent environmental features that may be affected by the proposal

No adjacent environmental features will be impacted. The only work will be completed at the pond at this park, and a Site Investigation will be completed prior to any work to protect this environmental feature.

e. List any permits required for project and brief status (i.e., waterfront development)

This project requires a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Permit from the Somerset Union Soil Conservation District. Each permit will cost about $1,000.00 and may cost about $5,000.00 each to be designed by an engineering consultant. Additionally, the City Engineer also anticipates the need for a NJ DEP Freshwater Wetlands permit.

f. For development that would impact an undisturbed portion of the project site, the local government must submit a Natural Heritage Data Request Form to the DEP's Office of Natural Lands Management (form available through website or by writing to Natural Heritage Program, PO Box 404, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0404). Please attach and discuss the results of the search.

The project will not impact undisturbed areas and does not include any development. The project site is located in Woodrow Wilson Park, which is fully developed and maintained by the City of Linden.

4. Discuss if/how the project may be impacted by sea level rise and any related design considerations.

This project will not be impacted by the sea level. However, there are stormwater considerations. Infrastructure is established around this pond that helps to regulate the water level during storms and flooding.

5. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

a. Identify alternate sites
b. Discuss alternate levels and types of development
c. Compare environmental impacts of each alternative.

There were no alternatives to the proposed action as this is not similar to adding new park features, but instead focuses on the restoration of an existing resource. Therefore, there are no alternative locations. As far as alternative solutions to the existing problem, City of Linden has garnered feedback from residents and has

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worked with an environmental consultant to develop this proposed action, which the City believes will best address the existing problems at this pond, both restoring the natural resource and increasing the communities access to this resource.

6. MITIGATING MEASURES

Describe the measures that will be undertaken to mitigate adverse impacts

Mitigation of adverse impacts to the park or the environment is not necessary for this project as this project will be completed on facilities that are already in existence.

7. AUTHOR(S) AND QUALIFICATIONS

Nicholas J. Pantina, PE CME CPWM, City Engineer

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