



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 04
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Environmental Document

for

STA Middle Branch Trail PID 118751

Environmental Document Level: C2

Approved: 2/2/2024

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The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by ODOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2020, and executed by FHWA and ODOT.

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C2

Project Information

PID:	118751
Project Sponsor:	Stark County Park District
ODOT District:	4
Funding Source:	Federal

C2 Section

Project Description:



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The Stark County Park District (Stark Parks) proposes to rehabilitate/resurface approximately 3.63 miles of the existing Middle Branch Trail network in the City of Canton and Plain Township, Stark County. The project limits extend north along the main Middle Branch Trail from Maple Avenue to 55th Street (2.92-miles) and includes a 0.41-mile long spur trail segment that extends west from the main Middle Branch Trail ending on Helmsworth Drive NE and an additional 0.30-mile segment extending west from intersection of Plain Center Avenue NE/Helmsworth Drive NE to Gardendale Avenue NE. Project construction will be administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Within the project limits, the existing Middle Branch Trail base ranges from 8-feet wide to greater than 10 feet wide, with a minimum 8-foot wide limestone or asphalt surface, and graded shoulders. Areas with an existing limestone surface course (approximately 3.3-miles) will be graded and resurfaced with approximately 3-inches of new asphalt. Spot repair work will be performed, where needed on existing asphalt pavement sections within the project construction limits. No culvert, bridge or other structure/drainage work is proposed for the project and all work will be performed within the footprint of the existing trail surface. This project also proposes curb ramp reconstruction and installation of new intersection curb ramps to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and replacement of safety bollards and trail signage impacted within the project construction limits.

Mapping that depicts the project location on United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Topographic Quadrangle Mapping is included in the Project File/General/Project Information subsection as *USGS Quadrangle Topographical Map.pdf*.

Road closures and detours are not proposed to construct the project. The project will be constructed in sections/phases to minimize disruption to the public and maintain access to parks and the remainder of the Middle Branch Trail throughout project construction. Conservatively, anticipated closures of individual trail sections are expected to last less than 21-days. The project will not result in access restrictions to adjacent public and private properties and/or intersecting side streets during project construction. Substantial traffic disruptions are not expected to construct the project.

Based on the project scope of work, its Path 1 Project Development Process (PDP) Classification and the proposed maintenance of traffic measures, emergency/public services contact activities were not conducted for the project.

No permanent or temporary right-of-way is anticipated for this trail maintenance project.

Multiple overhead and underground utilities exist within the project construction limits. No relocations of existing utilities is anticipated for the project. The final trail surface will be adjusted to match existing manhole covers and maintain utility line cover requirements. Utilities will not be permanently removed to construct the project. Coordination with utility companies affected by the proposed construction activities was conducted for the project during its preliminary engineering phase and detailed design phase.

The project will not impact any environmentally sensitive resources within the project study area.

The environmental document and associated studies, as applicable, were approved using the available information in the Stage 3 Design plans. A copy of the Stage 3 Design plans for the project is included in the Project File/General/Project Information subsection as *Stage 3 Design.pdf*.

The estimated project construction cost specified in Ellis is approximately 3.5% less than the project construction cost specified in the ODOT State Fiscal Years 2024 - 2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). However, fiscal constraint is at the Statewide Line Item (SLI) Group level. An individual project utilizing a SLI does not require a STIP/TIP amendment.

The next phase of the proposed project is listed on the STIP:

Yes

Ellis STIP Details

Phase	Current STIP Reference
CO	118751: 24-27 STIP



The current cost estimate is in line with existing federal procedures for Ohio STIP Amendments and Administration Modifications: Yes

Select the appropriate project type:

(26) Modernization of a highway by resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, adding shoulders, or adding auxiliary lanes (including parking, weaving, turning, and climbing lanes), if the action meets the constraints in paragraph I of this section. **Examples include: Joint or limited use of right-of-way where the proposed use would have minimal or no adverse social (including highway safety), economic or environmental impacts; Installation of new noise walls and other new noise mitigation projects; Construction of highway safety and truck escape ramps; Construction of bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, shared-use paths, or facilities and trailhead parking that do not otherwise qualify for a C1 designation; Beautification or facility improvement projects (i.e. landscaping, curb and gutter installation and replacement, ADA ramps/curb ramps, installation of park benches, decorative lighting, etc.); Construction of alternative energy facilities (fuel tank farms, wind turbines, etc.)**

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117(e), the proposed project cannot be processed as a C2 CE, if it involves -

1. **a.** Acquisition of more than a minor amount of ROW (exceeds strip takes)
2. **b.** Residential or non-residential displacements
3. **c.** A U.S. Coast Guard permit or an Individual Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act
4. **d.** A Section 106 finding of *Adverse Effect*
5. **e.** Section 4(f) impacts greater than de minimis
6. **f.** A finding of *May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect* to Threatened and Endangered Species
7. **g.** Construction of temporary access, or the closure of existing road, bridge, or ramps, that would result in major traffic disruptions
8. **h.** Changes in access control
9. **i.** Floodplain encroachment other than functionally dependent uses (e.g., bridges, wetlands) or actions that facilitate open space use (e.g., recreational trails, bicycle and pedestrian paths)
10. **j.** Construction activities in, across or adjacent to a river component designated or proposed for inclusion in the National System of Wild and Scenic Rivers
11. **k.** No minor public or agency controversy on environmental grounds (no opposition from any organized groups or agencies and no unresolved environmental coordination)
12. **l.** A full Environmental Justice Analysis Report (EJAR) is required (the project must be processed as a D-level CE or higher-level document). If a memo-to-file/letter/IOC-format EJAR Short Report is determined to be the appropriate level of documentation, contact OES regarding NEPA document level.

For certification purposes, documentation is required to illustrate no significant impacts will occur to the following environmental resources and that no unusual circumstances exist that would warrant a higher level of NEPA document. Upload all supporting documentation to the project file.

Ecological

Waterways:

Not Present

Will any wetlands be impacted?

No



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The identified Federally Listed Species for the project received an effect determination of No Effect.

Endangered Species Remarks:

The project will not impact any listed species or environmentally sensitive resources within the project study area. See the *Ecological Survey STA-Middle Branch Trail.pdf* for the project in the Project File/Ecological/Reports subsection and resource information provided in the Ecological Tab.

Scenic Rivers

No National Wild and Scenic River
Within 1000 Feet of the Proposed
Project Area

Scenic Rivers Remarks

There are no national or state-listed wild and scenic rivers within 1,000 feet of the project area. The project will not impact any scenic river.

Floodplains

100-Year Floodplain:

Encroachment Within the SFHA is a
Functionally Dependent Use

EO 11988 Compliance Met

Yes

NFIP Coordination and Documentation Completed

Yes

NFIP Local Floodplain Coordinator Notification Date:

12/28/2023

Floodplain Remarks

ODOT District 4 Environmental Section Staff reviewed the FEMA FIRM for the project study area and determined the project is located within special flood hazard areas (Zone AE) identified for the Middle Branch of Nimishillen Creek. The project will be administered by ODOT and is therefore subject to ODOT's self-permit process in compliance with ORC 1521.13.D and ODOT L&D Vol. 2, 1005.1.4. Proposed trail maintenance activities are considered maintenance that will not change the alignment, grade or hydraulic capacity of the Middle Branch of Nimishillen Creek and/or its tributaries and, therefore, the project is exempt from the normal permit process required for work encroaching on a SFHA. Floodplain coordination is not required for the project. See the floodplains documentation for the project in the Project File/Permits/Floodplains subsection.

Section 4(f)

Section 4(f):

Present; No Programmatic
Evaluation or Individual Evaluation
Required

Section 4(f) Determination:

Temporary No Use Exception - 774.13(d)

Section 4(f) Determination Date - 774.13(d)

01/18/2024

Section 4(f) Remarks



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A Section 4(f)/6(f) Determination Request Form for Recreational Properties (DRF) was submitted to ODOT-OES Policy Staff on January 3, 2024. Based upon review of the DRF, ODOT-OES determined the proposed project can be processed as an exception to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval. In accordance with 23 CFR 774.13(d), the temporary occupancy of land and/or access will not constitute a use upon the protected recreational activities, features, or attributes associated with Middle Branch Trail, including Robert E. Schreiber Park, Reifsnnyder Park, Oak Park, and Martindale Park. The determination was made based on the proposed scope of work and concurrence received from the Officials with Jurisdiction regarding the assessment of impacts. Portions of Schreiber Park were developed using National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Funds, under Grant #39-0137. Based upon review of the DRF, ODOT-OES determined that the proposed project can be processed as a Maintenance Type Project in accordance with Section B(1) of the Section 6(f) Memorandum of Understanding executed July 11, 2018. Access to the Section 6(f) property (Schreiber Park) will be maintained at all times during construction activities. Furthermore, the type of work is designed to enhance the property and will not change the use of land from recreational to transportation.

The following measures to minimize harm will be incorporated into the plans as plan notes and as environmental commitments:

- Access to Schreiber Park, Reifsnnyder Park, Oak Park, Martindale Park and the remainder of the Middle Branch Trail shall be maintained at all times, except for the time needed to temporarily occupy each Section 4(f) property, which shall be less than the time needed for construction of the project.
- Temporary construction fencing shall be installed at public access points prior to the start of construction activities, as needed, to protect Section 4(f) properties and the public.
- Appropriate signage shall be installed to alert park and trail users of construction activities, trail access restrictions or closures, and to direct users to secondary trail access points.
- The contractor shall be required to closely coordinate the construction schedule with Stark Parks, the Canton Parks and Recreation Department and ODOT prior to the start of construction activities.

See Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) resource documentation for the project in the Project File/Section 4(f)/Coordination, Project Information and Reports subsections and the Project File/Section 6(f)/Coordination and Project Information subsections.

Section 6(f)

Section 6(f): Present; No 6(f) Conversion Required

Section 6(f) Determination: Maintenance

Section 6(f) Determination Date: 01/18/2024

Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources: Present; No Finding of Adverse Effect

Cultural Resources Coordination: Minimum Potential to Cause Effect
Appendix A

Cultural Resources Coordination - ODOT Approval/SHPO Concurrence Date 02/01/2024

Cultural Resources Remarks



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The undertaking is limited to a 3.63-mile-long multi-use trail rehabilitation/resurfacing project. The work will improve and repave the trail surface. All work areas are considered to have been previously disturbed by the existing modern trail facility. Construction activities will focus on the existing, disturbed trail operational rights-of-way. No buildings, culverts, bridges or other structures will be involved in construction and no relocations will be required for the project. A literature search performed for the project concluded there are no inventoried buildings (OHI), no known archaeological sites (OAI), and no listed or eligible historic properties found in the project area of potential effects (APE).

In conclusion, the repair, reconstruction, restoration, retrofitting, or replacement of any active pedestrian/bicycle path that is limited the existing operational rights-of-way is an activity exempt from further cultural resource consideration by the 5/29/2023 (Agreement No. 38503), as long as the project does not involve permanent right-of-way acquisition and is not within the boundaries of any historic property or National Register district. The project will not impact any cultural resources and no further coordination is required. See the cultural resources documentation for the project in the Project File/Cultural Resources/Project Information subsection and Cultural Resources Tab.

Environmental Resources Considered

The following environmental resources are present and have been studied for potential impacts:

Regulated Materials

Air Remarks

No air quality studies, or coordination are needed for this project. Project falls under 40CFR93.126 under Bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Noise Remarks

The project does not qualify as a Type I project for noise (i.e., not adding capacity, not moving through travel lanes equal to or greater than 50% closer to noise sensitive areas) and a noise analysis is not required for the project under 23 CFR 772.

The project involves ROW acquisition, Deep Excavation, or OEPA 513 Landfill Authorization: No

Hazardous Materials - OES Approval Date: 02/01/2024

Regulated Materials Review Remarks:

Based on the information in the Regulated Materials Review (RMR) Form completed for the project, no further RMR activities warranted for the project. See the RMR documentation for the project in the Project File/ESA/Reports subsection.

Environmental Justice

Projects that meet C2 criteria must be in accordance with ODOT's EJ Guidance and activities conducted for Public Involvement are commensurate to the project's type and scope of work.

Environmental Justice Populations

Present; No EJAR Required, Does Not Exceed EJ Guidance Criteria, and No Issues Raised During Public Involvement

Identified Environmental Justice Populations

Census Block Group #	% Minority	% Low Income
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391517122023	5	23
391517123001	20	43
391517004001	13	25
391517004002	15	56

Environmental Justice Remarks

A review of the ODOT Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS) indicated there are Environmental Justice populations within the proposed project area. No businesses or residences will be acquired or relocated as part of the project. The proposed project will have no disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority or low-income populations based upon the table above and attached mapping.

No concerns related to impacts on Environmental Justice populations were raised as a result of public involvement activities conducted as part of the proposed project. Therefore, in accordance with the protections of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23A, no further analysis is required.

Based on the above findings an Environmental Justice Analysis Report is not required.

Census mapping is saved in the Project File/Environmental Justice/Project Information subsection.

Public Involvement

Public Involvement:

Minimum PI Requirements Met; No
Minor Public or Agency Controversy
on Environmental Grounds

Public Involvement Remarks

Stark Parks conducted various public involvement activities for the project, including a news release and website posting. Project comments were requested with all public involvement activities. No public comments were received as a result of the public involvement activities conducted for the project. See the public involvement documentation for the project in the Project File/Public Involvement/Project Information subsection.

Environmental Commitments

Environmental Commitments

Yes



Environmental Commitments

C2

1) Measures to minimize harm to the Section 4(f)/6(f) resources have been established for the project and are project environmental commitments. The following measures shall be incorporated into the plans as plan notes and as environmental commitments:

1) Access to Schreiber Park, Reifsnyder Park, Oak Park, Martindale Park and the remainder of the Middle Branch Trail shall be maintained at all times, except for the time needed to temporarily occupy each Section 4(f) property, which shall be less than the time needed for construction of the project; 2) temporary construction fencing shall be installed at public access points prior to the start of construction activities, as needed, to protect Section 4(f) properties and the public; 3) appropriate signage shall be installed to alert park and trail users of construction activities, trail access restrictions or closures, and to direct users to secondary trail access points; and 4) the contractor shall be required to closely coordinate the construction schedule with Stark Parks, the Canton Parks and Recreation Department and ODOT prior to the start of construction activities.



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Preparers and Approvals

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Brian Peck

Approvals & Electronic Signatures

Approved & Electronically Signed By:	Approval Date:
Brian Peck (ENV SPEC 3)	2/2/2024



Appendix

General

Aerial Map.pdf

County Map.pdf

USGS Quadrangle Topographical Map.pdf

Air

Flow Chart Determination - No Air Analysis Required.pdf

Noise

Flow Chart Determination - No Noise Analysis Required.pdf

Cultural Resources

Records Check.pdf

Ecological

ODNR Scenic River MOA Conditions

USFWS/ODNR Ecological MOA Conditions

Section 4(f)

Determination Request Form for Recreational Properties.pdf

OES Recreational 4(f) Determination.pdf

Section 6(f)

OES Approval - Maintenance.pdf

Environmental Justice

Census Mapping.pdf

Public Involvement

Press Release.pdf

Project Related Email - No Public Comments Received.pdf

Website Snapshot 10-18-2023.pdf

Permits

District Determination - No Floodplain Impacts.pdf

FEMA FIRM.pdf