“Rail Trail Connections” Event Summary

Location: Wayne, NJ

Date: Saturday, September 12, 2026, 10:00 to 11:30 am



Event Overview

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), in partnership with the North Jersey Trail Network (NJTN) initiative, is studying the potential extension of the Pompton Valley Rail Trail, focusing on possible new trail connections, needed improvements, and next steps. One of the gaps of the Pompton Valley Rail Trail, which was the focus of the Rail Trail Connections event, is the gap between the Pompton Valley Rail Trail and the Mountain View Station, which is approximately 0.1 miles away from the trail head.

Three UpNext North Jersey (UpNext) members and one new recruit participated in a guided walking tour led by the Placemaking, Outreach and Engagement Team (POET) at the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University, which included a segment of the Pompton Valley Rail Trail and the area surrounding the trail head near the NJ TRANSIT Mountain View Station. Relying on a walking tour worksheet and map, POET staff and UpNext members discussed potential improvements to make it safer and easier for people to access the trail and to strengthen connections among neighborhoods, parks, schools, transit, businesses, and other community destinations. Additionally, UpNext members discussed potential amenities to enhance the trail experience. The walking tour began at Mountain View Station’s parking lot, covering a small commercial area along Mountainview Boulevard leading to the trail head, and a 0.4-mile segment of the trail. Participants returned their completed worksheets

to POET staff, who shared a copy of the worksheets with NJTPA's consultant for the Pompton Valley Rail Trail Extension Study.



Agenda

10:00 to 10:15 am – Introductions: NJTPA staff welcomed new and returning UpNext members. The group introduced themselves heard about the NJTPA's Active Transportation Plan.

10:15 to 11:15 am – Walking Tour: UpNext members participated in the walking tour and documented their observations and ideas for potential improvements utilizing the walking tour worksheet.

11:15 to 11:30 am – Closing Remarks: NJTPA staff encouraged UpNext members to participate in future events, which will also inform NJTPA's work in advancing the 2023 Active Transportation Plan.

Feedback

Participants primarily provided feedback on wayfinding, accessibility and trail amenities. Several connections to the trail already exist, including Pompton River Park; however, with limited signage, it is difficult to determine which places are accessible along the trail without a map. UpNext members noted several opportunities for improving signage and wayfinding on and around the trail. The existing kiosk at the trail head, which was empty, can include maps showing nearby bus and transit options. There is also limited signage along Mountainview Boulevard indicating that a trail is nearby.

In addition, participants noted several ways to improve pedestrian and cyclist access to the trail. Several cyclists were observed biking from the trail along Mountainview Boulevard and Erie Avenue, but there are no bicycle lanes. There are also no sidewalks along the Erie Avenue side of Mountainview Station. Participants had to step up onto a paved curb area to access the crosswalk, which was faded and in need of restriping.

There is no official access to the trail from the shopping center across from Mountain View Station, however a well-traveled dirt path shows many people cut through the woods behind the stores to access the trail. Adding signage at this location or making an official trail access point could make it even easier to enter the trail from the train station, rather than walking down Mountainview Boulevard to the trail head.



Participants also noted amenities that could be incorporated along the trail, including benches, trash cans, bike repair stations, and places to gather in the shade.

UpNext members and Rutgers-POET staff also answered several survey questions regarding the Pompton Valley Rail Trail. When asked to rank up to three trail improvements that matter the most, respondents ranked seating and rest areas most often (5 responses), followed by signage and wayfinding (4), easy access to the trail (3), and off-road trail connections (3). Trail improvements that were only ranked once or received no response include: nearby

parking, protected bike lanes, personal safety/security, safe trail crossings at roads or other barriers, and regular trail maintenance. Only one UpNext member had visited the trail before the event, and most respondents reported being “somewhat likely” to visit again in the future, either walking or biking.

About UpNext North Jersey

UpNext is an emerging leaders’ group that engages young North Jersey residents in a dialogue with the NJTPA. The NJTPA seeks to better understand this demographic group’s values and needs regarding key transportation issues. The NJTPA provides UpNext members with unique opportunities to learn about and discuss timely topics in regional planning and public policy, develop a network of peers with similar interests, and engage with regional thought leaders and decisionmakers.

POET works with the NJTPA to plan and conduct events. This was the first UpNext event of Fiscal Year 2027.