

Union County

Analysis Inputs

Union County is one of the most densely populated areas in the region, and its bicycle trip potential is commensurately high: most of the county scores in the 90th percentile, and there are only a few pockets that dip below a score of 70. The greatest demand for bicycle trips is in City of Elizabeth, where scores exceed 95, and its suburbs, with scores in the low 90s. The dense street grid, mix of land uses, and high population and employment density in these areas are very conducive to bicycle trips. The regional network covers all high trip potential communities, with several suggested corridors between City of Elizabeth and its suburbs, and between the suburbs themselves.

There are six high-crash corridors and eight high-crash intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists in Union County. These locations are concentrated in the larger communities of City of Elizabeth, City of Plainfield, Cranford Township, Roselle Borough, and Roselle Park Borough, and the NJ 28 corridor that connects them, as well as several smaller communities (City of Linden and Union Township). The regional network overlaps with all high-crash locations.

Table 23 shows the most predominant EJ populations in Union County by census block. Minority census block groups comprise the majority, followed by combined low-income/minority and low-income/minority/limited English. These groups are more prevalent in City of Plainfield and City of Elizabeth but are also spread widely throughout the county. The only areas that do not have EJ populations are New Providence Borough, Berkeley Heights Township in the western part of the county, and parts of Scotch Plains Township and Town of Westfield. The regional network connects to most EJ populations in Union County, with the exception of some minority communities along the I-95 corridor, and several census block groups in less populated parts of the county.

Table 23: Overburdened Communities in Union County

OBC Category	Number of census blocks
Low Income	1
Low Income and Minority	81
Low Income, Minority, and Limited English	19
Minority	180
Minority and Limited English	3

Public Feedback

Union County received 77 webmap comments, The second highest number in the region, this response rate indicates a relatively engaged populace invested in active transportation improvements. Comments follow the county's population density, and are centered around City of Elizabeth and neighboring communities. More than half of the comments discuss opportunities for rail-trail development in the county, with a particular focus on the Staten Island Rapid Transit Railroad, the CNJ Railroad, and the Rahway Valley Railroad.

Existing Network and Proposed Improvements

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is the most regionally significant active transportation facility in Union County. It follows the Rahway River, and travels through Nomahegan, Lenape, and Black Brook Parks. It also follows many of the quiet suburban streets alongside the Rahway River Parkway. The ECG connects with the County's greenway system in Lenape Park, providing additional recreational opportunities in Lenape and Echo Lake

Parks.²⁶ The Goethals Bridge bicycle and pedestrian path, which connects New Jersey to Staten Island, NY, also provides regional active transportation connectivity in Union County. Additionally, there are several local path systems, such as the Elizabeth River Trail, Lenape Park and Nomahegan Park in Cranford, and Watchung Reservation and Echo Lake Park in Mountainside. There are very few on-road facilities in Union County.

The regional network would establish a key connection along or parallel to the NJ 28 corridor, linking the county's most populous communities. It would also link these communities to destinations in surrounding counties; this is a key consideration for Union County, which shares borders with five other counties and is economically integrated with the larger region. Proposed corridors connect to population centers, recreational areas, and downtowns. These improvements would link communities whose active transportation networks are currently isolated or non-existent.

Multiple NJ TRANSIT commuter rail lines travel through Union County, including the Raritan Valley Line, North Jersey Coast Line, Morristown Line, Northeast Corridor, and Gladstone Branch. The regional network overlaps with almost all 16 NJ TRANSIT rail stations in the County, which can help establish better first- and last-mile connections from transit stations to population centers, and achieve stronger integration between active transportation facilities and transit systems:

- North Jersey Coast Line and Northeast Corridor: North Elizabeth, Elizabeth, Linden, Rahway
- Raritan Valley Line: Union Township, Roselle Park, Cranford, Garwood, Westfield, Fanwood, Plainfield
- Gladstone Branch: Summit, New Providence, Berkeley Heights
- Morristown Line: Summit

Table 24 lists all roads in Union County's regional network. It includes road name, municipality, and length of each segment. Network segments that are less than 0.25 miles in length are not listed. Many network segments are on high-volume state highway corridors; as such they are not presently conducive to active transportation. However, walk/bike potential does exist in these areas, and more suitable parallel routing could be explored, such as sidepaths, trails, and other separated facilities, as well as improved transit service for longer distance connections. Local roads that parallel the regional network may also be used as alternate low-stress routes during network implementation.

²⁶ Union County. (2023). East Coast Greenway. Retrieved from: <https://ucnj.org/parks-recreation/paths-trails-greenways/east-coast-greenway/>

Table 24: Union County Regional Network Corridors

Road Name	County/NJ/US Route	Municipality	Start Point	End Point	Length (Miles)
Midway Avenue	CR 610	Borough of Fanwood	North Martine Avenue, Woodland Avenue	North Avenue	0.64
North Avenue	NJ 28	Borough of Garwood	Lincoln Avenue West, North Avenue West	North Avenue East	1.00
Springfield Avenue	CR 512	Borough of New Providence	Constantine Place	Valley Road	4.17
Amsterdam Avenue	CR 617	Borough of Roselle	West 1st Avenue	Wood Avenue	0.62
Wood Avenue	CR 617	Borough of Roselle	N/A	N/A	1.31
Westfield Avenue West	CR 617, NJ 28	Borough of Roselle Park	N/A	N/A	1.03
Westfield Avenue East	NJ 28	Borough of Roselle Park	N/A	N/A	0.91
Westfield Avenue	NJ 27, NJ 28	City of Elizabeth	N/A	N/A	1.33
North Broad Street	CR 623, NJ 27	City of Elizabeth	N/A	N/A	0.59
Rahway Avenue	NJ 27	City of Elizabeth	N/A	N/A	0.94
Elizabeth Avenue	N/A	City of Elizabeth	1st Street, South 1st Street	Broad Street, Rahway Avenue, South Broad Street	1.76
East Grand Street	N/A	City of Elizabeth	Division Street, Trumbull Street	Broad Street	0.92
Fay Avenue	N/A	City of Elizabeth	East Elizabeth Avenue	South Elmora Avenue	0.30
Broad Street	CR 623	City of Elizabeth	Elizabeth Avenue, Rahway Avenue, South Broad Street	East Broad Street, North Broad Street	0.39
Newark Avenue	NJ 27	City of Elizabeth	Fairmount Avenue	Frelinghuysen Avenue	0.88
Trumbull Street	N/A	City of Elizabeth	1st Street, Puleo Plaza	Division Street, East Grand Street	1.27
North Wood Avenue	CR 617	City of Linden	South Wood Avenue	East Saint Georges Avenue, Wood Avenue, W. Saint Georges Avenue	0.85
West Elizabeth Avenue	CR 514	City of Linden	Elizabeth Avenue, Kearny Avenue	East Elizabeth Avenue, North Wood Avenue	1.21
East Elizabeth Avenue	CR 514	City of Linden	North Wood Avenue, West Elizabeth Avenue	Fay Avenue	1.83
South Wood Avenue	CR 617	City of Linden	North Wood Avenue	East Edgar Road	0.48
Park Avenue	CR 531	City of Plainfield	East Front Street, Somerset Street, West Front Street	N/A	1.76

Road Name	County/NJ/US Route	Municipality	Start Point	End Point	Length (Miles)
East Front Street	CR 620	City of Plainfield	Park Avenue, Somerset Street, West Front Street	Front Street, Terrill Road	1.94
West Front Street	CR 620, NJ 28	City of Plainfield	Jefferson Avenue, North Avenue	East Front Street, Park Avenue, Somerset Street	2.45
Irving Street	N/A	City of Rahway	East Milton Avenue, Fulton Street	Elizabeth Avenue	0.26
Westfield Avenue	CR 613	City of Rahway	St. George's Avenue, West Grand Avenue	N/A	1.12
Elizabeth Avenue	CR 514	City of Rahway	Irving Street	Kearny Avenue, West Elizabeth Avenue	0.74
New Brunswick Avenue	CR 609	City of Rahway	St. George's Avenue	East Emerson Avenue	1.06
West Grand Avenue	CR 514, CR 613	City of Rahway	East Grand Avenue	St. George's Avenue, Westfield Avenue	0.78
Lawrence Street	CR 514	City of Rahway	East Hazelwood Avenue, Woodbridge Road	East Grand Avenue	0.78
Randolph Avenue	CR 602	City of Rahway	Hart Street	Rahway Avenue, Woodbridge Road	0.45
River Road	CR 649	City of Summit	N/A	N/A	0.99
Passaic Avenue	CR 649	City of Summit	Old Springfield Avenue, Springfield Avenue	River Road	1.23
South Service Road	NJ 124	City of Summit	N/A	N/A	1.06
N/A	N/A	City of Summit	N/A	South Service Road	0.39
Springfield Avenue	CR 577	Town of Westfield	East Broad Street, Nomahegan Drive	South Springfield Avenue	0.69
Central Avenue	CR 613	Town of Westfield	N/A	N/A	2.99
East Broad Street	CR 509	Town of Westfield	North Avenue West	Nomahegan Drive, Springfield Avenue	1.96
North Avenue East	NJ 28	Town of Westfield	Central Avenue, North Avenue West	North Avenue	0.70
North Avenue West	CR 610, NJ 28	Town of Westfield	Central Avenue, North Avenue East	North Avenue	1.09
Brant Avenue	CR 613	Township of Clark	N/A	Central Avenue, Valley Road	0.28
North Avenue East	NJ 28	Township of Cranford	N/A	N/A	1.51
North Avenue West	NJ 28	Township of Cranford	Eastman Street	Lincoln Avenue West, North Avenue	0.44

Road Name	County/NJ/US Route	Municipality	Start Point	End Point	Length (Miles)
Liberty Avenue	CR 509	Township of Hillside	Salem Road	Hillside Avenue	0.95
Chestnut Avenue	CR 509	Township of Hillside	Hillside Avenue	Coit Street	0.39
Hillside Avenue	CR 509	Township of Hillside	Liberty Avenue	Chestnut Avenue	0.29
North Avenue	CR 610	Township of Scotch Plains	Midway Avenue	North Avenue West	0.67
Park Avenue	CR 655	Township of Scotch Plains	Front Street	North Martine Avenue, Portland Avenue	0.37
Front Street	CR 620	Township of Scotch Plains	East Front Street, Terrill Road	Park Avenue	0.68
Maple Avenue	CR 577, NJ 124	Township of Springfield	Meisel Avenue	Springfield Avenue, Victory Road	0.33
South Springfield Avenue	CR 577	Township of Springfield	N/A	N/A	1.30
Meisel Avenue	CR 577, NJ 124	Township of Springfield	Morris Avenue, Springfield Avenue	South Springfield Avenue	1.26
Springfield Avenue	CR 577, NJ 124	Township of Union	N/A	N/A	2.08
Morris Avenue	CR 629, NJ 124, NJ 82	Township of Union	N/A	N/A	7.48
Chestnut Street	CR 619, CR 627	Township of Union	N/A	N/A	2.34
Stuyvesant Avenue	CR 619	Township of Union	N/A	N/A	1.86
Salem Road	CR 509	Township of Union	Morris Avenue	Liberty Avenue	0.30

Figure 22: Union County Regional Network

