

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

This project includes the construction of a completely inclusive playground at Anthony Gallo Park, which will replace the existing playground equipment currently at the space. Specific improvements include the following:

- Clearing and excavation of the site
- Installation of new base for structure
- Installation of new inclusive playground equipment and fencing
- Landscaping

b. State objectives of the project

Through this project, the Borough of East Rutherford intends to expand access to and quality of recreational opportunities and amenities in the community. The Borough will accomplish this objective through the construction of a completely inclusive playground, as it will provide opportunities for residents of all abilities to be able to play and enjoy the space. The playground will address various age groups to maximize reach, and has been designed to have minimal impact on the existing environment and site.

c. Fully describe multi-phase projects

This criterion is not applicable, as this project is intended to be a single-phase project.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Describe existing environmental features:

a. vegetation

The Borough of East Rutherford is located in the Piedmont Plains Landscape region of New Jersey per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Division of Fish and Wildlife. The existing park space is composed of cleared, mown, grassy spaces, as well as a few trees, shrubs, and bushes. There is no notable vegetation at the site.

b. wildlife, including State and federal threatened and endangered species and critical habitats

According to the NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife, the project site is located within the Piedmont Plains Landscape region and there are no species of protected wildlife indicated at, or within 50-feet of, the site.

c. geology, topography, and soils

According to the NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Borough of East Rutherford is located in the northern section of the Piedmont Plains Landscape region of New Jersey. Anthony Gallo Park is a completed park that features porous surfaces, but there is no notable topography.

d. water resources/hydrology

There are no water resources or notable water features at or in proximity to the project site. However, per the NJDEP Land Resource Protection map, the Borough of East Rutherford is located in the Hackensack, Hudson, and Pascack Watershed region, near the Hackensack River (below/including Hirshfeld Bk), and the Berry's Creek (below Paterson Ave) subwatershed.

e. historic/archeological resources

Per the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's LUCY map, there are no historic nor archeological resources/designations at this site.

f. **transportation/access to site**

Anthony Gallo Park is in close proximity (0.3 mile walk) to a number of NJ Transit bus stops on Paterson Avenue, including stops on the 163, 164, 703, and 703b routes. Further, the Rutherford Train Station is located 1.2 miles from the park. This NJ Transit Train Station provides service on the Bergen Line between Hoboken, NJ, and Suffern, NY.

g. **adjacent land uses/description of the surrounding neighborhood**

The adjacent land uses and surrounding neighborhood consists primarily of residential dwellings. The East Rutherford Community Hall and East Rutherford Fire Department's Grove Street Station are near to the site.

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**

The project was designed to limit impacts to the project site. The affected space will include the existing playground footprint, and will remain comparable in size. Impacts will be more significant in terms of community benefit and will have limited environmental significance.

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

Short-term impacts include the closure of the playground, disrupted lawn, and regrading of the space. Long-term impacts include enhanced recreational opportunities for the community, but will not include long-term impacts from an environmental standpoint.

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

The Borough anticipates an increase in use of the playground at Anthony Gallo/Grove Street Park, as it will provide additional opportunities, equipment, and enhanced accessibility for all residents.

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

There are no adjacent environmental features that are anticipated to be affected by this project.

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

The Borough anticipates the following permits for this project, but does not anticipate any concerns in securing them:

- Soil Erosion and Sediment Control

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 proposed playground would not impact an undisturbed portion of the project site, so this criterion is not applicable.

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

It is not anticipated that the site will be impacted by sea level rise.

4. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

a. **Identify alternate sites**

While there are a number of parks in the Borough of East Rutherford, Anthony Gallo Park/Grove Street Park was selected for maximum impact and benefit for the community. There are a number of residential homes in the area, many of which host families who are anticipated to more frequently visit the park with the proposed improvements.

b. **Discuss alternate levels and types of development**

The Borough has worked closely with its engineering firm to determine the most appropriate and beneficial types of development to ensure compliance with the NJDCA accessibility requirements. Other types of development, such as different ground surfaces like the wood chip mulch currently at the park, may not provide as much mobility for some individuals, so was decided against for this

project.

c. **Compare environmental impacts of each alternative**

The Borough has chosen to move forward with a poured playground surface to enhance mobility, as other surface types may be more limited for accessibility, as well as require additional maintenance efforts.

5. MITIGATING MEASURES

Describe the measures that will be undertaken to mitigate adverse impacts

The Borough does not anticipate any adverse impacts for this project, so has not undertaken any measures. The Borough will ensure that the park and playground equipment is clean, maintained, and any potential adverse impacts are addressed if they ever were to arise.

6. AUTHOR(S) AND QUALIFICATIONS

Preparation by an environmental professional is recommended but not required