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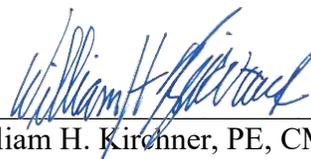
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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

for

William R. Allen School Park Improvements

Burlington City, Burlington County, NJ
Block 223, Lots 1, 2, 9 & 10
January 12, 2026



William H. Kirchner, PE, CME, N-2

This environmental impact statement has been prepared in accordance with Green Acres Environmental Assessment Outline contained in the Park Development Playground Funding Application. This report contains information necessary to evaluate the effects of the development on the property and surrounding area.

1. Description of Proposed Project

- a. The project area is a former school site located adjacent to the William R. Allen School building which is currently undergoing renovation for re-use as a recreation and community center. It is identified as Block 223, Lots 1, 2, 9 & 10 on Burlington City tax maps. Its street address is 400 Mitchell Avenue. The overall property comprises approximately 3.14 acres, however the park improvement area comprises approximately 82,328 square feet (1.89 acres). The development area is currently improved with two basketball courts located near the existing building, one of which is no longer in use. The remaining area consists of poor-quality grass. There is an 8' high chain link fence enclosing the property. NJSH Rt. 130 and the gravel parking area of a former car dealership border the property to its south. The Assiscunk Creek borders it to the east. The Mitchell Fire Company borders it to the west, on the other side of the former school building. A woods line consisting of varying quality trees and width extends along the opposite side of the perimeter fence that encloses the property.

Improvements proposed for the site include reconstructing the primary basketball court and providing it with sidewalk access and concrete pad mounted bleachers. Two playgrounds, one each for 2–5-year-olds and 5–12-year-olds will replace the other basketball court. The play structures will be installed in conjunction with poured in place rubber safety surfacing. A landscape bed will separate the playgrounds and function as a rain garden for any stormwater management that may be required. A bench will be provided for each playground as well as a concrete sidewalk connection between them. A multi-use, grass field is proposed in the easterly portion of the site. Soil amendments will be added as well as a spray head irrigation system to facilitate establishment and maintenance of healthy turf. A pavilion is proposed between the playgrounds and multi-use field. All the improvements will be linked via a concrete walkway traversing the entire facility.

- b. The William R. Allen School features complimentary facilities, including bathrooms that will be handicap accessible and will enhance useability of the playgrounds, active court and field play being proposed. The combined facilities will expand recreational and community opportunities and present the opportunity for a synergy that is uncommon in most recreational areas. One of the goals of the City is to implement several comprehensive recreation facilities located on larger, City owned tracts of land. The subject tract has multiple features that make it conducive to achieving that goal.
- c. It is intended that the improvements described above be completed in one phase. However, the City's longer-term objectives include enhancing the playgrounds with additional play structures as additional funds become available and replacing the existing sidewalk along Mitchell Avenue with a wider walkway utilizing other grant opportunities.

2. Description of the Environment

- a. As described above, the development area is generally open and comprised mostly of poor-quality grass. Improvements are limited to two basketball courts. There are no trees located in the development area. The project site area is in the 100-year flood plain.
- b. There are no known threatened or endangered wildlife species within the immediate area of proposed development nor is there any critical habitat. The Assiscunk Creek lies beyond the easterly property line and is separated from the development area by a chain-link fence.
- c. The topography of the park in general and the improvement area in particular is relatively flat with minimal slope towards the Assiscunk Creek.
- d. There are no water resources within the development area.
- e. The William R. Allen school was constructed in 1900 which makes it over 120 years old. William R. Allen School building, which was entered into the New Jersey Register of Historic Places in 1990 and the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1991. Constructed in 1900, the Allen School was the last segregated school to be built in the City and remained an all-black school until it closed in the 1960s. The school's property was previously occupied by the Federal Street School for Colored Children. The building is currently undergoing significant renovations which are intended to enhance its use as a community center, offering programming for City residents.
- f. The park is located within a regional transportation hub. It is located one block away from NJSH Rt. 130, which is an arterial, divided highway. The property has indirect access to NJSH Rt. 130 via Federal Street, which is located approximately 300 feet west of the site. The entire site fronts on Mitchell Avenue. Linden Avenue intersects Mitchell Avenue in front of the former school building.
- g. A townhouse development is located directly across the street from the proposed development. Multi-family residential units are located along Linden Avenue. The Mitchell fire company borders it to the west, on the other side of the former school building. A City owned Public Work's garage is located on the opposite side of Mitchell Avenue, west of the site. NJSH Rt. 130 and the gravel parking area of a former car dealership border the property to its south. The Assiscunk Creek borders it to the east.

3. Environmental Impact Analysis of Proposed Action

- a. No resources will be impacted by the park development.
- b. Short-term project impacts include demolition and removal of one basketball court and construction activity associated with installing the proposed improvements. The long-term project impacts include enhanced access to the facility and recreational opportunities to a greater proportion of local and regional users.
- c. The size of the project area provides the opportunity to create a multi-use park. The improvements include passive and active recreational opportunities that are enhanced by the facilities, including bathrooms being incorporated into the community building. Consequently, it is anticipated that the proposed improvements will generate significant park use.
- d. The only environmental area located in proximity to the site is Assiscunk Creek. As indicated earlier, it is separated by a chain link fence and vegetation. Soil erosion control devices will be incorporated into construction plans. Consequently, there will be no environmental features affected.

- e. The project is located within the 100-year flood plain. However, there is no increase in elevation proposed. Consequently, an NJDEP Flood Hazard Individual Permit should not be required. However, given the location of the creek and wetlands, the area of disturbance will exceed 5,000 square feet and a general Flood Hazard Permit will be required. Additionally, a Burlington County Soil Conservation District permit as well as an NJDEP Construction Activity (5G3) permit will be required.
- f. The entirety of the project area has been constructed on disturbed land. Consequently, the proposed improvements will not impact on any undisturbed areas.
- g. As indicated above, the improvement area, as well as the majority of Burlington City, is within the 100-year floodplain. Any sea level rise will affect the overall park however the existing elevations indicate that it will be impacted to a lesser degree than other City owned parcels.

4. Alternatives to the Proposed Action

- a. Burlington City has several parks improved with playgrounds, fields and courts, including basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, etc. They include:
 - i. Sixth Street Park (Walnut Avenue & Sixth Street). This park is fully engineered with construction drawings that include development of a playground area, pickleball and basketball courts, a picnic area and pedestrian walkways. Commencement of construction is anticipated in the summer of 2026.
 - ii. John F. Kennedy Park. This park is fully engineered with construction drawings that include development of a playground area, a pedestrian and walkway that provide access around much of its lake frontage and to adjacent residential neighborhoods. Commencement of construction is anticipated in the summer of 2026.
 - iii. Oakland Park (642 Oakland Avenue), which is a neighborhood park improved with playground equipment.
 - iv. Neptune Park (806 Neptune Avenue), which is a neighborhood park improved with playground equipment.
 - v. Boat Ramp (357 Pearl Street), which is improved with playground equipment and a basketball court.
 - vi. Columbus Park (521 Columbus Road), which is an unimproved passive park.
 - vii. Jones Playground (Linden Avenue & Jones Avenue), which is improved with playground equipment.
 - viii. Clarkson Playground (Clarkson Street & York Street), which is improved with playground equipment.
 - ix. Barclay Tot Lot, which has been improved with playground equipment.
- b. With the exception of Sixth Street Park and John F. Kennedy Park, the parks cited above are generally neighborhood parks of smaller size and lack the regional accessibility of the subject tract, which is strategically located and offers the opportunity for expansion of other recreational opportunities to provide a more diverse experience for visitors.
- c. With the exception of Sixth Street Park, each of the alternate sites listed above are located within the 100-year floodplain. Because of their limited size, most are not practical alternatives.

5. Mitigating Measures

There are no adverse impacts anticipated with the proposed development. On the contrary, improvements contemplated will enhance the immediate area of development and leverage the improvements proposed for the new community center. The proposed improvements will have no effect on any environmentally sensitive areas. Environmental enhancements proposed include extensive landscaping with native vegetation and creation of a Rain Garden, all of which provide seasonal interest and creation of a more park like ambiance.

6. Authors and Qualifications

This Environmental Impact Statement has been prepared by William H. Kirchner PE and Timothy G. Kaluhiokalani, LLA, PP. Mr. Kirchner has worked for Burlington City in various engineering capacities throughout his 38-year career, culminating in appointment as City engineer in 2023. Consequently, he has unique knowledge of its park system and supporting infrastructure. Mr. Kaluhiokalani has extensive experience performing site analysis, design and construction oversight for development of numerous parks. His portfolio includes multiple active use recreational facilities featuring baseball, tennis, soccer, football, pickleball and playgrounds, including the first inclusive playground constructed in Burlington County, located in Bob Meyer Memorial Park, in Medford Township, NJ. More recently, he has acted as project manager for two other parks located in Burlington City. John F. Kennedy Park, which features an inclusive playground and pedestrian trail and Sixth Street Park (Walnut Avenue & Sixth Street) which features a playground, pickleball courts, a reconstructed basketball court and picnic area.