

Route 9 – Indian Head Road to Central Ave/ Hurley Ave, Pavement Virtual Public Information Center Script

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Welcome to the virtual public information center for the ROUTE 9 – INDIAN HEAD ROAD TO CENTRAL AVE/HURLEY AVE, PAVEMENT Construction Project. The New Jersey Department of Transportation is committed to developing transportation improvements that best balance transportation needs, the environment, community concerns and costs. This virtual public information center is being presented to provide you with information about the project by Arora and Associates, P.C. for the New Jersey Department of Transportation. At the conclusion of this presentation, you will be able answer a survey questionnaire where you can ask questions and comment on the project.

Slide 2 – Presentation Content

This presentation will begin with a description of the project location and the need for the project. Next, we will provide a general overview of the work proposed throughout the corridor, including the proposed pavement resurfacing, traffic signal and pedestrian improvements, new drainage systems and stormwater management, detours and relocation of utilities. We will review the intersection improvements at each major intersection and discuss the two new traffic signals. Afterwards, we will discuss the traffic control and staging, the construction schedule, and the project cost.

Slide 3 – Project Location

The project is located within Toms River and Lakewood Townships, in Ocean County. In Toms River, the project starts at milepost 95.01, just north of Indian Head Road at the Swain Avenue intersection. In Lakewood, the project ends at milepost 101.89, between 2nd Street and 3rd Street. Within the project limits, Route 9 is an urban principal arterial with a posted speed of between 35 and 50 mph, varying between two and four lanes. The corridor is largely commercial along the frontage of Route 9, with many neighborhoods located just off the highway. This heavily traveled highway connects the Cape May-Lewes Ferry in Cape May, New Jersey with the New Jersey Turnpike heading into New York City.

Slide 4 – Project Background and Need

The existing pavement is in poor condition and in need of strengthening and resurfacing. Lakewood Township has been one of the fastest growing communities in New Jersey for years, and Toms River Township is also experiencing rapid growth. In both Townships, site development continues at a high rate, such that the needs of the motoring public were no longer being met by the existing configuration of Route 9. The Department of Transportation identified the need to mitigate traffic congestion and increase roadway capacity safely in this area. Assorted studies revealed additional needs to be met, including addressing high crash rates at certain corridor locations, updating pedestrian and bicycle facilities, meeting stormwater management regulations, upgrading utilities in the area and more.

Slide 5 – Project Overview – Intro & Pavement Resurfacing

The primary purpose of the project is to address the infrastructure needs of these two growing communities. First, we will present the general improvements that will apply corridor-wide, followed by a review of the improvements at each signalized intersection:

Route 9 will receive milling and resurfacing, pavement reconstruction, or new pavement throughout the project limits, topped by a high-performance thin overlay. In total, just over 64,000 TONS of new asphalt will be placed.

Slide 6 – Project Overview – Turning Lanes & Bus Turnouts

The addition of turning lanes throughout the corridor will allow vehicles to safely exit the flow of traffic and make their turns. Roadway widening to increase storage and throughput at traffic signals, along with optimized signal timings, will produce a smoother flow of traffic. New Jersey Transit approved bus turnouts will be added at multiple locations to allow through vehicles to bypass stopped buses. These measures are expected to considerably improve the average travel speed through the corridor and reduce congestion at choke points.

Slide 7 – Project Overview – Pedestrian Accommodation

Pedestrian accommodations will be improved by adding new sidewalk where there are currently worn pathways or gaps and reconstructing existing deteriorated sidewalk – over 18,700 square yards in total. Hundreds of new ADA-compliant curb ramps will be constructed, along with crosswalks and stop bars at intersections. At signalized intersections, pedestrian countdown heads, push buttons, and signage will be added or updated. Hundreds of driveway aprons will be reconstructed and over 65,000 linear feet of new curb will be installed.

Slide 8 – Project Overview – Additional Safety Improvements

Safety will be further addressed by adding over 430,000 linear feet of new striping and 2,600 square feet of regulatory and warning signage, incorporating wider shoulders at select locations to improve bicycle safety, and installing over 2,100 linear feet of guide rail that meets current crash standards, with associated end treatments. New or reconfigured lighting will be installed at all signalized intersections. The traffic signals will be updated, and all traffic signal heads will have 12-inch signal heads to improve signal visibility for approaching motorists, which will enhance intersection safety.

Slide 9 – Project Overview – Drainage, Stormwater Management and Environmental Permits

Four new stormwater management basins will be constructed to detain roadway runoff, treat it to remove pollutants, and infiltrate a portion of it back into the aquifers beneath the ground surface. Additionally, a sidewalk stormwater infiltration system will be constructed in Lakewood to assist with the storage of stormwater. These measures are required for the project to meet New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection regulations for stormwater runoff.

The existing roadway drainage systems will be updated with new pipes, inlets and manholes as needed to capture water from the roadways and direct it towards the basins and other outlets. All proposed drainage will meet the latest NJDOT standards. In all, over 43,000 linear feet of new pipe and 450 drainage structures will be installed. Environmental permits have already been secured from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in the form of a Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit, Freshwater Wetlands General Permit #11, and a Transition Area Waiver for Linear Development.

Slide 10 – Project Overview – Utilities and ITS

This project area is served by extensive networks of utilities from ten different utility companies. These include underground electric, telephone, gas, sanitary sewer, cable tv, and water facilities, as well as pole mounted electric, telephone, fiber optics, and cable tv facilities. Portions of the utility networks must be relocated to make way for the new construction, and brief disruptions to service may occur. Property owners will be notified in advance of any service interruption. Utilities will be relocated to their new permanent locations at the start of each construction stage, prior to the paving being done for that stage. The project will also include the placement of intelligent transportation system (ITS) manholes and conduits to facilitate future ITS operations.

Slide 11 – Project Overview – Whitty Road Intersection

Located in Toms River near the southern project limit. Widening along the northbound approach to the Whitty Road intersection allows us to add a dedicated right-turn lane towards eastbound Whitty Road. While the southbound approach to the intersection will remain largely the same with a through lane plus a left-turn lane, the westbound approach to the intersection will add a lane, such that vehicles turning northbound and southbound onto Route 9 will each have their own turn lane. Whitty Road will have a right-turn arrow which will overlap with the Route 9 southbound left-turn dedicated phase. The Route 9 northbound right-turn lane will also have a right-turn arrow which will overlap with the Whitty Road green signal phase.

Slide 12 – Project Overview – Church Road Intersection

Located in Toms River, approximately 0.65 miles north of Whitty Road. Similar to Whitty Road, widening along the northbound approach allows us to add a dedicated right-turn lane for vehicles turning onto Church Road eastbound. Westbound Church Road will continue to have two lanes, but striping will be added to show a left-turn lane and a right-turn lane. The southbound approach to the intersection will use a lane shift and narrower shoulder to allow the addition of a dedicated left-turn lane towards eastbound Church Road, which will receive a dedicated left-turn phase in the signal timing. A right-turn arrow will be provided for Route 9 northbound which will overlap with the Church Road green time. Church Road will have a right-turn arrow which will overlap with the Route 9 southbound left-turn phase.

Slide 13 – Project Overview – Locust Street Intersection

Locust Street is located just under 450 feet from the center of the Route 70 interchange in Lakewood. Both Route 9 approaches to the intersection and the eastbound approach on Honey Locust Drive will remain the same as the existing condition. The westbound approach on Locust Street adds a dedicated right-turn lane.

Slide 14– Project Overview – Chestnut Street and Cross Street Intersection

Located 0.44 miles north of the Locust Street Intersection in Lakewood. The existing Route 9 approaches to the intersection remain the same, with a dedicated left-turn lane and through/right-turn lane in each direction. Both the Cross Street and Chestnut Street approaches gain a third lane, so that each has a dedicated left-turn, through, and right-turn lane. The existing island on Route 9 will be reconstructed with new curb. Both the Route 9 and Chestnut/Cross Street approaches will have dedicated left-turn phases with a right turn overlap for Chestnut/Cross during the Route 9 left-turn phase.

Slide 15 – Project Overview – Chateau Drive and Broadway Intersection

Located 0.57 miles to the north of Chestnut Street and Cross Street in Lakewood. Chateau Drive will be realigned to meet Route 9 directly opposite of Broadway, and a new signal will be added at this intersection. Currently the intersection has one lane in each direction meeting Route 9. The proposed condition adds a dedicated left turn lane on each of the four approaches. Route 9 left turns will have a dedicated left-turn phase in the signal timings.

Slide 16 – Project Overview – Oak Street Intersection

Located 0.30 miles to the north of the realigned Chateau Drive in Lakewood. Oak Street creates a T-intersection with Route 9, with each leg currently having one lane. A new traffic signal will be added at this intersection and the entire intersection will be widened to allow the addition of dedicated left-turn and right-turn lanes on the northbound approach, a dedicated left-turn lane on the southbound approach, and a dedicated right-turn lane on the westbound approach. Route 9 left turns will have a dedicated left-turn phase in the signal timings.

Slide 17 – Project Overview – Prospect Street Intersection

Located 0.50 miles to the north of the new signal at Oak Street in Lakewood. We show substantial widening at the intersection, which allows the addition of a southbound right-turn lane from Route 9 to westbound Prospect Street. The current design was coordinated with Ocean County to provide a design they could easily tie into with a future roadway project along Prospect Street. Route 9 northbound left turns will have a dedicated phase and Route 9 southbound right turns will have an overlap phase during Prospect Street green time. “Do Not Block the Box” pavement markings and signage will be installed in the Route 9 northbound lane in front of Sherwood Drive to keep queuing vehicles from blocking access into and out of Sherwood Drive.

Slide 18 – Project Overview – Pine Street and James Street Intersection

Located 0.36 miles to the north of Prospect Street in Lakewood. The Route 9 approaches remain the same, with a left-turn lane and through-right lane in each direction. The James Street approach adds a dedicated left-turn lane. The Pine Street approach maintains its current configuration but shifts the roadway a bit to the south to flatten out the existing substandard horizontal curve just before the intersection. Both the Route 9 and James/Pine Street approaches will have dedicated left-turn phases.

Slide 19 – Project Overview – Central Avenue and Hurley Avenue Intersection

Located 0.50 miles to the north of Pine Street and James Street in Lakewood, this intersection has been a major choke point for traffic within this corridor. After careful consideration, the northbound left-turn lane onto westbound Central Avenue and the southbound left-turn lane onto eastbound Hurley Avenue were both eliminated so that a second northbound through lane could be added. Northbound vehicles can access the area to the west by instead making a left turn onto James Street, and southbound vehicles can access the area to the east by making a left onto Main Street/ Route 88. Westbound Hurley Avenue will keep its current configuration of a dedicated left-turn lane, through lane, and through/right-turn lane. These westbound through lanes have been extended after crossing the bridge to Central Avenue by several hundred feet before one lane drops out. The Central Avenue approach will maintain its current left-turn and through/right-turn lanes. The ends of South Lake Drive and Caranetta Drive are modified to improve safety and operations near the intersection.

Slide 20 – Project Overview – Main Street (Route 88) Intersection

Located 0.25 miles to the north of Central Avenue and Hurley Avenue in Lakewood. The Route 9 approaches maintain their current 3-lane section, with dedicated left-turn lanes and two through lanes in each direction. Westbound Main Street also keeps its left-turn and right-turn lanes. The current left-turn lane storage length for southbound vehicles turning left onto eastbound Main Street/Route 88 is significantly undersized, such that vehicles back up into the southbound through lane at First Street and father north. The proposed condition increases the vehicle storage within this left-turn lane by approximately two-hundred feet to alleviate this issue.

Slide 21 – Project Overview – First Street / Second Street Intersections

Located 380 feet to the north of Main Street (Route 88) in Lakewood. Extending the southbound left-turn lane at the Main Street intersection requires that all left turns from Route 9 onto First Street be eliminated. A raised concrete island will be constructed to prevent these left-turns. The approaches to Route 9 on First Street will be made right-tun only. Southbound vehicles may make a left turn at the Second Street or Main Street intersections, and northbound vehicles may make a left turn at either North Lake Drive or Second Street. The Second Street signalized intersection with Route 9 will be upgraded and will include left-turn arrows for dedicated left-turn phases from Route 9 to Second Street.

Slide 22 – Traffic Control and Staging

Due to the length of project and in an effort to limit impacts to traffic, this project is broken down geographically into six stages - Stages 1-3 are in Toms River, and Stages 4-6 are in Lakewood. Traffic shifts that allow two directions of travel to remain open are the preferred method of traffic control when feasible. Any work that cannot be performed with traffic shifts will be performed by single lane closures that alternate traffic with flaggers or detour one direction of traffic around the construction zone. Single lane closures (one-direction detours or alternating traffic) will only be allowed at night, with additional restrictions in the summer.

Slide 23 – Traffic Control and Staging

Twelve detours have been proposed – one for each direction of travel during each of the six stages. Simultaneous construction will be allowed in Toms River and Lakewood, provided that concurrent traffic detours do not overlap. Throughout construction, access to all homes and businesses will be maintained, and all sidewalks will remain open or detoured to a continuous route around the construction.

There will be several challenges to the traffic control and staging operations on this project. Coordination will be required with the ongoing projects in the area that include site development, Ocean County road work, and utility company upgrades. The large Jewish population in the area requires all pedestrian routes to stay open during construction, and the many businesses along the corridor will need continuous access. Perhaps most importantly, coordination with the Monmouth Medical Center is imperative to ensure emergency services are available around the clock.

Slide 24 - Project Status

This project has entered the construction phase and a contractor has been selected by NJDOT. Construction is expected to start in September 2022 and end during the summer of 2025. The total project cost is estimated to be approximately \$76 million.

Slide 25 – Contact Information

For further information about the project, please contact:

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All other comments can be submitted anonymously through the survey link below.

Thank you for your attention and interest in the **Route 9 – Indian Head Road to Central Ave/ Hurley Ave, Pavement** project.