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Preliminary Engineering Virtual Public Information Center

Construction of CR 539 Overpass (Structure No. 1523-031), Whiting-New Egypt Road over Ridge Way at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
June 1, 2026 through June 14, 2026

Presentation Transcript

Slide #	Transcript
1	Hello. On behalf of the Project sponsor, Ocean County and the Project designers, Mott MacDonald, we welcome you to the third virtual Public Information Center for the Final Design Phase of the County Route 539 Project, at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst located in the Plumsted and Jackson Townships, of Ocean County, New Jersey. This virtual information center follows the previous one held during the Local Preliminary Engineering Phase and will be live for two weeks from June 1st through June 14th. During this time, all members of the public are welcome to view this presentation, view frequently asked questions, review further Project information, and submit any additional comments or questions on the Project website at cr539atjbmdl.com.
2	The agenda for this presentation will begin with a brief description of the Project location and existing conditions, followed by the Project purpose and the goals identified early in the Project lifecycle. Next, we will provide an update on the Project's status, including the schedule and a summary of work conducted thus far. An overview of the final design phase and the latest design concept will then be reviewed, followed by an overview of the proposed staging during construction. Lastly, we will provide a brief summary and identify how the public can provide feedback or pose questions.
3	As previously stated, the Project is located within the military base Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in Plumsted and Jackson Townships, about 4 miles north of New Jersey Route 70. The approximate Project limits are outlined in red, along County Route 539 which runs approximately in the north-south direction. County Route 539, or CR 539, is classified as a rural major collector with an average daily traffic volume of over 10,000 vehicles per day. As part of their operations, Joint Base traffic occasionally needs to cross from one side of CR 539 to the other; currently this is done by entering CR 539 at the equipment concentration site driveway at the southern end and traveling to the "hole-in-the-wall" gate at the northern end. This travel introduces operational challenges, traffic delays, and safety risks for both the public and the military. Which leads us to the Project's purpose…
4	The purpose of this Project is to improve roadway safety and efficiency by providing a safe and efficient military crossing of CR 539, all while reducing travel delays for all users. Outside of the primary purpose, the design of the Project considered several additional goals including, but not limited to, those seen on this slide. These include minimizing environmental impacts, minimizing or eliminating substandard features, minimizing traffic impacts during construction, avoiding or minimizing impacts of existing utilities on both sides of the roadway, improving traffic operations, and avoiding or minimizing impacts to properties. All of these goals guided the design progression of this Project.
5	This Project is being advanced following the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Local Capital Project Delivery Process, which includes 4 general phases: Local Concept Development, Local Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, and Construction. The Local Concept Development Phase is complete and had the primary output of selecting a Preliminary Preferred Alternative (or PPA) to be advanced. The Local Preliminary Engineering Phase was the second phase and is also complete. During this phase, preliminary design of the PPA was advanced, Project impacts were assessed, and the necessary environmental documentation for the NEPA process was prepared and approved. The Project is currently about two-thirds of the way through the Final Design phase, during which the engineering design is being finalized, all required permits and approvals are being obtained, and the necessary documentation for authorizing and advertising the Project for construction is being prepared. The final Phase will be the Construction phase, which will be described in further detail in the latter portion of the presentation.
6	Here is a graphic showing the overall Project schedule. You can see that the Concept Development Phase was completed in

	2024 and the Preliminary Engineering Phase was completed at the end of 2025. January 2026 began the Final Design Phase, which is anticipated to conclude in September. The Project will be advertised as early as October of this year with construction starting over the winter. Currently, the Project is estimated to take approximately 24 months to construct, but a more precise construction schedule will be developed by the winning Contractor.
7	Before we discuss the Final Design components, let's first summarize the work completed in the earlier phases. During Concept Development, various alternatives were considered with the selected PPA consisting of a grade separation raising CR 539 over top of Ridge Way via the construction of a new overpass bridge. During Preliminary Engineering, this design was then further refined to include a westward shift in the alignment. This allows for the majority of the work to be performed offline, avoids impacts to existing underground utilities, reduces the overall construction duration, and improves roadway geometry at the curves located north and south of the new bridge. Based on these refinements, engineering investigations and technical environmental studies were completed to assess the Project's impacts. Right of way needs were also determined, and the acquisition process initiated for the requisite easements from the Joint Base property. Public outreach was performed in the fall including a public information center in September of 2025 where the PPA was presented in detail and feedback was gathered. Nearly 1,000 visitors accessed the website during this period, and several comments were received from the public. A Categorical Exclusion Document was prepared, submitted, and approved in accordance with federal NEPA requirements. This document summarizes Project impacts, confirms environmental compliance, and defines environmental commitments. And finally, preliminary documents were assembled to form the basis of the final design.
8	We are now mostly through the Final Design Phase, which is summarized by the activities shown on this slide. The engineering is essentially complete with the contract documents being prepared such that the Project can be advertised in the fall of this year. All necessary pre-construction environmental permits are currently being obtained. We are also continuing to coordinate with the Joint Base to acquire the necessary property rights to construct the proposed design, and the final step will be to request and receive federal authorization to advertise the Project for construction.
9	As presented at the last Public Information Center, this figure and the zoomed in insert depict the overall Project plan with the key proposed features. The yellow illustrates the proposed roadway to the west of the existing roadway. The limits of the existing road are shown delineated by this line here. You can see that a portion of the existing roadway will be converted to an access road at the end of the Project for exclusive use by the County, Joint Base, and utility companies this area is shown here in dark gray. The red is the proposed bridge and the long retaining walls that run parallel to the alignment, designed to support the elevated County Route 539. Finally, the light blue areas represent proposed shallow drainage basins that will be constructed in various locations on either side of the roadway to treat and control the release of stormwater during rain events.
10	This slide shows the proposed CR 539 typical section on the proposed overpass bridge looking south. You can see that the new roadway will include the same number of lanes as the existing roadway, but will be widened nominally to provide standard 8-foot-wide shoulders versus the existing 4-to-5-foot shoulders.
11	This is an elevation view of the overpass bridge over Ridge Way, looking east. You can see that the bridge will provide over 16 1/2 feet of vertical clearance and 30 feet of horizontal clearance for exclusive use by military vehicles. Ridge Way will remain an unpaved pathway under the bridge with barriers protecting the bridge. To the left and right of the typical section, in these areas here, you can see that there will be long vertical retaining walls on both approaches holding back the elevated roadway.
12	The proposed work is anticipated to be constructed in three primary construction Stages with some subsequent substages, which will be described in more detail in the following slides. This slide presents estimated durations for each Stage. Please note that exact staging scheme and durations are subject to change depending on the selected Contractor's proposed means and methods. However, except for very limited nighttime closures or slowdowns between Stages, one lane of traffic in each direction will always be maintained during construction. There are no planned long-term detours or temporary signals in place. Before construction starts, some pre-work will occur, on site, including tree and site clearing as well as utility relocations. The next group of slides will run through the impacts of traffic during each of the subsequent construction Stages.
13	Stage 1 is the longest construction Stage and is where most of the work will take place. During this Stage, the posted speed limit of CR 539 will be reduced to 35 miles per hour within the work zone, and the lanes will be shifted eastward on the existing roadway. This typical section illustrates the current roadway looking in a southbound direction. You can see that one standard lane of traffic will be maintained in each direction with a reduction in shoulder widths. A temporary concrete construction barrier will be placed along the west side of the roadway to separate traffic from the work zone.
14	This is a plan view of the northern end of the Project during Stage 1 where the green represents the shifted traffic lanes, the red represents proposed traffic control devices, and the gray represents the work zone. Again, you can see here that the lanes on the existing roadway will be shifted slightly eastward with construction barriers erected along the west side.
15	Similarly, this is a plan view of the southern end of the Project during Stage 1. Access will be maintained to the Joint Base driveway from both directions, but there will not be dedicated turn lanes during this Stage.
16	Moving on to Stage 2, this is where the new alignment will be tied into the existing roadway. As with the last Stage, the speed limit will remain at 35 miles per hour, and one standard lane of traffic will be maintained in each direction. However, the traffic lanes will no longer be adjacent during this phase. As seen in the southbound facing typical section on this slide, the northbound lane will remain on the existing roadway, while the southbound lane will be shifted onto the newly constructed roadway. A combination of temporary construction barriers and drums will be used during this phase to separate traffic from the work zone depending on the location.
17	This is a plan view of the northern end of the Project during Stage 2. You can see here that the lanes will be split to go around the work zone with the northbound traffic remaining on the existing roadway, and the southbound traffic shifted onto the new roadway. Short lengths of temporary roadway will be required on this end to bypass the work zone.
18	Similarly, this is a plan view of the southern end of the Project during Stage 2. During this short duration Stage, access to the

	Joint Base driveway will only be available in the northbound direction. It is noted that there will be a couple of substages between Stage 2 and Stage 3 where the lanes will be readjusted, but there is no change to the overall traffic flow during these substages.
19	The final Stage of construction is Stage 3. During this Stage, all traffic will be moved onto the new roadway in the final configuration, and the speed limit will be returned to normal. The typical section illustrates the makeup of the new roadway, with one 12-foot lane in each direction, and an adjacent 8-foot-wide shoulder. Temporary drums will still be in place during this phase to separate traffic from the incidental construction that will be occurring outside the edges of the roadway.
20	This is a plan view of the northern end of the Project during Stage 3. There is no green hatching here and this is because the lanes will be in their final locations and the work will be occurring in the areas outside of the roadway.
21	Similar to the previous slide, this is a plan view of the southern end of the Project during Stage 3.
22	And with that, this brings us to the end of the presentation. As noted in the beginning, we welcome any comments or questions from the public. They may be submitted from June 1 through June 14 via the Project website and again that web address is cr539atjbmdl.com. Alternatively, they can be submitted via e-mail or mail to Matthew Colon at Mott MacDonald. His contact information can be found on this slide and also on the Project website. The Project team will respond to any inquiries received as appropriate. Frequently Asked Questions will also be updated during the comment period if repetitive questions are noted.
23	Thank you again for taking the time to listen to this presentation and for your interest in this important Project. Ocean County is committed to developing transportation improvements that best balance transportation needs, the environment, community concerns, and costs, and looks forward to the successful completion of this Project. Please continue to check out the Project website for further updates and notifications during construction. Thank you!