



MONMOUTH COUNTY

Final Design Phase for County Route 537, West Main Street, Corridor Roadway Improvements Between Sentinel Road and U.S. Route 9 Interchange Township of Freehold, New Jersey

PROJECT INFORMATION

Monmouth County is finalizing the design for operational and safety improvements to the Monmouth County Route 537 (CR 537) West Main Street corridor between Sentinel Road (MP 49.35) and U.S. Route 9 Interchange (MP 51.30) in Freehold Township.

CR 537 is a major east-west transportation corridor serving regional travel needs between Burlington, Monmouth and Ocean Counties. The roadway serves as a connector between several regional routes, namely U.S. Route 9, NJ 33 Freeway, NJ 33 Business, and NJ Routes 34, 79, and Interstate Route 195. The corridor has substandard design elements, a history of safety concerns, and suffers from traffic congestion and delays due to inadequate roadway capacity. Solutions were developed to improve safety and reduce congestion while still considering practical measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to the natural environment.

Project Overview

A Local Concept Development (LCD) Study for corridor improvements was completed in 2014 through the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) using federal funding, with Monmouth County as the project sponsor. Monmouth County, as the project lead working in coordination with NJTPA and NJDOT completed the Local Preliminary Engineering (LPE) Phase in 2019. The project is currently in the Final Design (FD) Phase.

Local Concept Development (LCD) Study Phase

During the LCD Study Phase, a Purpose and Need Statement was developed focusing on the need to improve safety and operational movements in the corridor. A number of sensible and practical conceptual alternatives were developed to meet the goals and objectives. Upon completion of an alternatives analysis, and in coordination with the local officials, community stakeholders, the general public, NJTPA, NJDOT and permitting agencies, a Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) was recommended to address safety and traffic operational deficiencies with specific corridor roadway improvements. The improvements better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicular traffic. The project limits were modified to eliminate the portion of the corridor within Freehold Borough due to lack of support for CR 537 roadway improvements within the Freehold Borough jurisdiction. Resolutions of Support for the PPA were passed by the Township of Freehold on April 9, 2013 and November 12, 2013, and by the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners on November 14, 2013.

Local Preliminary Engineering (LPE) Phase

The LPE Phase involved performing engineering and environmental tasks required to obtain an approved National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document for the project. Property right-of-way impacts and environmental impacts for the proposed project were identified along with the needed permits for construction. Local officials meetings, a community stakeholders meeting, and a public information center meeting were also conducted during this phase for the design development and required environmental documentation. For the recommended refined PPA, Resolutions of Support were passed by the Township of Freehold on June 25, 2018 and by the Board of Monmouth County Commissioners on November 8, 2018.

Final Design (FD) Phase

The FD phase involves finalizing the roadway designs and preparing the construction contract documents including plans and specifications. Access modifications are completed in the FD phase along with acquisition of the needed Right-of-Way (ROW) for construction of the project. The necessary environmental permits for construction will also be obtained during this phase. To inform and to encourage community input, three local officials meetings and a community stakeholders meeting and a public information center meeting were held. A public information center meeting will be held before the end of this phase.

The tasks to be conducted during the FD phase consist of, but are not limited to:

- Geotechnical investigation (soil borings with analysis) for structural & SWM design
- Utility relocation coordination discussions with companies
- Development and completion of landscaping and aesthetic elements
- Secure environmental permits
- Right of Way (ROW) negotiations, acquisitions and easements
- Develop maintenance of traffic and construction staging plans
- Complete Final Design engineering technical plans

Project Schedule (Phases)

Local Concept Development (LCD) Phase	2011 – 2014 completed
Local Preliminary Engineering (LPE) Phase	2015 – 2019 completed
Final Design (FD) Phase	2020 – 2026
Construction Phase	2026 – 2028

Final Design - Project Schedule (Major Milestones)

Environmental Permits	Spring 2021/Spring 2026
ROW Availability	Fall 2025/Winter 2026
Completion of Final Design Phase	Spring 2026

Final Design - Anticipated Community Involvement Schedule

Local Officials Meetings No. 1, No. 2 & No. 3	February 2021, June 2023, August 2025
Community Stakeholders Meetings No. 1	September 2021
Public Information Center (PIC) Meeting	February 2026

For additional project information, please visit the project website: www.cr537westmainstreet.com

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