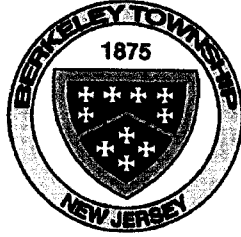


Carmen F. Amato, Jr.  
Mayor  
Township of Berkeley  
P.O. Box B  
Bayville, NJ 08721



Phone: 732 244 7400 ext. 1204  
Fax: 732-341-8968  
mayor@berkeleytownship.org

Congressman Chris Smith  
Ocean County Constituent Service Center  
33 Washington Street \*  
Toms River, NJ 08753

March 15, 2023

Representative Smith:

Please allow this correspondence to notify you of the Township of Berkeley's great need for transportation improvements. As Mayor of Berkeley Township, I am privy to the concerns and issues that our town faces, and none is more important than the need to improve the Bayville section of Berkeley Township's Road network. Our township applied for funding, unsuccessfully under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, as the State of New Jersey will be receiving \$15 billion for various infrastructure improvements. The extension of Western Blvd is an excellent project to be funded by the FY24 appropriations, as it provides benefits to the region as a whole and demonstrates the state's commitment to reducing historically problematic traffic reputations. The segment of Route 9, the area's major access road, from the Garden State Parkway (exit 80) in Beachwood through Berkeley/Pine Beach connecting with Lacey Township, is operating at an extremely poor level service. Improvements to Route 9 are very difficult and expensive, due to the location of the existing buildings and other infrastructure. This traffic and transportation problem is not only an issue for Berkeley Township, but also Lacey, Beachwood, and Pine Beach residents as this segment of Route 9 also services them.

Berkeley Township has always been progressive in the planning for our community. We've established a Redevelopment Area and have Plan Endorsement from the State Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA). Berkeley continues to work closely with the OPA officials to renew our Plan Endorsement status. A major part of the Endorsed Plan is the Town Center Redevelopment area, which includes a new major connector road known as the Western Boulevard Extension. At least as early as 1997, Berkeley Township Masterplans and traffic circulation elements have identified the Western Blvd Extension as a key infrastructure improvement project. This includes moving traffic from the Pinewald area (adjacent to the Garden State Parkway) to the eastern portions of the Township. The extension of Western Blvd will help alleviate the traffic problems on Route 9 while also greatly improving the transportation infrastructure for Berkeley and the surrounding communities.

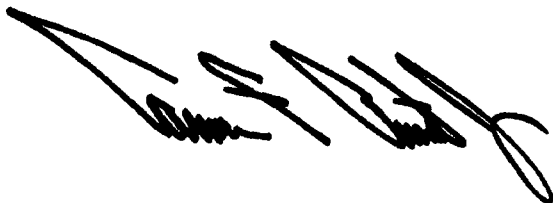
The Town Center Redevelopment area, situated along Route 9, has an assigned redeveloper who plans to improve the Town Center by providing goods, services, as well as much needed jobs to the local residents. The Township also plans to provide regional recreational opportunities, connections to the Ocean County Rail Trail, a solar energy project in the Community Solar program and a new indoor recreation facility. In addition, the project will accomplish the cleanup of a known contaminated site, known as the South Brunswick Asphalt site, which was owned by a defunct LLC with no assets. Over decades, the site fell into complete disrepair and was further damaged by Superstorm Sandy. The township was forced to condemn the property and demolish the hazardous on-site structures, and yet there remains significant environmental damage at the site. We continue to work closely with the Department of Solid and Hazardous Waste as well as the NJEDA HDSRF program and anticipate that the future tax payments (PILOT) from the redevelopment of the Town Center will assist with these cleaning costs, currently estimated to over \$20 million. However, without the Western Boulevard extension, the project will remain stalled.

This area of town is poised to become an integral part of our local and regional economy; however, the area cannot be fully developed without major improvements to the transportation network. As previously stated, improvements to Route 9 are very limited and the need for the Western Boulevard Extension has never been greater. The Western Boulevard extension is greatly needed to address the extremely poor traffic conditions on Route 9, accommodate the development of the Town Center Redevelopment Area, and assistance in the clean of the major hazardous waste site, all while providing good paying jobs, good services to our area resident and providing green energy infrastructure for the residents and the state.

I write today to seek your assistance. Berkeley Township is requesting financial assistance from the State for the design and construction of the Wester Boulevard Extension. We understand that there are several millions of dollars that will become available through the federal government infrastructure programs. Initial estimates for the cost to design and build the Western Boulevard Extension are \$19,729,132.80. The Township engineer has identified the immediate need for an updated study to a previous 2014 study on this project, expected to cost \$100,000.00 and a preliminary engineering and design phase, estimated to cost \$1,079,164. The proposed road is approximately a 2-mile stretch that will extend from Northern Boulevard to the Route at the intersection of Washington Street, at the Pine Beach/Berkeley border. Some preliminary studies have been performed; however, there are still more tasks to be completed to advance this worthwhile project. Our taxpayers cannot bear the burden of this regional transportation problem, as the redevelopment area will generate a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), those monies are assigned to the future cleanup costs of the South Brunswick Asphalt Site.

We respectfully request FY24 Congressional Appropriations [in the amount of \$1,179,164 for the updated study and design phase, be considered for the funding of Western Boulevard Extension – Route 9 Connection. I can be reached at 732-915-5068. Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name of the Mayor, written in a cursive style.

Mayor



## Township of Lacey

818 W. LACEY ROAD  
FORKED RIVER, NJ 08731

(809)693-1100

The Honorable Chris Smith  
33 Washington Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753

Re: Berkeley Township Western Boulevard Extension Congressionally Directed Spending

Congressman Smith:

The Township of Lacey would like to offer strong support for Berkeley Townships Application for the Western Boulevard Extension project. Western Boulevard now dead-ends at Northern Boulevard in Pinewald. The proposed expansion to Gladney Avenue would create an effective bypass of congested Route 9, a two-lane highway, through Bayville, providing a more direct north-south route than the current route through Beachwood. The intent of this expansion would be to lessen traffic congestion on Route 9.

Efficient circulation is a vital element in the economic growth of the Township. This roadway will be devoted to upgrading and improving roadways to enhance their safety and ability to efficiently handle growing traffic volumes. This project compliments ongoing county, local and private sector transportation investments. The movement of people and goods on our roadways is important to our economy. Constructing this roadway will serve the residential community, as well as the commercial, industrial, retail and civic land-uses situated along the corridor. Without this project, this economic corridor will continue to have a pinch point and will remain congested.

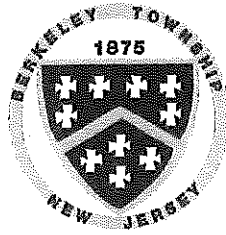
Berkley Townships project lines up with the intent of the NJTPA and has significant positive impact to the residents, businesses and visitors. The State of NJ Department of Transportation has been reluctant for numerous years to dualize the highway at Route 9 south of Lakewood citing the expense involved. It is now time for the local municipalities to ban together to address the growing concerns of traffic congestion and the quality of our residents lives spending it in traffic.

Approval of this funding will help enhance the capacity and efficiency of the transportation infrastructure. Approval will have a catalytic effect on easing traffic congestion on an already overburdened roadway system. For these reasons, we urge your strong consideration for a full award of the funding. We ask that you give positive consideration to this project to help address the needs of our neighboring community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy McDonald", is written over a horizontal line.

Timothy McDonald  
Mayor Lacey Township



## Berkeley Township Police Department

KEVIN H. SANTUCCI  
Chief of Police

LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER  
631 Pinewald-Keswick Road  
P.O.Box B  
Bayville, NJ 08721  
(732) 341-1132

Member  
of the  
Police Department

Congressman Chris Smith  
Ocean County Constituent Service Center  
33 Washington Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753

Representative Smith,

The Berkeley Township Police Department's Traffic Safety Bureau is in strong support of the Western Boulevard Extension project. This project will benefit the network of roadways throughout all of Berkeley Township and the surrounding jurisdictions. The project will relieve the severe problems that plague Route 9 which is operating at a poor level. The traffic problem on Route 9 effects not only Berkeley Township but also Beachwood, South Toms River, Lacey Township, Ocean Gate, and Pine Beach.

The two-lane highway of Route 9 has extreme congestion spanning from South Toms River to Lacey Township during all hours of the day. During rush hour time periods, the traffic is at a standstill in certain areas. This not only causes inconvenience but also poses great safety concerns. While traffic is at a standstill, views are obstructed by large volumes of traffic and tractor trailers causes pedestrian crossing concerns. The bumper to bumper traffic on Route 9 has also been the cause of 87 crashes during 2022 in Berkeley Township alone. Public transportation also poses concern for safety along the Route 9 corridor and its heavily congested traffic. The Township has several bus stops with very limited shoulders and no room for passing during loading and unloading. A relief in congestion would improve the level of safety for all of our motorist and pedestrian traffic.

With the always growing population and several new neighborhoods forming off of the Route 9 corridor, the growing traffic volumes not only effects the commuters safety but also the economic growth of our local businesses. The Traffic Safety Bureau receives traffic complaints on a daily basis in regards to the current infrastructure unable to meet the needs of the commercial transportation. Delivery vehicles experience great difficulty entering and exiting the commercial properties that they are required to deliver to. The circulation of traffic is vital to serve our community as well as the retail, industrial, and commercial land-uses.

With the Western Boulevard Extension acting as a bypass of Route 9, the community of Berkeley Township and the surrounding Townships will be greatly benefited. Approval of this project will address our safety concerns for motorist, allow for economic growth in our business district, and improve our Public Transportation infrastructure.

Respectfully,

Sean Varady  
Berkeley Township Traffic Safety Bureau



**BOROUGH OF BEACHWOOD**  
**1600 PINEWALD ROAD**  
**BEACHWOOD NEW JERSEY 08722**  
**(732) 286-6000**  
**(732) 349-8390 fax**  
**www.beachwoodusa.com**

**MAYOR**  
**Ronald F. Roma, Jr.**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT**  
**William J. Cairns**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
**Beverly Clayton**  
**Gregory Feeney**  
**Steven Komsa**  
**Gerald LaCrosse**  
**Edward Zakar**

March 29, 2023

The Honorable Chris Smith  
33 Washington Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753

Re: Berkeley Township Western Boulevard Extension Congressionally Directed Spending

Dear Congressman Smith:

The Borough of Beachwood offers our strong support for Berkeley Township's application for the Western Boulevard Extension project. Currently, Western Boulevard ends at Northern Boulevard. This proposed extension would create an effective bypass of Route 9, a two-lane highway, through Bayville providing a more direct north-south than the current route through Beachwood. The intent of this extension would lessen traffic congestion on Route 9.

The extension would encourage efficient circulation to the economic growth of Berkeley Township. Constructing this roadway will serve the residential community as well as the commercial, industrial, retail, and civic land uses situated along the corridor. Without the extension, the residents, businesses, and visitors would continue to endure the congestion of Route 9.

The Berkeley Township proposal is inline with the NJ Department of Transportation's intention and will be a significantly positive impact to the residents, businesses, and visitors. The NJDT has been reluctant to move forward with the extension indicating the involved expense but the local municipalities desire to address the growing concerns of traffic congestion and the quality of our residents' lives.

Approval of this funding will enhance the capacity and efficiency of the transportation infrastructure. The funding would ease the traffic congestion on an overburdened roadway system. For these reasons, the Borough of Beachwood Mayor and Council respectively urge your strong consideration for a full award of the funding to address the roads of our neighboring community.

Sincerely,

Ronald F. Roma, Jr.  
Mayor

# **BOROUGH OF OCEAN GATE**

**801 OCEAN GATE AVENUE - CN 100  
OCEAN GATE, NEW JERSEY 08740-0100  
Telephone (732) 269-3166**

Congressman Chris Smith  
Ocean County Constituent Service Center  
33 Washington Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753

Dear Representative Smith,

This letter is in strong support of the Western Blvd. extension project which would alleviate congestion on Rte. 9 for not only Berkeley Township but also for the residents of the surrounding towns of Beachwood, Ocean Gate, South Toms River, Lacey, and Pine Beach. The proposed expansion would create an effective bypass of the congested Route 9 corridor to lessen traffic.

The traffic on Route 9 seems to be at all hours of the day. During rush hour, the traffic is often at a standstill. There are a great deal of car and pedestrian accidents which has become a concern for safety among both the residents and the Administration of neighboring Towns.

The expansion of the roadway will be devoted to upgrading and improving the roads to enhance their safety and ability to efficiently handle growing traffic volumes. This project compliments ongoing County, local and private sector transportation investments. The movement of people and goods on our roadways is important to our economy. Constructing this roadway will serve the residential community as well as the commercial, industrial, retail, and civic land-uses situated along the Route 9 corridor. Without this expansion, the economic corridor will continue to be unsafe and greatly impact on the quality of life for our residents.

We respectfully ask you to consider providing funding for this western Boulevard extension. Approval will greatly enhance the capacity and efficiency of the transportation infrastructure and well as alleviate congestion on this already overburdened roadway. We strongly ask that you give positive consideration to this project to address the needs of our neighboring communities.

Respectfully,



Robert Curtin  
Mayor Ocean Gate Township