

Fourth District Projects for 2021

Under a new process authorized this year, Members of Congress may submit a limited number of public and not-for-profit projects for consideration of direct federal funding. Each project must have garnered local community support and exhibit a demonstrated need. These carefully chosen submissions must also meet stringent criteria established by the committees of jurisdiction, and they are restricted by the rules of the committees. I have developed this page to keep the public informed of these important requests. Please feel free to read about each one below.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Sponsor: The County of Ocean, N.J., 101 Hooper Ave., Toms River, NJ 08753

Project Name & Description: The County Road 539 Overpass Project is a long-anticipated plan to significantly increase civilian traffic safety on the roadway and provide an alternate route for military vehicles that need to cross it to conduct mission critical training and connect the eastern and western portions of the 65-square mile base. Since the inception and subsequent growth of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, this road has been supported by Federal, State, County and local officials, as well as officials at the Army Reserve and Army Guard. Civilians would take the new overpass on CR 539 while large military tactical vehicles—integral to the national security mission at JB-MDL—would be able to travel more safely and in convoy formation underneath. The Army reports the proposed overpass is in “direct support of its’s readiness mission to improve operational capability.” Local government leaders note it will vastly reduce congestion on the roadway and enhance safety for all civilian commuters.

Project Cost: \$10 million

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter of US Rep. Smith to Appropriations Committee for CR 539 Overpass Project](#)
- [Letter of Request from Sponsor Ocean County Commissioners Gary Quinn and Jack Kelly](#)
- [Letter of Support from the U.S. Army Reserve-Fort Dix Commander, Col. Jon Brierton](#)
- [Letter of Support from the North Jersey Transportation Authority Executive Director](#)
- [Letter of Support from the Defense Enhancement Coalition Chairman Jim Saxton and Executive Director Michael Warner](#)

Sponsor: Middletown Township, NJ

Project Name and Description: Middletown, NJ - Federal funding for the Koleda Park Improvement project is needed to help Middletown Township convert a vacant lot into useful community space. The project will include a driveway for the adjacent elementary school which will improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety at the nearby intersection. Additionally, a properly managed, ADA compliant parking lot on the site will reduce the need for visitors to park on neighborhood streets and ensure increased safety for those visiting the area to enjoy a nearby lake, pond, and other educational and recreational venues next to the site. The entire lot also requires a new layer of topsoil to remediate from fertilizers and pesticides used by the farm that stood on the site decades ago. The Township of Middletown, and all who visit Koleda Park, especially and including visitors to the nearby school and parks, will benefit from this project. The local sponsor will be the Township of Middletown and is prepared to meet the 20 percent local sponsor match. Accordingly, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, has indicated this project would be able to be added to the TIP.

Project Cost: \$837,690

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter from US Rep. Smith to Appropriations Committee for Middletown Koleda Park Project](#)
- [Koleda Park Proposal by Sponsor Middletown Township](#)
- [Letter of Support from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Executive Director](#)
- [Letter of Support from State Sen. Declan O'Scanlon](#)
- [Letter of Support from Mayor Tony Perry](#)
- [Letter of Support from Middletown Board of Education](#)

Sponsor: Borough of Point Pleasant Beach, NJ

Project Name and Description: The Point Pleasant Beach Channel Drive ADA Compliance Upgrade and Surface Revitalization project will enhance safety and ADA accessibility in a five-block shopping and business district by removing and replacing curbing and sidewalks; installing ADA-ramps and driveway aprons; installing ADA-compliant, color-contrasting crosswalks, pavement markings and signage; and adding lighting, landscaping, ADA-compliant benches, bike racks and bus shelters. The repaired and revamped area will also offer new opportunities for local employment for the Borough's diverse group of businesses, including the local seafood industry, and family-friendly tourist attractions such as a thriving boardwalk that includes a first-class aquarium, rides, arcades, and a mile-long sandy beach—boosting the local economy that has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The local sponsor is the Borough of Point Pleasant Beach which is prepared to meet the 20 percent local sponsor match. Accordingly, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, has indicated this project would be able to be added to the TIP.

Project Cost: \$1,750,000

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter from US Rep. Smith to Appropriations Committee for Point Pleasant Beach Project](#)
- [Letter of Support from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Executive Director](#)
- [Letter of Support from Mayor Paul Kanitra with Cost Breakdown](#)

Sponsor: Freehold Borough, NJ

Project Name and Description: The benefits of the Freehold Borough Parking Improvement project include a revised circulation plan to increase the existing 54 parking spaces to 67 spaces, restoring the heavily used parking lot, while also providing additional green space and reducing stormwater runoff. In addition to the new parking spaces, a second pedestrian access point will be created, and ADA-compliant curb ramps and crosswalks will be installed to allow increased accessibility. The centralized location of the parking lot is surrounded by 3 well-travelled streets and is steps away from nearby government buildings as well as small businesses including restaurants and the local arts and cultural community who have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The local sponsor is the Borough of Freehold, which is prepared to meet the 20% local match. Accordingly, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, has indicated this project would be able to be added to the TIP.

Project Cost: \$697,145

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter of US Rep. Smith to Appropriations Committee for Freehold Parking Project](#)
- [Letter from Sponsor Freehold Borough Administrator](#)
- [Letter of Support from the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Executive Director](#)
- [Freehold Borough Engineer's Proposal](#)
- [Letters of Support from numerous Freehold Businesses](#)

Sponsor: New Jersey Department of Transportation

Project Name and Description: The Route 35 Bridge Over the North Branch of Wreck Pond replacement

project will result in a safer and more resilient byway which will effectively service this bustling economic area for decades to come. The purpose of this project is to replace the current bridge which has been deemed structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. Built in 1931, the current structure is in dire need of replacing.

The importance of Route 35 to the greater Southern Monmouth County community and economy cannot be overstated. This State highway is a major thoroughfare connecting numerous towns, and it also serves as an evacuation route during times of perilous storms. Economically, the highway in the project area is home to scores of businesses, and as well as provides a conduit to millions of visitors to the New Jersey shore.

This project is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and is on the appropriate TIP.

Project Cost: \$4,665,000

Supporting Documents:

[Letter from US Rep. Chris Smith to Appropriations Committee for Route 35 Bridge Over the N. Branch of Wreck Pond](#)

[Letter of Support from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Executive Director](#)

[Letter from Sponsor New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti](#)

[Letter of Support from the Monmouth County Administrator](#)

[Letter of Support from State Sen. Bob Singer and Assemblymen Sean Kean and Thomson](#)

[Letter of Support from Wall Mayor Timothy Farrell](#)

[Link to NJTPA 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program](#)

Sponsor: Mercer County

Project Name and Description: The Mercer County Bus Purchase will provide for the purchase of buses and bus equipment for transportation service programs in Mercer County in FY2022. It will fund the replacement of three small cutaway buses, five standard cutaway buses, and three extended cutaway standard floor buses. The County's Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly (TRADE) program provides non-emergency transportation to residents of Mercer County who are elderly and those with disabilities. It is the mission of TRADE to provide a safe, efficient and economical paratransit service to all eligible Mercer County residents by trained staff dedicated to the passengers' special needs. This project, sponsored by the government of Mercer County, is already on the TIP, and the County is eager to improve essential transportation services for those in need.

Project Cost: \$915,000

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter from US Rep. Chris Smith to Appropriations Committee for Mercer County TRADE Bus Project](#)
- [Letter of Support from the Project Sponsor, Mercer County](#)
- [Letter of Support from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Executive Director](#)
- [Link to DVPRA FY2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program](#)

Sponsor: New Jersey Department of Transportation

Project Name and Description: The Route 33 Bridge Over the Millstone River replacement project will replace a dangerous structure with a safer and more sound thoroughfare and serve rural farms, businesses of all sizes, residents and many neighborhood communities in this section of Monmouth County, NJ. The current bridge, which was built in 1926, has been deemed structurally deficient. At 95 years old, this structure is showing its age—evidence of the years of wear and tear connecting the Shore area with Trenton, the State Capital. In addition to the many businesses located along the

roadway, Route 33 is also home to many agricultural and horse farms, which necessitate heavy equipment using the roads. Additionally, as a result of the online shopping boom brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are thousands of square feet of warehouse space currently under construction in the immediate vicinity of the bridge. Once completed, that storage space will bring with it a marked increase in heavy truck traffic that will stress and deteriorate the aged structure even more. The sponsor of this project is the New Jersey Department of Transportation and it is listed on the appropriate Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) demonstrating both significant local support and need.

Project Cost: \$4,550,000

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter of US Rep. Smith to Appropriations Committee](#)
- [Letter of Support from Sponsor by NJDOT Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti](#)
- [Letter of Support from Assemblymen Ron Dancer and Rob Clifton](#)
- [Letter of Support from Millstone Mayor Dorfman](#)
- [Letter of Support from Monmouth County Administrator](#)
- [Letter of Support from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority](#)
- [Link to NJTPA 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program](#)

Sponsor: Mercer County

Project Name and Description: Mercer County Roadway Safety Improvements will provide for the purchase of buses and bus equipment for transportation service programs in Mercer County in FY2022. It will fund the replacement of three small cutaway buses, five standard cutaway buses, and three extended cutaway standard floor buses. The County's Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly (TRADE) program provides non-emergency transportation to residents of Mercer County who are elderly and those with disabilities. It is the mission of TRADE to provide a safe, efficient and economical paratransit service to all eligible Mercer County residents by trained staff dedicated to the passengers' special needs. This project, sponsored by the government of Mercer County, is already on the TIP, and the County is eager to improve essential transportation services for those in need.

Project Cost: \$800,000 for FY2023; \$1,000,000 for FY2025

Supporting Documents:

- [Letter from US Rep. Chris Smith to Appropriations Committee for the Mercer County Roadway Safety Improvements project](#)
- [Letter of Support from the Project Sponsor, Mercer County](#)
- [Letter of Support from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission](#)
- [Link to DVPRA FY2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program](#)