

Ortley Beach Streetscape and Gateway Transportation Alternatives
Township of Toms River, Ocean County
Preliminary Engineering Phase
Design Consultant: NV5

Virtual Public Information Center

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Prepared By: NV5 and Toms River Township
Question Period: Saturday, November 22, 2020 through Saturday, December 6, 2020
Progress Print: December 20, 2020

QUESTIONS RECEIVED THROUGH DECEMBER 20, 2020

DOCUMENT FORMAT:

- Question or comment received during Virtual Public Information Center or question period
Response: Response to question or comment provided by NV5 and/or Toms River Township.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. Will the presentation and plans be made available following the Virtual Public Information Center?
Response: The Ortley Beach Streetscape and Gateway Transportation Alternatives presentation, plans, and a video from the Virtual Public Information Center are available on the Toms River Township website:
<https://www.tomsrivertownship.com/483/Ortley-Beach-Streetscape-Project>
2. Who should I contact if I have questions or comments following the Virtual Public Information Center?
Response: Questions and comments were received during the Virtual Public Information Center, however, if you were unable to attend the meeting, you can send questions or comments to Toms River Township. The questions and comment period is from the date of the Virtual Public Information Center (Saturday, November 22, 2020 through **Saturday, December 6, 2020**).
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3. Why will development and finalization of the plans take so long? Is it possible to speed up the process so the implementation of the project can begin in the Fall of 2021?
Response: NV5 and Toms River Township are following the requirements for federally funded Transportation Alternatives Program grant projects to ensure compliance with rules and regulations. Since the project is federally funded and administered through New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Local Aid, reviews by the Federal government and NJDOT will be required, along with Environmental Documents. The ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic has also played a role in the schedule.
4. I would like to know if before and after this project the upkeep of Rt 35 will be handle by the township or the state?
Response: This question refers to jurisdictional agreements between NJDOT, Ocean County and Toms River Township. Route 35 is a state roadway, Bay Boulevard is a County roadway and the side streets throughout the project limits are a combination of Ocean County and Toms River Township roadways. The proposed streetscape improvements proposed within this project will be maintained by Toms River Township. Updated jurisdictional agreements between the three parties will be required as the project progresses.

5. Will there be signs on Route 35 Southbound directing people to the business district and businesses on Route 35 Northbound like they have in Lavallette?

Response: "Wayfinding" directional signs to the business district were not previously included in the scope of work for the project, however, it can be considered.

6. Will the wiring for the pedestrian lighting be underground? Will the street lights require street closures for digging trenches for the wires? How bright are the new street lights? Does this plan include banners and accommodate Holiday lighting? If the lamp post wires are going underground, can the existing wires be moved underground at the same time?

Response: The proposed light poles will feature underground electrical conduit in vicinity of the existing curb lines. In order to install the proposed conduit, shoulder closures on a block-by-block basis will be used during construction. The proposed design will minimize any potential crossing of Route 35 to avoid impacts to traffic.

The proposed street lights are for pedestrian lighting rather than roadway lighting. As the design progresses, final photometric data will be available for the locations of proposed lights and to how bright they are, however, impacts to adjacent property owners is not anticipated. The current layout provides for the intended pedestrian lighting needs. The light poles will feature LED bulbs that can be adjusted and light shield could be used to avoid disruption to adjacent properties.

The proposed light poles will have interchangeable banners with an outlet provided on the pole to connect with holiday lighting.

While the proposed lighting conduits will be underground, moving the existing overhead utilities is outside the scope of this project. Such changes to the existing utilities would require substantial coordination and funding.

7. Can we please do everything possible and use this opportunity to reduce paved and concrete areas to increase permeable surfaces? Are there any rain gardens or other improvements to reduce rainwater run off? Will the plantings be native plants? Will the project maintain the look and feel of a beach community?

Response: Areas between the curb and sidewalk were improved during the Route 35 Emergency Restoration project, however, it is not proposed for a corridor wide improvement to remove paved or concrete areas; select locations near light poles will have landscaping (proposed sea grass).

Rain gardens are not included in the proposed project. Plantings near the proposed light poles are not intended to accommodate drainage infiltration similar to a formal rain garden. Planting gardens will help with runoff, however, are not considered a rain garden.

The proposed plantings will consist of American beach grass within 8' – 10' linear planting areas near the proposed street lights. And have been selected due to the shore environment. Additional planting areas have also been considered in vicinity of select corners (along with benches, bike racks and news racks). As the design progresses, NV5 and Toms River will coordinate for the particular species of beach grass with the goal of selecting plantings to minimize potential maintenance.

The project will ensure the selection of proposed features will maintain the look and feel of the beach community and corridor.

8. Is there an opportunity to improve the beach boardwalk, store fronts, side street sidewalks and other items?

Response: This project is a streetscape improvement project consisting of street lights, benches, trash receptacles, news racks, bike racks and gateway signage. Improvements to the beach boardwalk, store fronts and side street sidewalks are outside the scope of the project.

9. What is the material of the benches? Metals easily rust in the salt air. Can we keep the benches and other metal items blue?

Response: Bench material shown on the graphics consist of powder coated steel. These products will be Made in America as a part of the NJDOT / Federal 'Buy American' clause due to the use of Federal funding.

Color selection for benches to be determined – the project is currently in Preliminary Engineering

phase and NV5 will coordinate with Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association (OBVTA – a primary project stakeholder) and Toms River Township prior to finalizing the project and ordering the material.

10. Is replacement of street trees along Route 35 that have survived included?

Response: This project does not include additional street trees. We will notify NJDOT Bureau of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Solutions of the comment. Any future plantings will require coordination.

Post Meeting Note: All of the warranties from Super Storm Sandy restoration plantings are finished. NJDOT has provided assistance under the use of the Good Neighbor Contract to maintain and provide new material in various locations of this corridor. It is noted trees were met with various opinions, so if there is consideration for planting new trees it will be in consultation with Toms River Township.

11. Are the newsstands actually needed? Many are empty or not maintained (old publications), most people read online these days or go to stores for hard copies. If you must - use one to consolidate the existing ones or take them out.

Response: NV5 will coordinate with Toms River Township to potentially minimize the size or number of news racks. Toms River Township noted that the existing news racks can be considered for consolidated and an assessment made to determine if the publications are active and require news racks.

12. We are owners on Eighth Avenue and many families cross Route 35 North at Eighth, and there is no crosswalk or pedestrian crossing sign. Can there be a bench and plants added and a crosswalk?

Response: The addition of a bench and plantings at the corner of Eighth and Route 35N can be investigated as part of the streetscape project, but the crosswalk is outside the scope of the project and will require NJDOT consultation and approval.

13. What is being done to clean up Route 35 SB from 1st Ave to the end of Ortley? It is overgrown and unsightly in many areas.

Response: This section of Route 35 is outside the project limits. If the area in question is within the NJDOT right-of-way, they would have jurisdiction over maintenance. If the area in question is on private property, enforcement would be through the Township's Code Enforcement Division. NJDOT will be informed of the comment, if confirmed within their notify NJDOT right-of-way,

14. Halsey and Arnold Avenues are used as a cut through from the ACME shopping center from Bay Boulevard to Washington Avenue. Would it be considered to make these two small roads either one-way or dead end streets?

Response: The use of side streets and the overall circulation pattern in Ortley Beach was previously studied in the Ortley Beach Neighborhood Plan in 2014 and 2015 and this issue was not raised and is outside the scope of streetscape improvements. It would best be addressed by contacting the Traffic Safety Officer in the Toms River Police Department.

15. Save Barnegat Bay provided written comments dated December 6, 2020 regarding their coordination post Super Storm Sandy with NJDOT and NJDEP's list of New Jersey Native Plant Species, Save Barnegat Bay is requesting the use of native plants.

Response: The intent for the project is to use plant material that is native and appropriate for Ortley Beach. The preliminary plans currently identify American Beachgrass (NJ native) at locations where decorative lighting is proposed. Additional plantings are also planned for the proposed gateway sign locations though specific plants have not been identified yet. They too will be native species.

Note December 20, 2020: The November 2020 Preliminary Engineering PIC comment period has concluded. Additional comments, if received, during the Preliminary Engineering Phase will be reviewed and assessed. A PIC will be conducted in the Final Design Phase.