



## Route 179 Bridge over Back Brook (Ringo's Creek) Preliminary Engineering Phase Virtual Public Information Center • February 2026 East Amwell, Hunterdon County

### PRESENTATION TRANSCRIPT

Slide #	Transcript
1	Welcome to the Route 179 virtual Public Information Center. This presentation has been prepared to inform the community and other stakeholders of the proposed improvements for the replacement of this bridge that has outlived its useful life. This federally-funded improvement project is being administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. We encourage you to participate in the design development of the improvements by sending the project team questions or concerns. Instructions on how to do this are provided at the end of the presentation.
2	The Route 179 bridge project is located in the Township of East Amwell, Hunterdon County. The project area is situated just south of the center of the Town of Ringoes. Residential homes are located on both approaches to the bridge, with one business situated on the south approach just past Melbourn Lane.
3	<p>The Route 179 bridge has outlived its useful life and is in need of replacement. The bridge has been in existence for nearly 100 years.</p> <p>The New Jersey Department of Transportation began exploring this issue and how to address it through a Problem Screening Report that was completed in 2016. Based on the findings of this screening, the project was advanced to NJDOT for further study and concept development.</p> <p>NJDOT completed the Concept Development phase of the project in December of 2020. At the conclusion of the Concept Development phase, the NJDOT selected a Preliminary Preferred Alternative for the proposed improvements, and in 2024, the project progressed to Preliminary Engineering.</p> <p>Throughout 2024 and 2025, NJDOT's engineering design firm, Hardesty &amp; Hanover, was working on the completion of the preparation of Preliminary Engineering plans. Upon completion of this phase this year, Final Design can commence.</p>
4	<p>The purpose of the project is to replace the deteriorating bridge with a new structure that provides a safe passage over Back Brook while enhancing vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist safety within the project area. The existing bridge was built in 1929 and, now being close to 100 years old and showing extensive deterioration, requires replacement.</p> <p>In addition to the continued deterioration of the structure, according to the latest bridge inspection, scouring along the footings of the abutments was discovered.</p> <p>Proposed shoulders through the project area will remain at 8' wide to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. These improvements are being implemented to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and to comply with the NJDOT's Complete Streets Policy for multimodal use.</p>
5	<p>The existing Route 179 roadway over the bridge and across both approaches is comprised of one lane in each direction - 12' wide' with shoulders on both sides - 8' in width. There are no sidewalks located on this section of the roadway. The roadway has a posted speed limit of 35 mph in this area.</p> <p>The existing bridge is a single span concrete slab structure overlaid with asphalt. Substandard guide rail is attached to the bridge deck and spans over the culvert. Short flared wingwalls exist at all four (4) corners of the structure. The footings for the abutments and wingwalls are founded on bedrock.</p> <p>Due to the continued deterioration of the concrete, NJDOT Maintenance Forces have periodically patched the spalled areas of the top slab, headwalls, and wingwalls.</p>



Slide #	Transcript
6	<p>The Preliminary Preferred Alternative for the proposed improvements and the total footprint of the project is shown here. The Route 179 project limits begin on the south approach just past the Melbourn Lane T-intersection and end approximately 200' past the stream crossing on the north approach.</p> <p>No residential nor business driveways are located within the proposed construction limits.</p>
7	<p>The existing Route 179 Bridge over Back Brook is essentially being replaced in kind as far as bridge width is concerned – the 40' cartway will be maintained. The bridge length will be slightly increased to accommodate terrestrial crossing shelves as part of the required wildlife crossing. The proposed new structure is a single-span precast concrete three-sided rigid frame.</p> <p>Aside from the new bridge, other improvements being proposed include new guide rail upgrades at the four corners of the bridge; improved drainage system including a new piped system in the northeast quadrant of the bridge; and new retaining walls on the upstream side of the bridge.</p>
8	<p>The main structural component of the new bridge will be prefabricated three-sided rigid frame units cast off-site at a precasting plant. The proposed typical section will closely mimic the existing conditions to include two – 12' lanes and two - 8' shoulders, with no sidewalks.</p> <p>This slide also shows a photo of a similar rigid frame segment being lifted into place on another NJDOT bridge replacement project. This type of construction is considered accelerated bridge construction, or ABC, which is a project delivery method that reduces the construction time and consequently the impacts to the public. By fabricating the concrete units under controlled conditions in a precasting plant, the quality of these main structural components is improved.</p>
9	<p>One of the key commitments made to the Local Officials for this project is that Route 179 must remain open to traffic, thus avoiding a long-term detour. Therefore, both the northbound and southbound traffic will use a single common lane facilitated by temporary traffic signals located on each approach to the bridge construction work zone.</p> <p>Traffic staging will be performed in two stages. The western portion of the bridge and retaining walls &amp; wingwalls will be constructed first while traffic utilizes the single common lane on the existing bridge. Then traffic will shift over to the newly constructed portion of the bridge on the western side, while the remaining portion of the bridge and wingwalls are constructed on the eastern side.</p> <p>A traffic study has been performed during this Preliminary Engineering phase to analyze this alternating two-way, one-lane concept. The analysis has determined the proposed concept will provide acceptable levels of service with minimal queuing.</p>
10	<p>Pedestrians and bicyclists will also be precluded from passing through the construction zone while the bridge is being replaced. A nearby convenient detour route will be signed that directs all pedestrians and bicyclists to follow local roads Melbourn Lane and John Ringo Road. Thru traffic will be prohibited to utilize Melbourn Lane throughout the duration of construction.</p>
11	<p>The project will not result in any residential acquisitions or displacements, nor will the project bring travel lanes closer in proximity to residential dwellings or other sensitive receptors. The right-of-way impacts involve only temporary construction easements on two properties for construction, utilities, drainage, and slopes.</p> <p>Property owners with right-of-way impacts will be notified in writing from the NJDOT as the project progresses.</p>
12	<p>At present, the Route 179 project is in the Preliminary Engineering phase of project development. After the 30-day public comment period has ended, the project will be advanced to Final Design. It is anticipated that the Final Design phase will begin in 2026 and reach completion in 2027. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2028 and be completed in 2029.</p>



Slide #	Transcript
13	<p>Throughout the Concept Development and Preliminary Engineering phases for the project, there has been continued outreach to local officials and the public.</p> <p>Since project kick-off in 2018, three Local Officials Briefings have been conducted, in 2018 and 2019, and then again in 2024 at the commencement of the Preliminary Engineering phase.</p> <p>An in-person Public Information Center was held near the conclusion of the Concept Development phase in July of 2019 at the East Amwell Township Municipal Building.</p> <p>A Resolution of Support was received from East Amwell in August of 2024.</p>
14	<p>Thank you for taking the time to attend this virtual Public Information Center. Now that you are aware of the proposed Route 179 over Back Brook bridge replacement project, you are welcome to submit comments, questions, or changes you would like to see considered. This can be done via email to <a href="mailto:Route179Bridge@gmail.com">Route179Bridge@gmail.com</a> or by mailing them to Patience Sengbey, at the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Office of Community Relations at the address shown here.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>