

Intersection of Main Street & New Street Safety Enhancements

Intersections Improvements Along Main Street (CR 531) from Talmadge Avenue to Brunswick Avenue Safety Improvements Project

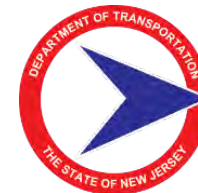
Local Safety Program

Local Safety Engineering Assistance Program

Middlesex County
Borough of Metuchen, NJ

www.MainStreetMetuchenSafetyProject.com

Public Information Center No. 2
September 20, 2021



Agenda

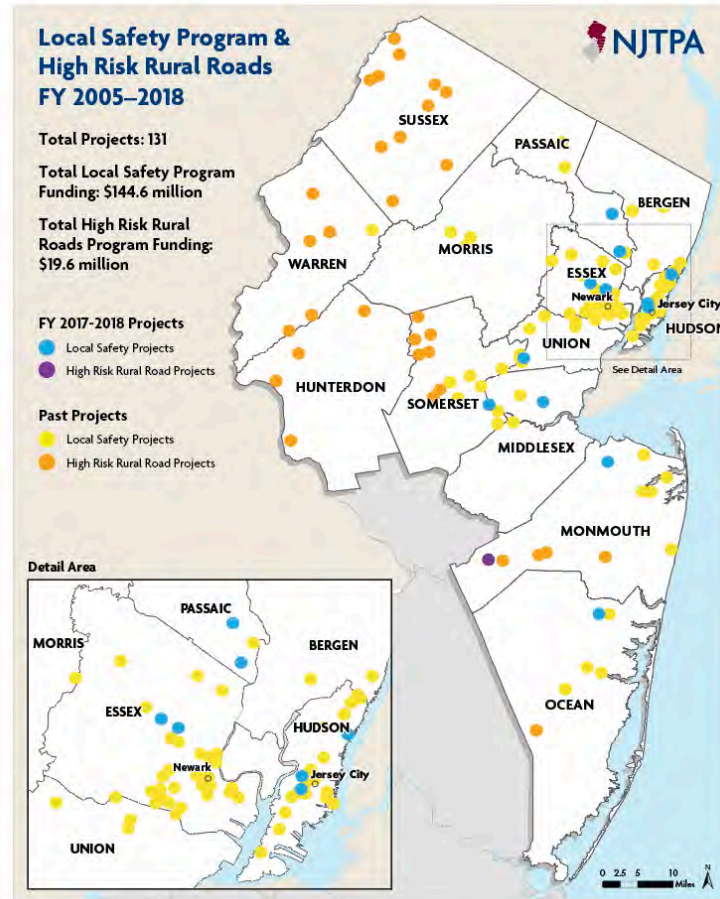
- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Funding
- Project Location
- Safety Enhancements Alternatives at New Street & Main Street
- Next Steps & Comments

A Public Information Center (PIC) was held on October 7, 2020 for the overall project.

<https://www.njtpa.org/Get-Involved/Info-Resources/Calendar/2020/October/Public-Meeting-Metuchen-Safety-Improvements.aspx>

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for Northern New Jersey



Local Safety and High-Risk Rural Roads Programs

- Over \$145 million in funding for safety improvements since 2004 on County and Local Roadways in urban, suburban, and rural communities

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

- Emphasizes a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety

Funding Source

- Federal Transportation Funding administered through the NJTPA

Network Screening

- Identifies locations experiencing:
 - High crash frequencies
 - Severe crash injuries
 - Specific crash types such as right-angle or roadway departures

Community Outreach

- Provides the public, local stakeholders and officials with an opportunity to provide comments and ask questions

Main Street from Talmadge Avenue to Brunswick Avenue

Total Project Length: 1.1 miles

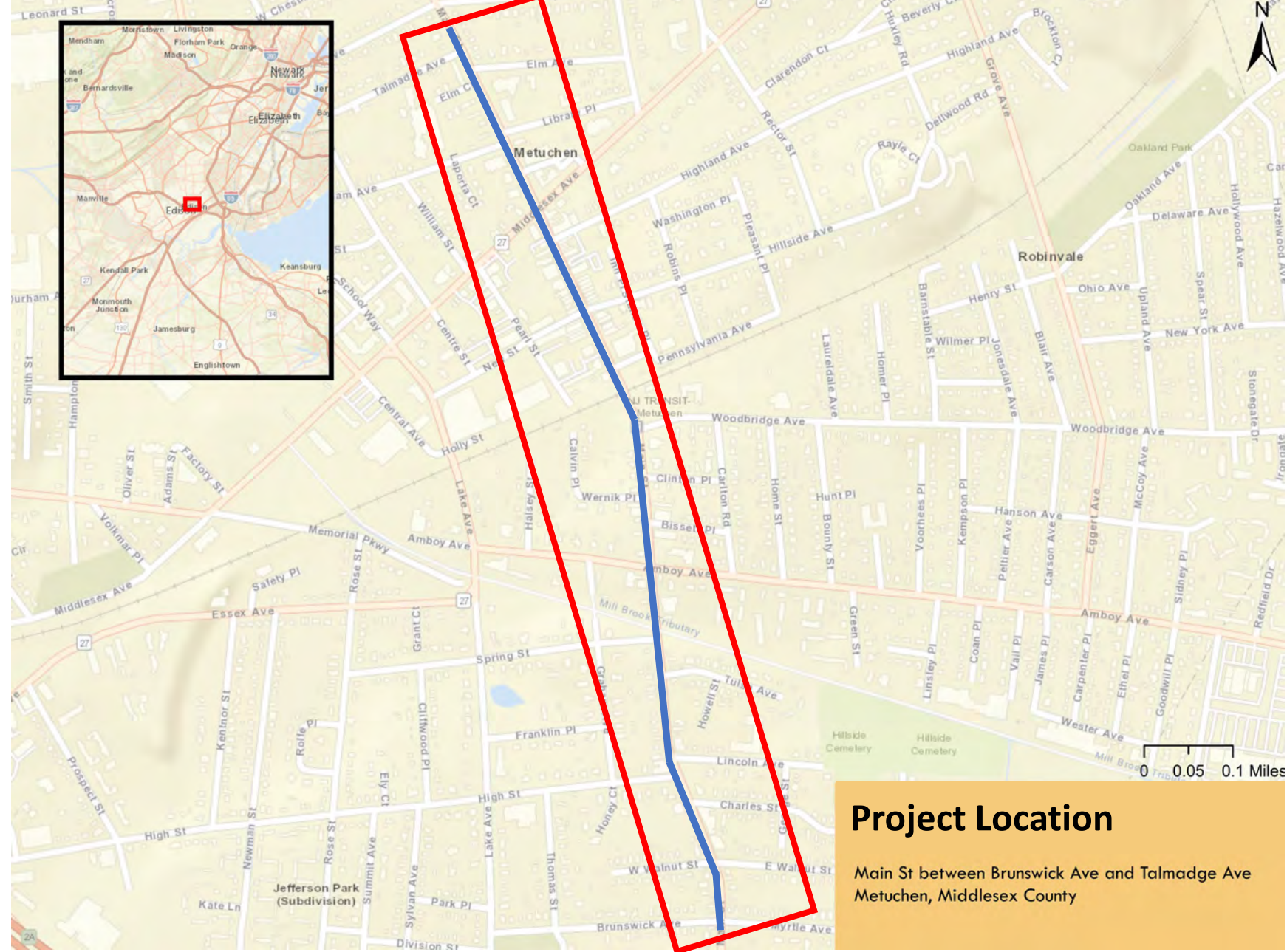
Tentative Project Schedule

Preliminary Engineering
2020-2021

Final Design
2022

Anticipated Construction
2023

Anticipated Completion
2024



Project Location
Main St between Brunswick Ave and Talmadge Ave
Metuchen, Middlesex County

Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

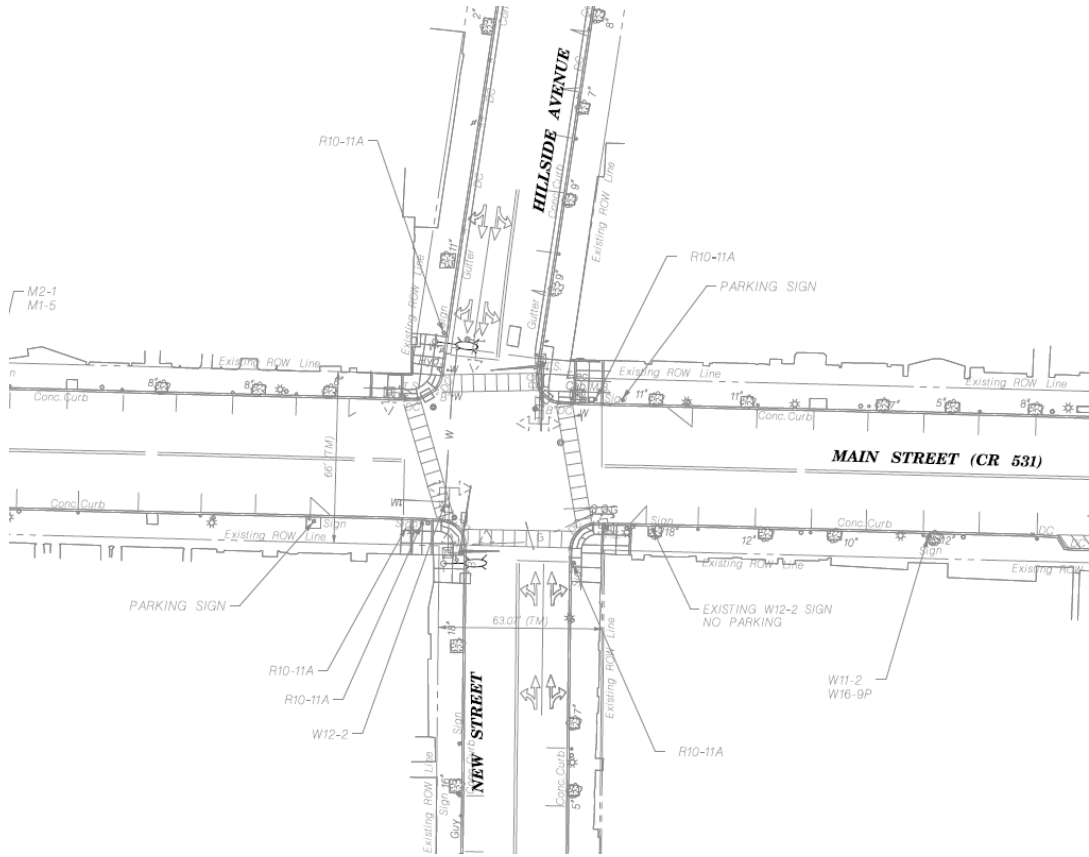
Existing Condition

- Project focus area – “heart” of downtown. Busy and dangerous intersection
 - Address crashes and pedestrian safety/mobility concerns
 - **9 Pedestrian strikes** from 2014 to 2019
 - Aware of numerous near-strikes
- Pandemic closure of New Street – Improved safety
 - Reduction in pedestrian strikes, near-strikes



Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

Existing Condition



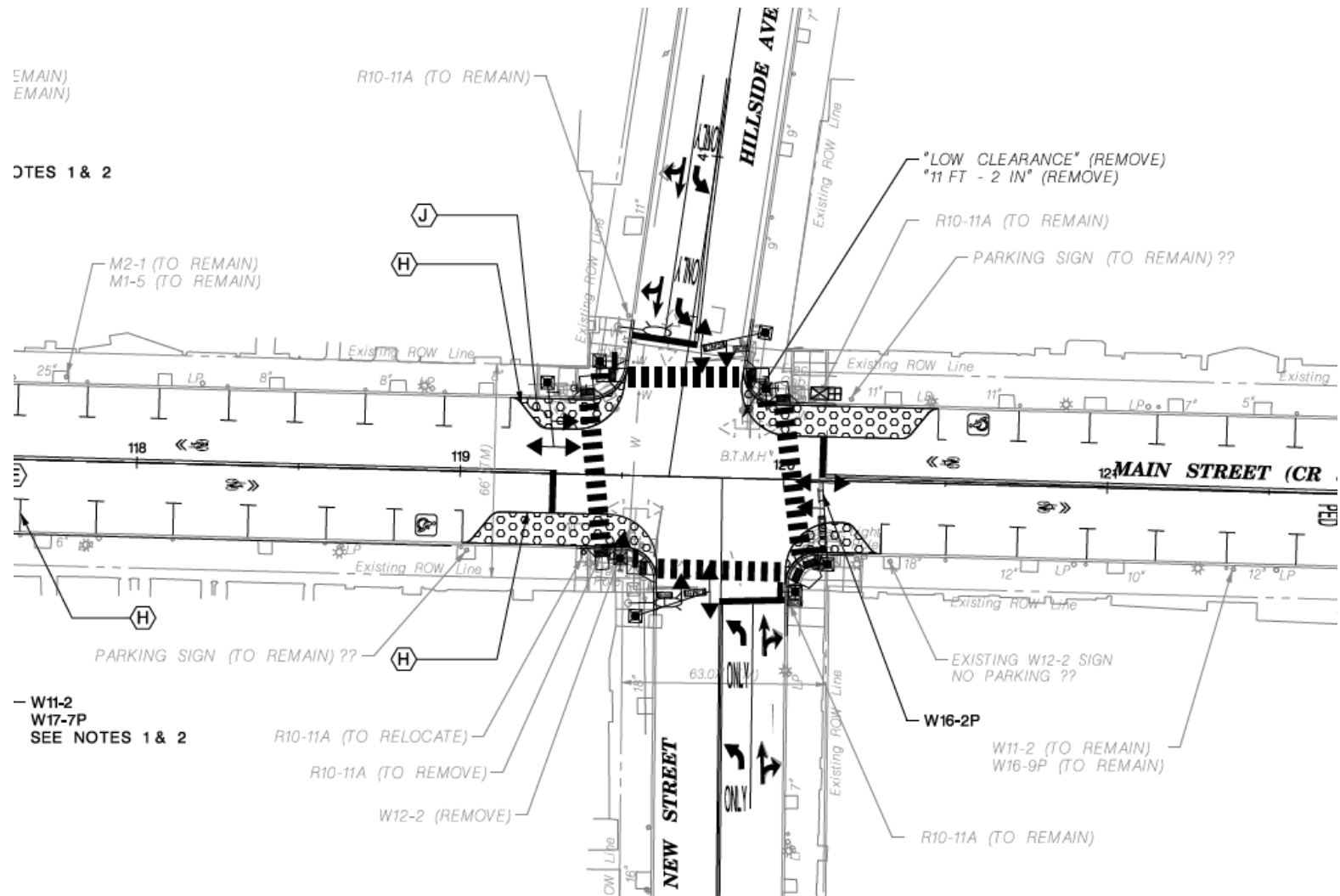
Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave



Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

Original Concept

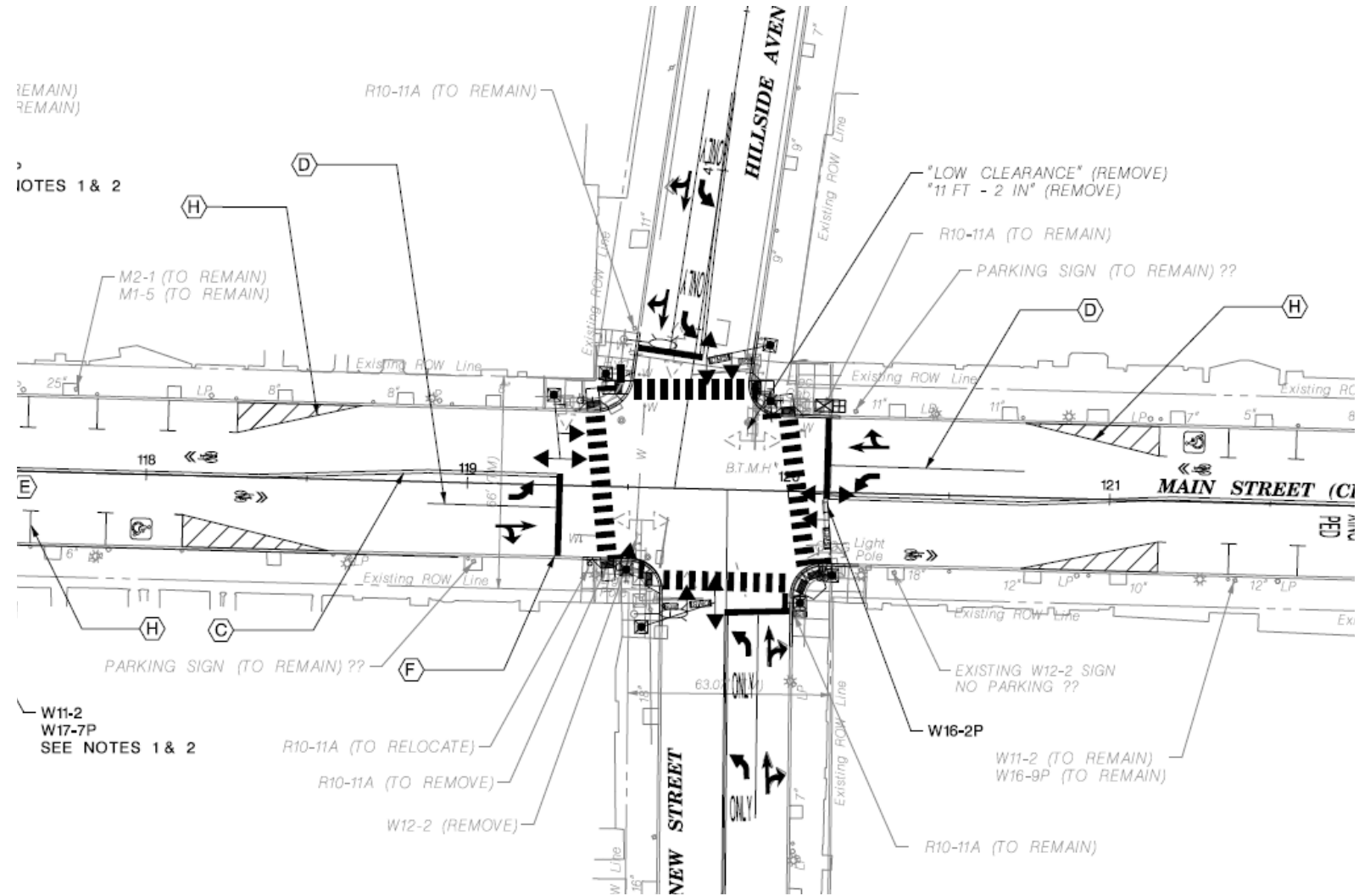
- New traffic signal
- Traffic calming – Curb extensions
- “Passing on the right” discouraged by design
- New/Hillside left turn phases – *Protected/Green Arrow*
- Main Street crosswalks – Leading Pedestrian Intervals
- Increased vehicular delay and queues but maintains parking
- Safety improvements – No passing on right; leading pedestrian intervals (peds begin walk before left turns release)



Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

Alternative 1

- New traffic signal
- Traffic calming – Reduce aggressive driver behavior
- Left turn slots on Main Street, increased safety, predictability, visibility – Permissive/Green Ball
- New/Hillside left turn phases – *Protected/Green Arrow*
- Main Street crosswalks – Leading Pedestrian Intervals
- Decreased vehicular delay and queues but removes 15 Main Street parking spaces



Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

Alternative 2

- New traffic signal
- Traffic calming - Curb extensions
- Sidewalk along Main Street extended across New Street
- Future pedestrian plaza to be designed and constructed by the Boro.
- Plaza design opportunities may include on-street parking adjacent to Pearl Street



Potential Pedestrian Plaza to be designed and construction by the Boro

Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave

Alternative 2 Benefits

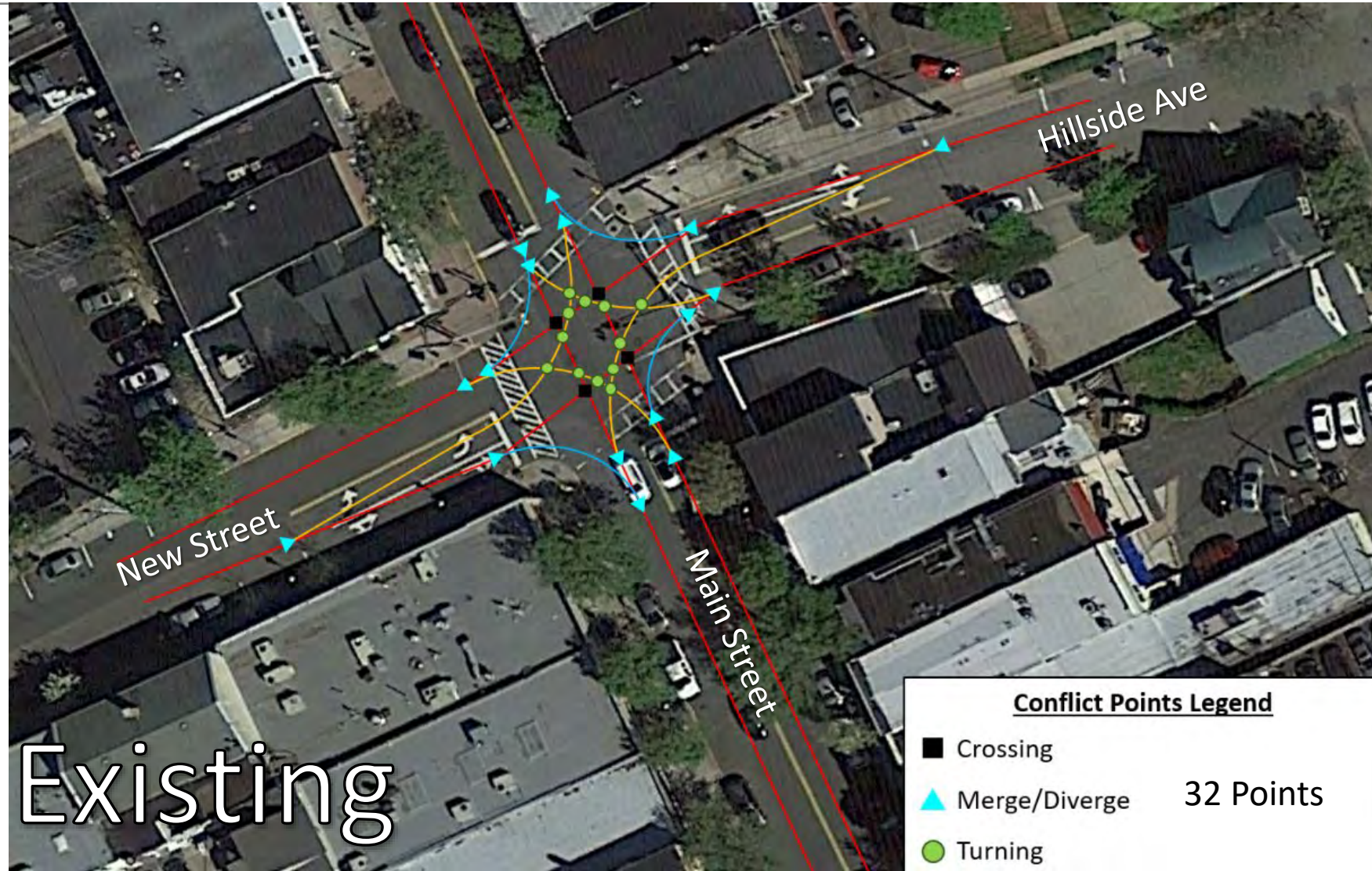
Pedestrians

- Safer and easier to navigate intersection
- Pedestrians traveling north/south on the western sidewalk no longer wait at a signal
- More crossing opportunities on Main Street (every 60 seconds)
- Safer atmosphere, more walkable downtown attracts pedestrians/visitors. Increases foot-traffic, creates opportunities for placemaking to benefit all businesses.

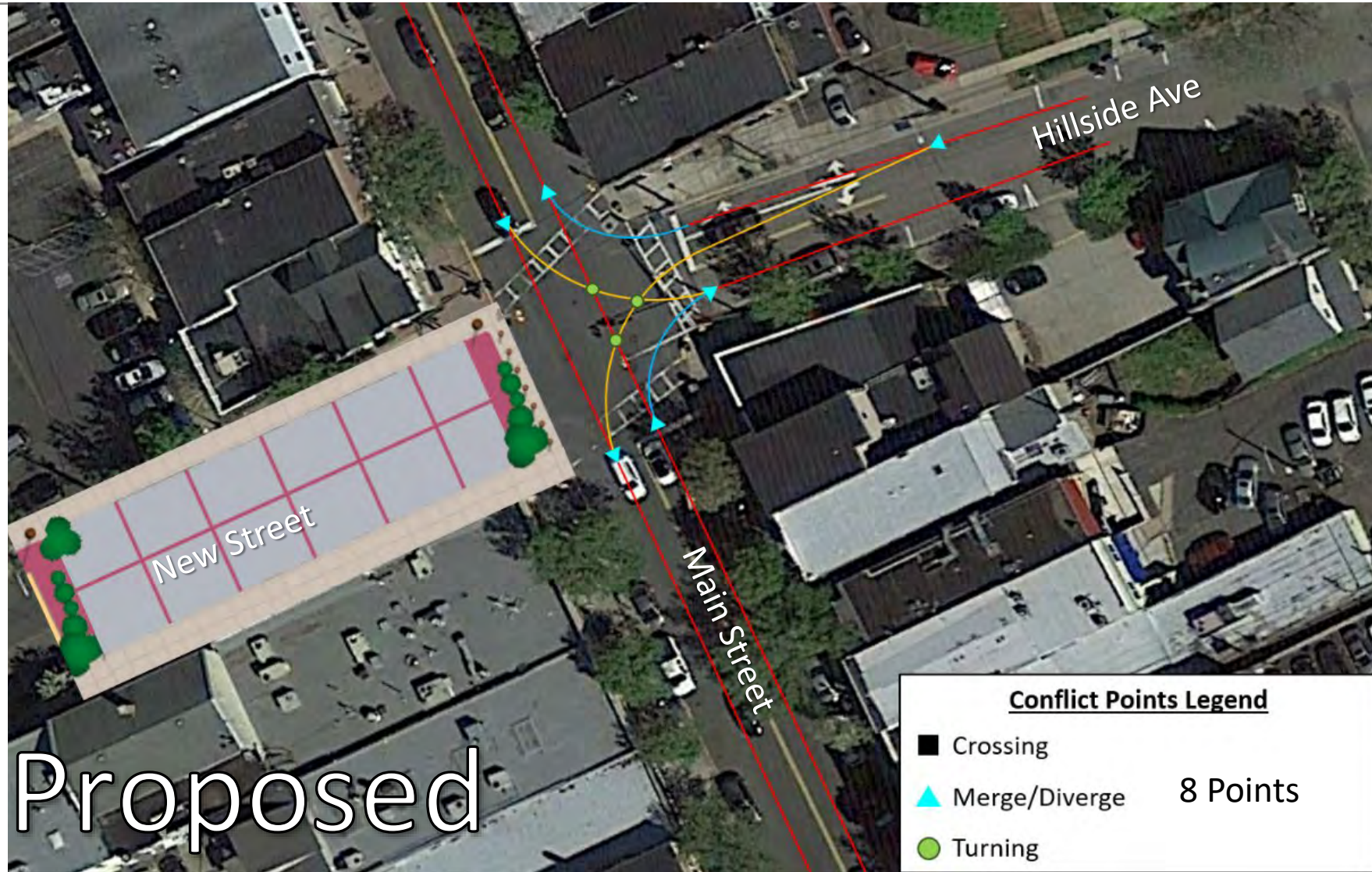
Motorists

- Reduces conflict points = reduced vehicle crashes
- Shorter travel time on Main Street
- Reduces delay and queues by ~50% (fewer vehicles will wait, and for less time at the signal)
- Unserved Main Street northbound lefts will take place at NJ Route 27 and Amboy Avenue intersections (County and State routes)

Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave



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Intersection of Main Street & New Street/Hillside Ave



Vision - Division Street, Somerville



Vision - Division Street, Somerville



Vision - Division Street, Somerville

Somerville seeks input on pilot program that closed Division Street to traffic

Updated: Jan. 17, 2019, 7:30 p.m. | Published: Aug. 20, 2013, 4:15 p.m.

Originally, the 420-foot-long street was set to allow traffic one-way after cement pavers were installed in May 2012, but the results of an informal survey done July of last year encouraged borough officials to close off the roadway to traffic, starting with a one-year pilot program, [NJN reported at the time](#).

Some Division Street business owners told NJN they were concerned about the closure because they saw limited business during the construction phase, but once the roadway reopened, the newly renovated promenade drew "tons of customers."

..."The [survey] data so far truly supports what we have known anecdotally — overall — **people feel that the Division Street has improved tremendously over the last year, that Division Street adds something unique to our downtown**" Macdonald wrote in an email to NJ.com.

"They are visiting the street more than they ever have and will continue to use it more with increased programming and amenities and a successful business mix," she said...

Macdonald said she thought the perception of Division Street was very positive.

"We have certainly seen an undeniable amount of private investment on Division Street over the last 12 months, which is a very good indicator of the success..."

Vision - Division Street, Somerville



Vision - Division Street, Somerville

[Somerville, NJ Now Has A Thriving Downtown Pedestrian Street. Could It Work In Princeton too?](#)

Posted on March 17, 2014 by walkableprinceton

The story of Division Street underscores the fact that **shoppers like having the opportunity to stroll without constantly watching for cars.** It creates an environment in which **people want to linger, eat an ice-cream, and explore the local retail scene.**

Downtown Somerville businesses have struggled to compete with the retail epicenter of the nearby malls around Route 202 and Route 287- which attract shoppers from the entire region. But **Division Street has gone from a 50% vacancy rate pre-pedestrianization to fully-leased today**, showing that downtowns can thrive if they realize the potential of their walkable [place capital](#). More generally, **downtown Somerville is looking in really good shape, with new investment and attractively-managed streetscapes.**

Further Examples – Newark Avenue, Jersey City



Further Examples – Newark Avenue, Jersey City

Jersey City plans \$6.7 million overhaul of Newark Avenue pedestrian plaza

Updated: Feb. 09, 2021, 5:09 p.m. | Published: Feb. 09, 2021, 11:48 a.m. | By [Ron Zeitlinger](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#)

What started as an experiment — a small pedestrian mall Downtown — is being transformed into a Jersey City showpiece.

The popular Newark Avenue pedestrian plaza will expand to cover three-tenths of a mile, from Grove Street to Jersey Avenue, when a \$6.7 million overhaul is complete, city officials say. The City Council will vote on the awarding of a development contract Wednesday, with construction set to begin in April.

The pedestrian mall was created in 2015 to limit traffic and create a pedestrian destination, then it was expanded in 2018 and also grew larger in 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic to boost small businesses there.

“The creation of the pedestrian plaza was a risk our administration took when first elected as there was significant pushback, but I think over time **it has become clear to everyone that the changes we made there have attracted more people, allowed more businesses to open, and created a destination spot for visitors and residents,**” Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop said in a statement.

The funding for the project is coming from the city’s capital account, according to the City Council resolution. The contract was awarded to JC Contracting, based in Rahway, which was one of nine bidders for the project.

Other Municipalities Explore

Bound Brook's vision for a pedestrian plaza inches closer to reality

Mike Deak MyCentralJersey.com | Published 5:02 a.m. ET may 14, 2021

BOUND BROOK - The borough has received a \$1 million grant to fulfill its vision of creating [a one-block pedestrian plaza on Hamilton Street](#).

With downtown Bound Brook enjoying a renaissance, the pedestrian plaza — similar to Somerville's Division Street — will be key to energizing the block where the Brook Theatre is located and a 100-unit, five-story apartment building is proposed at the site of the Salvation Army.

The Pedestrian Plaza Returns

By VIOLET LAZARUS | Published July 10, 2021 at 11:48 PM

RIDGEWOOD, NJ- Families, couples, and groups of friends took up the streets of Ridgewood's business district today during the return of Ridgewood's Pedestrian Plaza... the Pedestrian Plaza returned for its second summer. The plaza was originally an answer to the pandemic-era capacity limitations, and its success earned it a second summer. Chestnut Street, Oak Street, and East Ridgewood Ave from the train station to North Walnut street were blocked off to cars. The empty streets were filled with tables and chairs, merchandise, and pedestrians.

Red Bank's 'Broadwalk' pedestrian plaza slated to return in May

by [RED BANK PULSE](#) March 29, 2021

Without question, Red Bank's identity easily changed overnight with the launch of the ['Broadwalk' pedestrian plaza](#) last year in June. It helped usher in a change to Red Bank that hasn't been seen before by closing down parts of Broad Street and Monmouth Street...

Comments & Questions

Written comments will be accepted through Tuesday, October 5, 2021.

New Street Intersection configuration to be determined by Borough by January 2022.

For the public comment form please visit:

www.MainStreetMetuchenSafetyProject.com



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Public Comments & Suggestions

Please use the space below to provide comments or suggestions (please print legibly):

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Comments/Suggestions: _____

Kindly submit the comments by Wednesday, October 30, 2020 to:

Ron Sendner, Middlesex County Engineer
Office of Engineering, Department of Transportation
75 Bayard St.
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: (732) 745-3248 | Fax: (732) 745 - 8852
Ronald.Sendner@co.middlesex.nj.us



Next Steps

Activity	Tentative Timeframe
1 st Public Information Center (PIC)	October 7, 2020
2 nd Public Information Center (PIC)	September 20, 2021
Complete Preliminary Design	Fall 2021
Complete Final Design	Summer 2022
Anticipated Federal Authorization to Construct	Winter 2022/23
Begin Construction	Spring 2023
Construction Substantially Completed	Winter 2023/24

Thank You!

