



Congressional Earmark Funded Project

Local Government Webinar

Laine Rankin

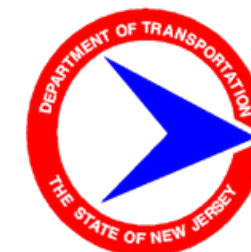
Assistant Commissioner, Local Resources & Community Development

Veronica Murphy, AICP

Director, Community Development

Vanessa Koenigkramer

Director of Capital Programming, NJTPA



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Agenda

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The Path to Construction

03

How to Money Works

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Your Project and TIP

07

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What's Next

Your Congressional \$ at work

Our Commitment

NJDOT is committed to assisting you in navigating the federal process from start to finish. We know this may be unfamiliar territory; that's why we're here.

What the Work Entails

Congressional earmark funded projects must follow a specific project delivery process that meets federal standards.

What Success Looks Like

A completed project that stands up to federal scrutiny, utilizes the funds awarded, and serves your residents for decades.

“The Federal process is like a good book, if you try to jump to the end, you ruin it.”

FULL SCOPE PROJECT SEQUENCE

Every federally funded project follows this sequence. Each phase has a purpose — and each one moves you closer to construction. **FULL SCOPE**

Concept Development	Preliminary Engineering	Final Design	Construction
• Define the problem • Data collection • Conduct Outreach • Purpose & Need • Develop alternatives • Select Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) • Determine expected environmental document	• Initiate utilities, ROW & roadway engineering • Conduct Environmental Analysis and complete document including coordination with SHPO, Green Acres, DEP. • Conduct Outreach • Design & construction cost estimates	• Complete Design • Conduct Outreach • Acquire ROW & Jurisdictional agreements • Complete Environmental Permits & clearances • Prepare Plans, Specifications, & Engineer's Estimate (PS&E Package)	• Advertise and award • Conduct Outreach • Construct • Prepare & submit as-built drawings • Project closeout

LIMITED SCOPE PROJECT SEQUENCE

Or this sequence. **LIMITED SCOPE**

**Concept
Development**

- Define the problem
- Data collection
- Conduct Outreach
- Purpose & Need
- Develop alternatives
- Select Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA)
- Determine expected environmental document

~~Preliminary
Engineering~~

**Final
Design**

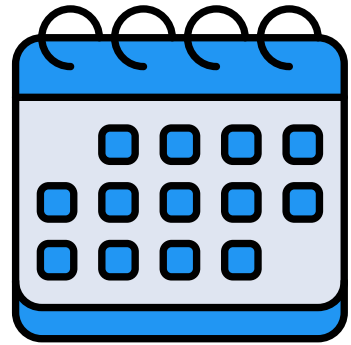
- Complete Design
- Conduct Outreach
- Acquire ROW & Jurisdictional agreements
- Complete Environmental Permits & clearances
- Prepare Plans, Specifications, & Engineer's Estimate (PS&E Package)

Construction

- Advertise and award
- Conduct Outreach
- Construct
- Prepare & submit as-built drawings
- Project closeout

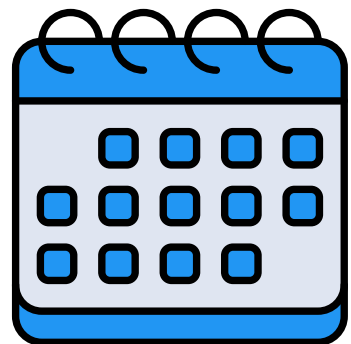
ACCESSING THE FUNDS

Federal Obligation Date is the date on which the federal funds are legally committed for a specific purpose, marking the point when the government has a binding liability to pay.



Obligation Date

3 years after award by congress. Funds must be authorized by September of the obligation year. FY27 Obligation date: September 2030



Expend Date

Funds must be exhausted and project built by this year.
FY27 Expend date: September 2032

HOW THE MONEY WORKS

Federal funds are reimbursed as you spend — not issued upfront. Plan your cash flow accordingly.

STEP 1

You Spend

Your municipality or consultant performs **eligible work** and documents all expenses in accordance with federal requirements. Municipal staff time is NOT eligible.

STEP 2

You Invoice NJDOT

You submit invoices to NJDOT with **supporting documentation**. NJDOT reviews for federal compliance before processing.

STEP 3

You Get Reimbursed

NJDOT processes your **reimbursement invoice**. Funds are returned to the municipality for eligible expenses incurred.

Important: Expenses incurred before federal authorization are not reimbursable. Confirm eligibility with NJDOT before spending.

I-BANK CONTACT INFORMATION

Program and Project Issues / Questions:

George Rolon

Chief Operating Officer

(609) 219-8968

grolon@njib.gov

Melinda Roslon

Program Manager

(609) 219-6584

mroslon@njib.gov

Brittany Vechesky

Administrative Assistant

(609) 219-8601

bvechesky@njib.gov

Corporate Issues / Questions:

David Zimmer

Executive Director

(609) 219-8600

dzimmer@njib.gov

Lauren Kaltman

Chief Financial Officer

(609) 219-8607

lskaltman@njib.gov



FEDERAL STANDARDS

These standards apply to every federally funded project. NJDOT’s job is to guide you through each one — you don’t navigate this alone.

NEPA	Environmental Review The National Environmental Policy Act applies regardless of when federal funds are used. All projects must complete an environmental review — the scope depends on project complexity.		
BROOKS ACT	Consultant Procurement All consultant services on federally funded work must be procured through qualifications-based selection. Your local bid procedures do not apply to federal work. Costs cannot be considered.	ADA	Accessibility Standards ADA-compliant curb ramps, pedestrian accessible routes, and detailed accessibility design are required. These must be designed in detail — not just a spec detail.
CIVIL RIGHTS	Civil Rights Requirements All projects must comply with federal civil rights requirements throughout design and construction. NJDOT will provide guidance on compliance documentation.	BUY AMERICA	Buy America Federally funded projects must use American-made steel and manufactured products. The construction details must be reflected in bid documents.

PROJECT READINESS

Before we can move into the process, we need to know what work has already been done, and whether it has followed the federal processes.

Questions We'll Explore Together

- 1 What is the problem the project needs to solve?
- 2 Have the project limits been clearly defined?
- 3 Has any prior study, design, or environmental work been done?
- 4 Are there known ROW, environmental, or drainage complexities?
- 5 Who will benefit and who will be impacted by the project?

What We Determine Together

CD Scope Path

Limited Scope or Full Scope CD — based on scope and potential impacts

Consultant Approach

In-house or procurement — based on scope and available funds

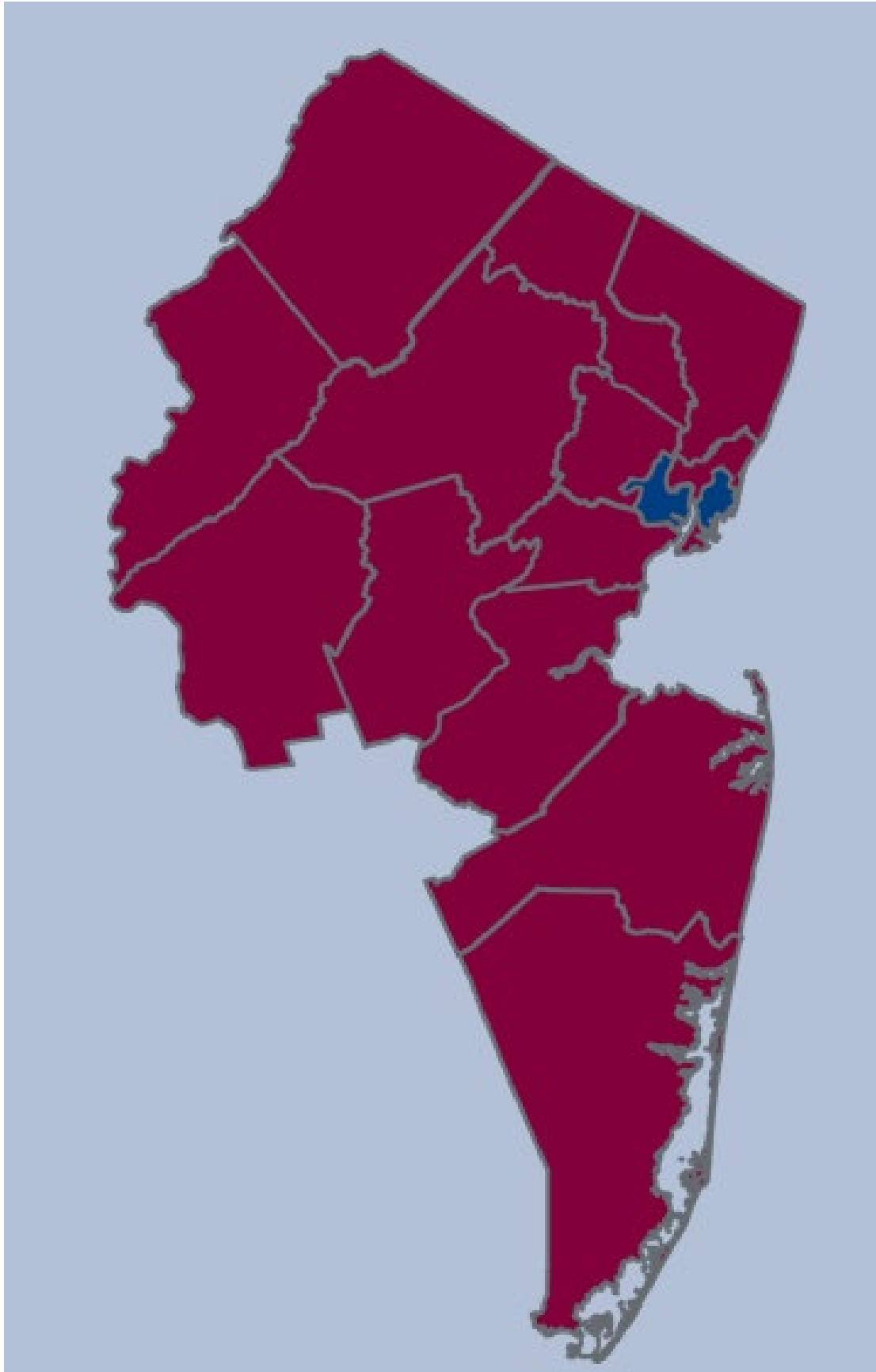
Timeline Orientation

A realistic picture of the path from today to construction

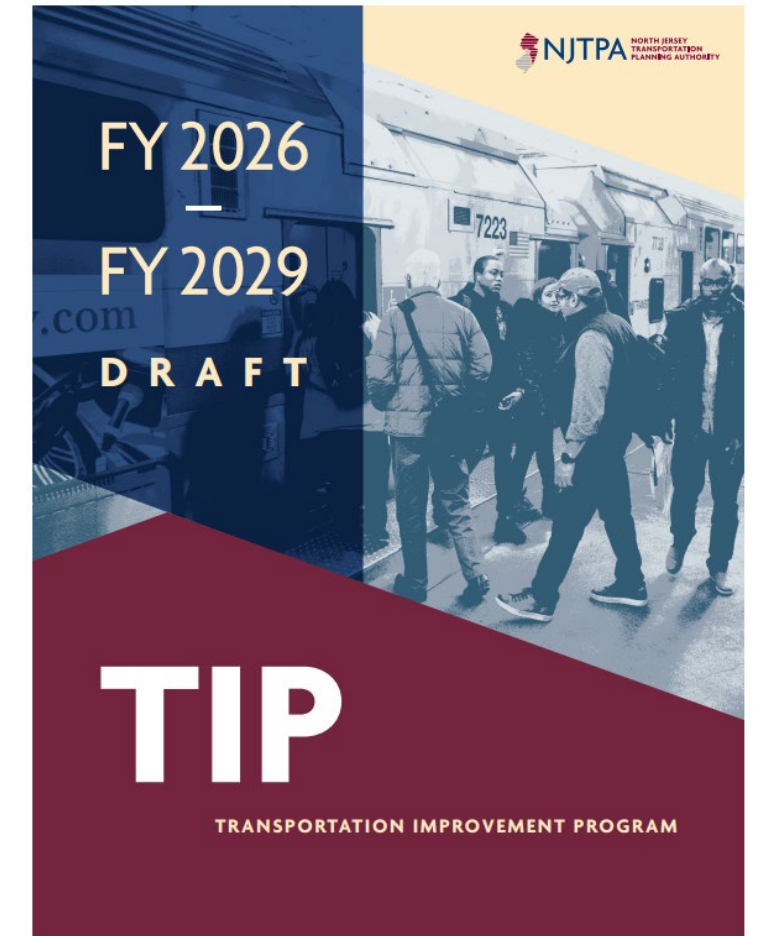
Next Steps

Clear actions for both NJDOT and your team to move forward

READY TO PROGRAM YOUR TIP PROJECT?

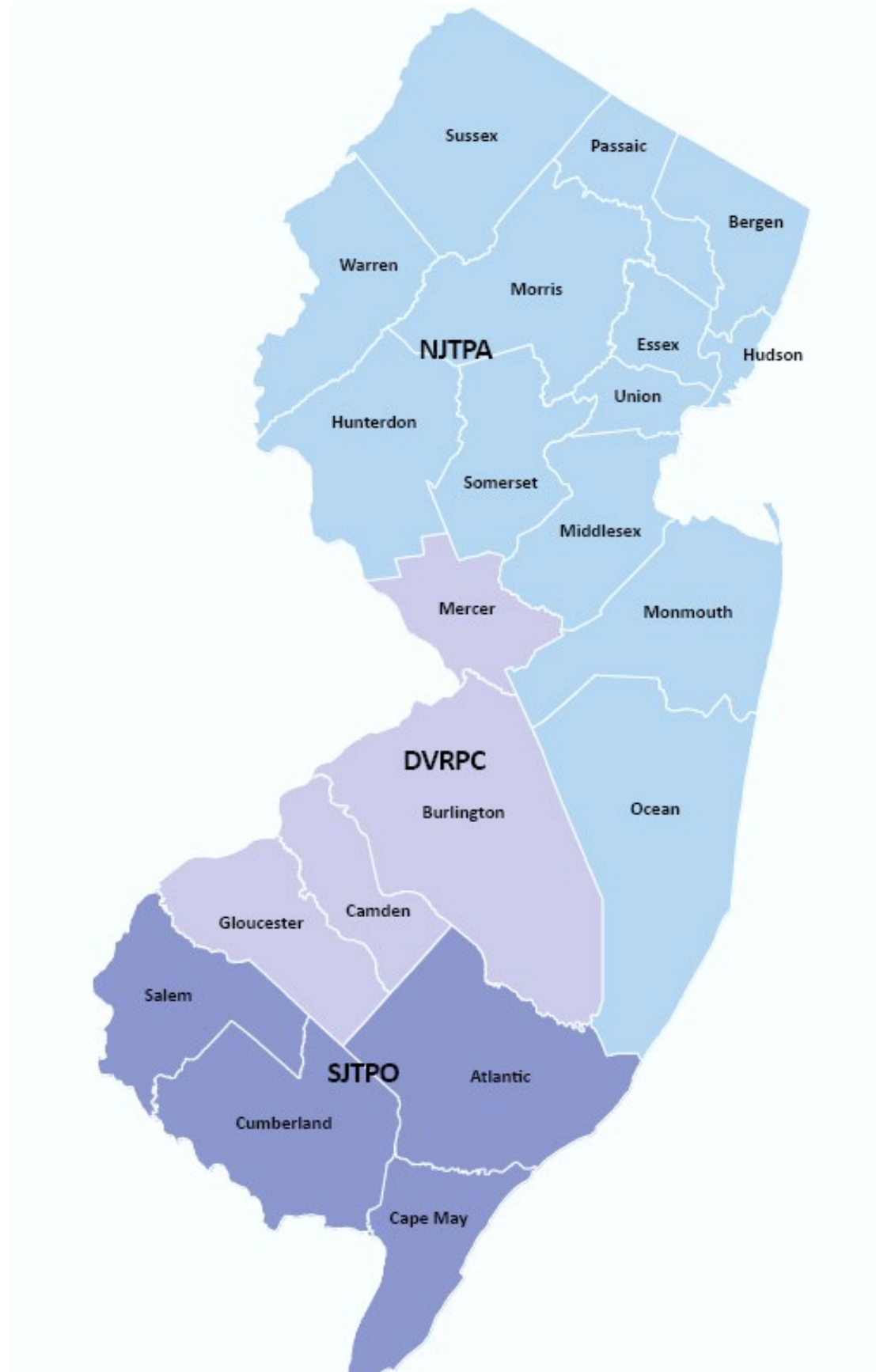


- **Appendix J**
- **MOU for TIP/STIP Revision – updated!**
- **2026 NJTPA Board Meetings**
 - 1/12/26, 3/9/26, 5/11/26, 7/13/26, 9/14/26, 11/9/26
- **Project Info:**
 - *Award Letter*
 - *When you plan to authorize*
 - *Description of project*
 - *Phases and Amounts (including non-federal funds)*



<https://njtpa.org/tip/>

MPO CONTACT INFORMATION



North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)

Vanessa Koenigkramer

Director of Capital Programming

vkoenigkramer@njtpa.org

973-639-8411

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Rick Murphy

Manager, Office of TIP Development & Maintenance

rmurphy@dvrpc.org

215-238-2946

South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO)

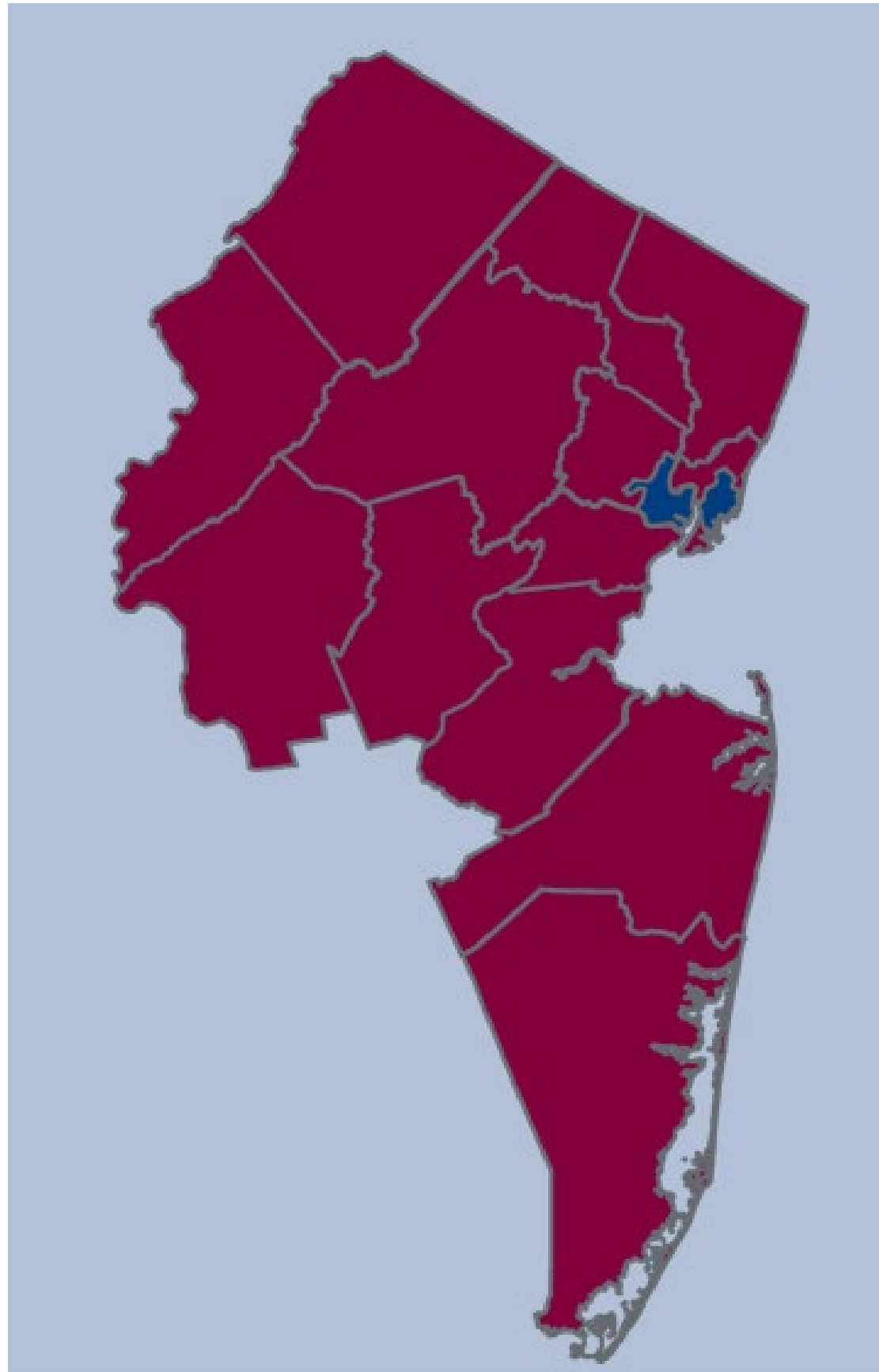
Alice Gibson

Program Manager of Capital Programming & Project Development

agibson@sjtpo.org

856-794-1941 ext. 202

THANK YOU!



Vanessa Koenigkramer

Director of Capital Programming

vkoenigkramer@njtpa.org

973-639-8411



NJTPA

**NORTH JERSEY
TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Defining the Vision. Shaping the Future.

ROLE OF LOCAL AID IN ADMINISTERING FEDERAL FUNDS

NJDOT Division of Local Aid conducts Eligibility Assessment for each LPA. Municipalities are assessed for each project. Counties are assessed every three years.

Through its Stewardship and Oversight Agreement with FHWA, Local Aid is responsible for ensuring each LPA has the proper internal controls in place, as required by 2 CFR 200.303 to administer a federal-aid project.

FHWA requires that NJDOT must, on a systematic basis, evaluate and test the financial controls, data and information maintained by the LPA to satisfy Federal Aid grants.



RESPONSIBLE IN CHARGE

Every federally funded project requires a designated Responsible in Charge (RC) — a person on your staff who owns day-to-day project oversight.

Who is the Responsible in Charge?

The RIC is the municipal employee who provides active project management oversight on behalf of the LPA — not just a signature, but genuine day-to-day involvement.

Does the RC have to be a licensed engineer?

No. The role requires competency and active involvement — the specific qualifications depend on project type. Understanding municipal finances is helpful. NJDOT can help you identify the right person.

Can the RC be a consultant?

No. The RC must be a municipal employee. A consultant may support the project, but the RIC responsibility cannot be delegated to a consultant.

What training is required?

The RC must complete specific federal training courses before the project can advance. NJDOT's Local Aid Resource Center will guide you through the requirements.

REQUIRED TRAINING FOR RESPONSIBLE CHARGE

Your RC must complete the following federal training courses. These are available through NHI and FHWA at no cost to your municipality.

1	Design of ADA Curb Ramps	4	Federal Aid Requirements and LPA Stewardship
2	Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the Public Right of Way	5	Grant Management for Federal Aid Projects
3	Highway Inspection Procedures for Federal Aid Highways	6	Responsible Charge

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Your individual kickoff meeting.

01

Your Individual Kickoff

NJDOT will schedule a one-on-one meeting with your project team to get into the specifics of your project, assess readiness, and map out next steps.

02

Project Description

Come prepared to describe the problem you're solving and the physical conditions at the project location. The better we understand your project, the faster the process can move.

03

Designate Your RC

Identify your Responsible in Charge and begin the required training process. NJDOT's Local Aid Resource Center is available to help.

04

We Move Forward Together

NJDOT will guide you through each phase — from Concept Development through construction. You bring the local knowledge; we bring the federal process expertise.



Contact Us



1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08625



(609) 649-9395



www.njdotlocalhub.com



DOT-LocalAID.ResourceCenter@dot.nj.gov

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!