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Alexander Street/Road in Princeton and West Windsor to be closed and detoured starting Wednesday, November 6 for concurrent Mercer County and NJDOT bridge projects Motorists encouraged to learn alternate routes and options

(Trenton) - New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and Mercer County officials today announced that Alexander Street/Road in Princeton and West Windsor will be closed and detoured for six months beginning on Wednesday, November 6 for concurrent Mercer County and NJDOT bridge replacement projects.

There are two separate bridge replacement projects involving three bridges near each other that will take place concurrently on Alexander Street/Alexander Road in Princeton and West Windsor. One is a Mercer County project to replace two bridges and the other is an NJDOT project that will replace one bridge. The road is called Alexander Street in Princeton and becomes Alexander Road in West Windsor at the Delaware & Raritan (D&R) Canal, which divides the municipalities.

Beginning at 10 a.m. Wednesday, November 6 Alexander Street/Road between Route 1 and Basin Street is scheduled to be closed and detoured until April 20, 2020 to allow Mercer County and NJDOT to replace the three bridges on Alexander Street/Road. Local access for residents and businesses will be maintained between Route 1 and Canal Road, and between Faculty Road and Lawrence Drive. The following detour will be in place:

Alexander Road north from Route 1 detour:

- Traffic wishing to travel north on Alexander Road toward downtown Princeton from Route 1 or West Windsor will be directed to use Washington Road/CR571
- Take Washington Road/CR571 north
- Turn left onto Faculty Road
- Continue through the roundabout at Elm Drive/Lakeside Road
- Turn Right on Alexander Street

Alexander Street south from Princeton detour:

- Traffic wishing to travel south on Alexander Street from downtown Princeton to Route 1 or West Windsor will be directed to turn left onto Faculty Road
- Continue through the roundabout at Elm Drive/Lakeside Road





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- Turn right onto Washington Road/CR571 south to Route 1

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT INFORMATION

NDJOT Alexander Road Bridge over D&R Canal Replacement

The NJDOT project will replace the bridge over the D&R Canal between Princeton and West Windsor, which was built in 1948 and is in poor condition. The existing structure consists of a three-span, simply supported, timber stringer-type bridge with a timber deck overlaid with asphalt. There is a 6-foot wide timber sidewalk on each side with continuous, rolled steel beams below. The existing structure features one travel lane in each direction and no shoulders.

The new bridge will be a single-span consisting of a beam-supported concrete deck on reinforced concrete abutments. The outer edge of the structure and concrete wingwalls will feature a wood façade. Bridge railings and guiderail will meet current standards and the design is respectful of the historic nature of the D&R Canal and surrounding area. The new roadway will consist of two 12-foot lanes, two 5-foot shoulders and two 5-foot wide timber sidewalks with concrete curbs.

Mercer County Bridge over Stony Brook and Bridge over Alexander Creek Replacements

The Mercer County project will replace two structures – the bridge over the Stony Brook and the Bridge over Alexander Creek, which are north of the D&R Canal. The existing truss bridge over the Stony Brook was installed in 1989 as a temporary replacement to the structure in place at the time. Construction of a permanent bridge has now become a priority as the truss bridge has begun to deteriorate and the width is not adequate to accommodate bus and truck traffic. Bridge railings and guiderail will meet current standards and the design is respectful of the historic nature of the D&R Canal and surrounding area.

The bridge just north of Basin Street over Alexander Creek also will be replaced due to deteriorated structural conditions. Both bridges will be built with the same roadway configuration as the new D&R Canal Bridge being constructed by NJDOT.

Accelerated Construction to Minimize Impact to the Community

To minimize the duration of the closure of Alexander Street/Alexander Road, all three structures will be replaced simultaneously. Both NJDOT and Mercer County are employing Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) techniques for their respective bridge replacements, which drastically reduces the required closure time of Alexander Street. Conventional bridge construction would require approximately 9-12 months to complete. These projects are expected to be completed in less than six months.





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Mercer County and NJDOT coordinated with regulatory agencies such as the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), NJDEP State Historic Preservation Office, D&R Canal State Park, D&R Canal Commission, NJ Water Supply Authority and stakeholders, such as West Windsor, Princeton and Princeton University.

Construction schedules were largely driven by environmental restrictions. The projects are expected to be completed in the spring of 2020, with the detour removed by April 20, 2020.

Six-Month Alexander Road Detour

During the six-month closure of Alexander Road to allow for the replacement of the three bridges between November 6, 2019 and April 20, 2020, Alexander Street/Alexander Road will be closed and detoured using the same detour listed above.

For the NJDOT Alexander Road Bridge over the D&R Canal, the Towpath along the canal will be open during construction except during temporary closures for the safety of path users and construction personnel. However, pedestrians will not be able to access Alexander Road/Street due to safety considerations as these areas will be active construction zones.

COMMUTING OPTIONS

Commuters are encouraged to learn the multiple alternate driving routes and public transportation options that are available, and be prepared to try several options in the first days and weeks of the closure to find the route or mode of travel that best meets their needs while minimizing inconvenience.

Travel times for alternate routes will be provided during construction to provide useful information to motorists. In addition, NJDOT is working to optimize traffic signal timing on Route 1 to assist with addressing traffic congestion where possible

To mitigate congestion during this project, NJDOT has been working with local officials, employers and commuters to promote several strategies including:

- Join a carpool or vanpool
- Adjust travel times to leave before or after the peak morning and evening travel periods
- Telecommute or work at other sites that your employer may have available
- Use mass transit

Alternate Routes

Motorists are encouraged to use alternate parallel routes, such as Route 27, Princeton Pike, and Route 206 if possible during the closure. Other routes that may be considered include:





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- Quakerbridge Road
- Elm Road
- Washington Road
- Harrison Street
- Witherspoon Street
- River Road

Travel Times to be Posted on Message Boards

To assist motorists in choosing an alternative route, NJDOT will provide 11 message boards with travel times to and from Princeton via a variety of alternate routes. The boards will be located on Route 1, I-295, Route 206, Princeton Pike, Alexander Street and near the Princeton Junction train station. To get real-time information on traffic conditions go to www.511nj.org.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Local Officials were involved early in design meetings and Officials Briefings conducted during the design phase (2018 and 2019). A team of NJDOT, Princeton, West Windsor & Mercer County representatives have been coordinating efforts for the project design & construction. Several Public Information Centers were held during the Design Phase in the past year, including in September 2019 in advance of the road closure and detour. NJDOT also met with several business owner stakeholders this summer.

NJDOT has created a project-specific email, so anyone with questions or comments about either of the two projects may submit an email to: AlexanderRoad@dot.nj.gov. The precise timing of the work is subject to change due to weather or other factors. For NJDOT news follow us on Twitter [@NJDOT_info](https://twitter.com/NJDOT_info) and our [Facebook page](#).

Please note, the NJDOT Communications Office has a new phone number – 609-963-1975.

