



NJDOT TRAFFIC ADVISORY

For Immediate Release:
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Route 72 shoulder closures required as Manahawkin Bay Bridges project resumes in Stafford, Ocean County **Final stage of project will reduce congestion in Stafford and Ship Bottom**

(Trenton) – New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) officials today announced shoulder closures on Route 72 and a traffic shift on Marsha Drive as the Route 72 Manahawkin Bay Bridges project resumes in Stafford, Ocean County.

Beginning at 11 p.m. tonight, Friday, March 26, NJDOT's contractor, C.J. Hesse, Inc., is scheduled to close the shoulder on Route 72 in both directions near the Marsha Drive intersection in Stafford, Ocean County. Traffic on Marsha Drive also will be shifted approximately two feet to the right in both directions. This will allow the contractor to complete roadway restriping and begin widening the roadway.

This final construction contract for the Route 72 Manahawkin Bay Bridges project is designed to improve safety and reduce congestion in Stafford Township at the Marsha Drive/Route 72 intersection and in Ship Bottom on Long Beach Island. In Stafford Township, Marsha Drive will be widened to provide double left turn lanes onto Route 72, and a third lane will be added on Route 72 in both directions near the intersection.

In Ship Bottom, approximately 3,000 feet of Route 72 (locally known as 8th and 9th Streets) and three cross roads (Barnegat Avenue, Central Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard) will be widened. Two-way traffic will be restored along Central Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard. Five traffic signals will be reconstructed, and a new traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of 8th Street and Long Beach Boulevard. In addition, a new storm drainage system and new outfalls will be installed in an effort to reduce frequent flooding along Route 72 and these intersections.

Work on the \$312 million Route 72/Manahawkin Bay Bridge project began in 2013. The 3-mile long causeway links Stafford on the mainland with Ship Bottom on Long Beach Island. As part of the project, a new bridge has been constructed parallel to the existing one over Manahawkin Bay, providing the safety of a redundant route on or off the island. The new bridge is carrying two lanes of eastbound traffic, while the rehabilitated original bridge is carrying two lanes of westbound traffic. For more information NJDOT developed a [project-specific website](#).

The precise timing of the work is subject to change due to weather or other factors. Motorists are encouraged to check NJDOT's traffic information website www.511nj.org for construction updates and real-time travel information. For NJDOT news follow us on Twitter [@NewJerseyDOT](https://twitter.com/NewJerseyDOT) and our [Facebook page](#).

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