



WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

March 2, 2026

Dear Governor Sherill,

Enclosed is West Windsor Township Resolution 2026-R051 which respectfully requests the declaration of a temporary State of Emergency in response to the closure of the Clarksville Road bridge in West Windsor Township, Mercer County, NJ.

On November 2, 2025, the Clarksville Road Bridge (CR 638) over the Amtrak rail line was abruptly closed after a routine NJDOT inspection revealed significant structural corrosion. It is now four months later and inspections are not yet complete. We do not yet have a timeline for repair and/or replacement of this critical bridge.

The continued closure has resulted in increased response times for Fire, Police, EMS, Hazmat Response (West Windsor is one of only two hazmat teams for the entire County), transportation disruptions throughout the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District and cascading traffic and emergency response issues throughout the region.

The closure has also produced serious economic consequences. Local businesses, particularly those in and around Village Square Plaza are reporting revenue losses exceeding 50 percent.

Resolution 2025-R051 from the West Windsor Mayor and Council provides a list of issues and what relief we hope to achieve with the Governor's State of Emergency. A clear precedent for such intervention exists in Executive Order No. 383 (2025), wherein a State of Emergency was declared for Route 80 sinkholes to bypass administrative red tape, expedite construction through emergency procurement, and establish the "Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program".

We include documents of support from West Windsor officials, the Mercer County Executive and Commissioners, our state legislators, and others.

Included in this packet is Resolution 2026-R061 and backup documents:

1. **West Windsor Resolution 2026-R051** – Petitioning Governor Mikie Sherill to declare a State of Emergency for the Clarksville road corridor pursuant to the emergency services act
2. Letter from **West Windsor Mayor Hemant Marathe**
3. Local **State of Emergency** declaration from **West Windsor Chief Lynch**
4. Letter from **Mercer County Executive Dan Benson**
5. **Board of Mercer County Commissioner’s Resolution 2026-180** – County Executive and the Mercer County Board of County Commissioner’s support West Windsor Township’s resolution petitioning for a declaration of a State of Emergency.
6. Letter from **State Senator Shirley Turner**
7. Letter from **Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli**
8. Letter from **WW-P Regional School District Superintendent Dr. David Aderhold and WW-P BOE President Graelynn McKeown**
9. Letter from **West Windsor Chief Lynch (Fire/EMS/EMT)** with supporting data
10. Letter from **West Windsor Police** with supporting data
11. **Plainsboro Township Resolution 26-69** – Resolution supporting West Windsor’s request to declare a State of Emergency for the Clarksville road corridor pursuant to the emergency services act.
12. **NJDOT** response as of February 27, 2026
13. **West Windsor Resolution 2022-R193** – Supporting and Endorsing the NJDOT Preliminary preferred alternative plan to replace the structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Clarksville road bridge over Amtrak.
14. **Pictures** of the Bridge showing the structural Corrosion
15. **Residents Petition** to repair the Clarksville road Amtrak Bridge immediately (currently 1,779 signatures)

Given the severity of the situation, we respectfully request your consideration of a State of Emergency declaration for the Clarksville Road Corridor.

Respectfully,

West Windsor Mayor Hemant Marathe

Council President Sonia Gawas

Council Vice President Andrea Mandel

Councilwoman Linda Geevers

Councilman Daniel Weiss

Councilman Joe Charles

RESOLUTION PETITIONING GOVERNOR MIKIE SHERRILL TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY
FOR THE CLARKSVILLE ROAD CORRIDOR PURSUANT TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT

- WHEREAS, on November 2, 2025, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) ordered the emergency closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge (CR 638), Bridge over Amtrak, located in West Windsor, NJ, due to severe structural corrosion discovered during a routine inspection; and
- WHEREAS, the Clarksville Road Bridge serves as a critical regional artery, supporting an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of approximately 15,000 vehicles, many of whom utilize the corridor to access the Princeton Junction Train Station, employment, commerce, education, residential neighborhoods, and emergency response routes; and
- WHEREAS, the continued closure has resulted in a public safety crisis, with emergency response times for West Windsor Fire, EMS, and County Hazmat teams often extended to four times their normal length and significantly putting residents at risk due to compromised response routes; and
- WHEREAS, the bridge closure is overwhelming local residential streets with excessive traffic volume, leading to double the normal rates of traffic accidents while causing local gridlock, as reported by the West Windsor Police Department; and
- WHEREAS, the continued bridge closure causes transportation disruptions throughout the West Windsor-Plainsboro School District, from pre-school through high school; and
- WHEREAS, the bridge closure adversely affects over 1200 directly isolated residents, as well as affecting indirectly over 30,000 other West Windsor residents, and over 25,000 Plainsboro residents in the joint West Windsor-Plainsboro School District, as well as additional residents in the surrounding area; and
- WHEREAS, small businesses along the Clarksville Road corridor, particularly within Village Square, have reported catastrophic revenue losses exceeding 50% due to the loss of pass-by traffic and may be forced to permanently close; and
- WHEREAS, critical repairs and structural assessments remained in a state of administrative gridlock for over three months due to the inability to quickly secure inspection permits from Amtrak, whose federal jurisdiction over the Northeast Corridor (NEC) rail lines has delayed state and local efforts to plan repairs or produce a timeline, showing a need to prioritize this project with Amtrak at the national level to proceed with actual repairs; and
- WHEREAS, the Clarksville Bridge was already deemed structurally deficient and slated for replacement, and on August 22, 2022 the West Windsor Township Council adopted Resolution 2022-R193 in support and endorsement of the NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan to replace the “structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak.”; and
- WHEREAS, the Mayor and Township Council finds that a State of Emergency would provide local and state agencies effective authority and leverage to compel timely action or coordination from Amtrak; and
- WHEREAS, the continued absence of a defined inspection or repair timeline, combined with procedural impediments beyond local control, constitutes an extraordinary and escalating emergency condition that cannot be resolved through routine intergovernmental processes; and
- WHEREAS, the Mayor and Township Council further finds that executive-level intervention is necessary and urgent to protect public safety, stabilize the local economy, and restore essential transportation infrastructure; and

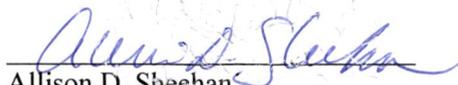
WHEREAS, a clear precedent for such intervention exists in Executive Order No. 383 (2025), wherein a State of Emergency was declared for Route 80 sinkholes to bypass administrative red tape, expedite construction through emergency procurement, and establish the "Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of West Windsor, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. Petition for Emergency Declaration: The Mayor and West Windsor Township Council formally petition Governor Mikie Sherrill to issue an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency for the Clarksville Road corridor to elevate the bridge's status from a "local maintenance issue" to a "critical safety crisis".
2. Federal Intercession: The Mayor and Council request the Governor utilize the authority of the State of New Jersey to intervene with the U.S. Department of Transportation to compel Amtrak to prioritize the necessary track outages for NJDOT repair crews.
3. Emergency Procurement and Reduction of Bureaucratic Procedures: The Mayor and Council urge the use of the Emergency Declaration for the authorization of emergency procurement powers and a reduction of ordinarily required bureaucratic procedures to allow for the immediate installation of a temporary steel bridge, deck reinforcement or other temporary solution to restore traffic flow.
4. Economic Assistance: The Mayor and Council request the activation of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) to establish a "Clarksville Corridor Business Assistance Grant" and to facilitate access to federal SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) for impacted local merchants.
5. Expedited Bridge Replacement: The Mayor and Council urge the Governor to expedite the permanent replacement of the Clarksville Bridge as per the adopted NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan adopted on August 22, 2022.
6. Distribution: A certified copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Office of Governor Mikie Sherrill, U.S. Senator Corey Booker, U.S. Senator Andy Kim, State Senator Shirley K. Turner, Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman, General Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, General Assemblyman Anthony S. Verrelli, Mercer County Executive Dan Benson, the Board of County Commissioners, the Commissioner of the NJDOT and the President of Amtrak.

Adopted: February 24, 2026

I hereby certify the above resolution was adopted by the West Windsor Township Council at their meeting held on the 24th day of February, 2026.


Allison D. Sheehan
Township Clerk
West Windsor Township



WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

**HEMANT MARATHE, Ph.D.
MAYOR**

27 February ,2026

Office of the Governor
125 W State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Dear Governor Sherill,

I am writing to respectfully request the declaration of a temporary State of Emergency in response to the sudden closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge in our town, West Windsor, Mercer County, NJ. Although the NJDOT maintains this orphan bridge which is on the list for replacement, it will take at least 5-7 years to complete.

The unplanned closure has had devastating impact on our community:

- First, it has significantly worsened response times for our first responders, increasing it by at least a magnitude of four.
- Second, it has severely affected the financial health of affected businesses including Gateway of India, Global Grill & Halal Market, Young's Cleaners, Kumon of Princeton Junction, Hot Wok Café, Mizu Japanese Cuisine, Vsmile Dental, Capuano Ristorante Italiano, NJ Taekwondo Academy, That Pottery Place, Little Gym, Windsor Happy School, Juice Se Lavi, Salon Facci and Westrick Music School. Some of these businesses have experienced a revenue drop of 50% or more and characterize the impact as worse than during Covid.
- Third, it has created traffic congestion and gridlock in West Windsor and the surrounding areas, including at Princeton Junction Train Station, one of the busiest train stations in the NJ Transit rail system.

I hope your declaration of a Temporary State of Emergency will achieve dual objectives:

- It will facilitate the creation of Economic Development Authority grants and loans to support affected businesses. Many of these businesses will close within months without such support.
- It will enable deployment of resources to support neighborhoods experiencing extended emergency response times from fire, police and ambulance.

I also request you to instruct NJ DOT to treat reopening of the bridge as their top priority. The latest estimate from them shows they will take another 4 months to come up with a plan and then additional time to actually fix the bridge.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your continued commitment to the safety and well-being of all residents. If your staff or you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (609) 468 5011. Given our proximity to Trenton if either you or any of your staff would like to see the impact firsthand, we will be happy to give you a tour to demonstrate the impact this closure has on our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hemant Marathe". The signature is written in a cursive style with a loop at the beginning of the first name.

Hemant Marathe

Mayor

West Windsor Township, Mercer County, NJ

hmarathe@westwindsortwp.gov

(609) 468-5011

PROCLAMATION

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

TO ALL RESIDENTS AND PERSONS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST WINDSOR, NEW JERSEY AND TO ALL DEPARTMENTS OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT OF WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP:

WHEREAS, pursuant to the powers vested by (Chapter 251 of the Laws of 1942), as amended and supplemented, N.J.S.A. App. A:9-30 et seq.; N.J.S.A. 40:48-1(6); N.J.S.A. 2C:33-1 et seq., whichever law or laws apply, a local disaster emergency is hereby declared to exist within the boundaries of West Windsor Township; and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid laws authorize the promulgation of such orders, rules, and regulations as are necessary to meet the various problems which have or may occur due to such emergency; and

WHEREAS, the continued closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge has significantly altered established traffic patterns within the Township, resulting in substantial congestion, increased travel times, and the redirection of vehicular traffic onto roadways not designed to accommodate such volume; and

WHEREAS, the loss of the Clarksville Road Bridge has created a public safety hazard by increasing emergency response times to portions of the Township, including residential communities that were previously in close proximity to police, fire, and emergency medical services resources and are now subject to extended response routes and traffic-related delays; and

WHEREAS, these conditions may affect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Township of West Windsor by impairing timely emergency response, increasing the risk of secondary traffic incidents, and limiting safe and efficient access for first responders; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that areas impacted by the Clarksville Road Bridge closure and its associated detour routes should be declared disaster areas, and that certain measures must be taken in order to ensure public safety, maintain an orderly flow of traffic, and protect the persons and property of the residents affected by these conditions;

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby declare that a Local Disaster Emergency exists in the Township of West Windsor effective November 1, 2025.

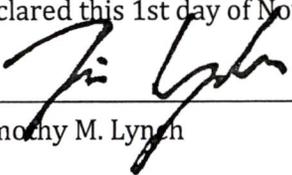
NOW, THEREFORE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH the aforesaid laws, it is hereby promulgated and declared that the following regulations shall be in addition to all other laws of the State of New Jersey and the Township of West Windsor:

1. There shall be no through traffic traversing the aforesaid disaster area(s), except for the movement of police, fire, EMS, public works, and other authorized emergency or governmental vehicles, or such vehicles as may be permitted by authorized officials of this Township.

2. The Township may implement temporary traffic control measures, detours, access restrictions, or other operational adjustments deemed necessary by public safety officials in order to mitigate congestion, preserve emergency access, and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

3. All residents and motorists are directed to comply with posted signage, traffic control devices, and lawful directions of police and emergency personnel within the designated disaster area(s).

Declared this 1st day of November, 2025.



Timothy M. Lynch

Emergency Management Coordinator



COUNTY OF MERCER

McDADE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
640 SOUTH BROAD STREET
P.O. BOX 8068
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08650-8068
FAX: (609) 278-4819

DAN BENSON
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

SHARON SHINKLE GARDNER
Chief of Staff

CHRISTOPHER R. MARION
County Administrator

Office of the Governor
125 W. State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Dear Governor Sherill,

I am writing to respectfully request the declaration of a Temporary State of Emergency in response to the closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge in West Windsor Township, Mercer County.

The Clarksville Road Bridge is a Department of Transportation-maintained orphan bridge, bordered on both approaches by County Road 638. Its closure has significantly impacted commuters, residents, and small businesses in West Windsor and the surrounding communities. It is our understanding that construction of a new bridge could take anywhere from five to seven years to complete.

For commuters, the closure has created substantial traffic congestion and has made access to Princeton Junction Train Station considerably more difficult. For residents, emergency response times are expected to increase by a factor of three to four, posing serious public safety concerns. For local businesses, the closure has effectively cut off customer access, threatening their ability to remain viable.

The neighborhoods most adversely affected include Berrien City, Eaves by Avalon, and the outlying Princeton Junction area. In addition, nine small businesses located in the shopping plaza adjacent to the nearby housing development have been particularly impacted. These businesses include Hot Wok Café, VSmile Dental, Capuano, Global Grill & Halal Market, Gateway of India, NJ Taekwondo Kickboxing Academy, The Pottery Place, Little Gym of West Windsor, and Salon Facci.

By declaring a Temporary State of Emergency, we seek to accomplish two critical objectives. First, to enable the deployment of additional Office of Emergency Management resources to support neighborhoods experiencing extended emergency response times. Second, to facilitate the creation of Economic Development Authority grants and loans to assist the most severely affected small businesses in remaining operational during the coming months, as efforts continue to determine and implement the fastest possible remedy for the bridge closure.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter and for your continued commitment to the safety and well-being of our residents and local businesses. If you or your staff would like to discuss this proposal in more detail, please feel free to contact me by phone at 609-989-6518.

Sincerely,

Dan Benson
Mercer County Executive

Approved as to Form and Legality

Date

[Signature]

 County Counsel

February 24, 2026.....

COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND THE MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SUPPORT WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP'S RESOLUTION PETITIONING FOR A DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2025, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) ordered the emergency closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge (County Route 638) over Amtrak, located in West Windsor Township, due to severe structural corrosion discovered during a routine inspection; and,

WHEREAS, the Clarksville Road Bridge is a critical regional transportation corridor supporting approximately 15,000 vehicles per day and serving commuters, emergency responders, school transportation, residents, and businesses throughout West Windsor Township, Plainsboro Township, and the greater Mercer County region; and,

WHEREAS, the prolonged closure of the bridge has resulted in significant public safety concerns, including increased emergency response times for fire, emergency medical services, and county-level emergency response units, thereby placing residents at increased risk; and,

.....
 Clerk to the Board

RECORD OF VOTE													
COMMISSIONERS	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Res.	Sec.	COMMISSIONERS	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Res.	Sec.
Cimino	X						Melker	X					
Frisby	X				✓		Walter	X					
Lewis	X					✓	Stokes	X					
McLaughlin	X												

X—Indicates Vote Abs.—Absent N.V.—Not Voting
 Res.—Resolution Moved Sec.—Resolution Seconded

WHEREAS, the bridge closure has directly isolated more than 1,200 residents and has indirectly impacted tens of thousands of additional residents due to compromised access routes, local gridlock, and traffic diversion through residential neighborhoods; and,

WHEREAS, the closure has caused disruptions to the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, affecting transportation, scheduling, and daily operations for students and families across ten schools from preschool through high school; and,

WHEREAS, small businesses along the Clarksville Road corridor, particularly within the Village Square commercial area, have experienced severe economic hardship, including reported revenue losses exceeding fifty percent due to the loss of pass-by traffic; and,

WHEREAS, administrative delays associated with securing inspection permits and coordination with Amtrak, which maintains federal jurisdiction over the Northeast Corridor rail lines, have significantly impeded the ability of state and local agencies to advance repairs or establish a clear timeline for reopening; and

WHEREAS, the West Windsor Township Council has formally acted on this matter by adopting a Resolution petitioning Governor Mikie Sherrill to declare a State of Emergency for the Clarksville Road corridor in order to expedite repairs, reduce administrative barriers, and restore critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive and the Mercer County Board of County Commissioners recognize that the impacts of the Clarksville Road Bridge extend beyond municipal boundaries and constitute a regional public safety, transportation, and economic concern affecting residents and businesses throughout Mercer County; and

WHEREAS, precedent exists for such executive action, including Executive Order No. 383 (2025), which declared a State of Emergency for Interstate 80 infrastructure failures to expedite construction, streamline procurement, and provide economic assistance to impacted communities: now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The County Executive and the Mercer County Board of County Commissioners hereby support the Resolution adopted by the West Windsor Township Council petitioning Governor Mikie Sherrill to declare a State of Emergency for the Clarksville Road corridor.

.....
Clerk to the Board

2. The County Executive and the Mercer County Board of County Commissioners respectfully urge the Governor of the State of New Jersey to give due consideration to the West Windsor Township Resolution and to take appropriate executive action to expedite repairs, enhance intergovernmental coordination, and mitigate ongoing public safety and economic impacts.
3. The Clerk to the Board shall forward certified copies of this Resolution to the Office of the Governor; the New Jersey Department of Transportation; the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; members of New Jersey's Congressional delegation; members of the New Jersey Legislature representing Mercer County; the West Windsor Township Council.

Lillian Bianchi - DeStefano

Clerk to the Board



NEW JERSEY SENATE

SHIRLEY K. TURNER

SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

SENATOR, 15TH DISTRICT

MOUNTAIN VIEW OFFICE PARK

850 BEAR TAVERN ROAD

SUITE 101

EWING, NJ 08628

TEL. (609) 323-7239

FAX (609) 323-7633

E-MAIL: senturner@njleg.org

VICE CHAIR

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE

MEMBER

STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING,

TOURISM & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

COMMISSIONER

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

February 17, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
Governor, State of New Jersey
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625-0001

Dear Governor Sherrill,

I write to respectfully urge you to consider declaring a State of Emergency related to the ongoing closure of the Clarksville Bridge, which has created a significant public safety, transportation, and economic crisis for West Windsor Township, Mercer County, and surrounding communities.

The West Windsor Township Council has formally requested State intervention, concluding that piecemeal efforts to expedite individual steps in the repair process have proven inefficient and insufficient. Despite the involvement of multiple agencies, progress has been slow, and no clear timeline for reopening has been established. A coordinated, emergency-level response is urgently needed.

The Clarksville Bridge has been closed since November 2, 2025. Its continued closure has resulted in increased emergency response times for fire, police, EMS, and hazmat services. West Windsor is home to one of only two hazmat teams serving Mercer County and regularly provides mutual aid to neighboring municipalities. Any delay in emergency response caused by detours or congestion places lives at risk.

The closure has also produced serious economic consequences. Local businesses, particularly those in and around Village Square, report revenue losses of approximately 50 percent. Existing aid programs are extremely limited, and some businesses may not be able to remain open without additional assistance.

In addition, approximately 15,000 vehicles per day that once traveled over the Clarksville Bridge are now being diverted onto alternate routes, overwhelming local and regional roadways

Letter to Governor Sherrill
February 17, 2026
Page Two

and significantly affecting daily commutes, school transportation, and commercial activity. A State of Emergency declaration would help cut through administrative barriers, improve coordination among State agencies, elevate engagement with Amtrak, and allow the State to deploy resources more quickly. It would also enable consideration of economic assistance through the New Jersey Economic Development Authority for businesses currently ineligible under existing law and open the possibility of federal disaster relief.

There is clear precedent for this approach. In 2025, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order 383 in response to the Route 80 sinkhole, which resulted in expedited infrastructure repairs, financial assistance for impacted businesses, and access to federal aid. The Clarksville Bridge closure presents a comparable level of disruption and warrants similar action.

Given the severity and duration of this situation, I respectfully request your consideration of a State of Emergency declaration to accelerate repairs and provide relief to affected residents and businesses. I appreciate your leadership and your commitment to protecting public safety and supporting New Jersey communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley K. Turner". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Shirley K. Turner
Senator – 15th District

SKT:mlo



NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY S. VERRELLI
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 15
Delaware • East Amwell • Ewing • Frenchtown
Hopewell Borough • Hopewell Twp • Kingwood
Lambertville • Lawrence Twp. • Pennington
Stockton • Trenton • West Amwell • West Windsor

Committee Assignments
Labor, *Chair*
Public Safety & Preparedness, *Vice-Chair*
Health

February 20, 2026

Governor Mikie Sherrill
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: Request for Declaration of State of Emergency – Clarksville Road Bridge

Dear Governor Sherrill,

I write to urge your immediate intervention regarding the ongoing closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge in West Windsor Township. Nearly four months after NJDOT ordered its emergency shutdown due to severe structural corrosion, the absence of a repair timeline has created a public safety and economic crisis affecting thousands of my constituents in the 15th Legislative District.

The Clarksville Road Bridge carries approximately 15,000 vehicles daily, serving as a critical artery for daily rail commuters, emergency responders, and local businesses. Since the November closure of the bridge, daily routines have been uprooted; local business revenue has dropped; and emergency response times for West Windsor Fire and EMS have extended beyond the normal acceptable length. It is a potent mix of worsening quality of life and deteriorating public safety for residents.

Despite multiple meetings between local officials and Amtrak, whose Northeast Corridor line runs beneath the bridge, the necessary inspection permits have been slow to obtain and only recently have limited inspections been permitted, leaving residents without a defined repair timeline or sense that relief will be coming soon. These federal jurisdictional barriers have effectively paralyzed state and local efforts to proceed with repairs.

Prior administrations have demonstrated that executive action can cut through precisely this type of bureaucratic impasse. Executive Order No. 383, declaring a State of Emergency for the Route 80 sinkholes, provides a sensible template. It expedited emergency procurement, bypassed administrative red tape, and established a business assistance program to mitigate economic damage. It is my belief that the Clarksville Road corridor warrants the same type of approach.

A State of Emergency declaration would provide the State of New Jersey with necessary tools to compel Amtrak to prioritize this project, authorize emergency procurement powers to restore traffic flow, and activate economic assistance for impacted local merchants. It's the thoughtful and necessary approach to relieving this crisis.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony S. Verrelli". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

Anthony S. Verrelli
Assemblyman, Fifteenth Legislative District



WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

321 Village Road East
West Windsor, New Jersey 08550-0505
Phone: (609) 716-5000, Ext. 5040
Fax: (609) 716-5022
E-mail: david.aderhold@wwprsd.org

David M. Aderhold, EdD
Superintendent of Schools

February 24, 2026

The Honorable Mikie Sherril, Governor of the State of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: Support for West Windsor Township Resolution 2026-R051 – Urgent Petition for State of Emergency Declaration for Clarksville Road Corridor

Dear Governor Sherrill,

On behalf of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, we write to express our urgent and unequivocal support for West Windsor Township Resolution 2026-R051. We stand alongside the West Windsor Mayor and Township Council in petitioning you to declare a State of Emergency for the Clarksville Road corridor.

The emergency closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge over the Amtrak rail line by the New Jersey Department of Transportation on November 2, 2025, has precipitated a severe crisis for our community. The continued closure is causing profound transportation disruptions throughout the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, impacting students and operations from pre-school through high school. Our joint district serves a massive population, and this infrastructure failure indirectly affects over 30,000 West Windsor residents and over 25,000 Plainsboro residents.

As educational leaders, the safety, security, and well-being of our students, staff, and their families are our absolute highest priorities. The current infrastructure failure has created a public safety crisis that we can no longer simply manage around. We are deeply concerned by the following impacts:

- The diversion of approximately 15,000 vehicles daily is overwhelming local residential streets and causing local gridlock.

- This excessive traffic volume has led to double the normal rates of traffic accidents, severely compromising the safety of our school bus routes and walking paths.
- Emergency response times for Fire, EMS, and County Hazmat teams have often been extended to four times their normal length, significantly putting our students, staff, and residents at risk.

It is unacceptable that critical structural assessments and repairs have remained in a state of administrative gridlock for over three months due to difficulties securing inspection permits from Amtrak. Furthermore, this bridge was already deemed structurally deficient and slated for replacement as far back as August 2022. The continued lack of a defined repair timeline, compounded by bureaucratic delays beyond local control, constitutes an escalating emergency.

Therefore, we strongly urge your administration to execute executive-level intervention to protect public safety and restore this essential transportation infrastructure. Specifically, we request that you:

- Issue an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency to elevate this from a local maintenance issue to a critical safety crisis.
- Utilize state authority to intervene with the U.S. Department of Transportation to compel Amtrak to prioritize track outages for NJDOT repair crews.
- Authorize emergency procurement powers to reduce bureaucratic procedures, allowing for the immediate installation of a temporary bridge or deck reinforcement to safely restore traffic flow.
- Expedite the permanent replacement of the Clarksville Bridge in accordance with the 2022 NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan.

We cannot allow procedural impediments to continually compromise the safety and educational routines of the thousands of children we serve. We implore you to take immediate action to resolve this crisis.

Respectfully,



Dr. David Aderhold
Superintendent of Schools



Graelynn McKeown
Board of Education President



WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mayor Hemant Marathe, Ph.D.
West Windsor Township
271 Clarksville Road
West Winsor, NJ 08550

February 12, 2026

Mayor Marathe:

With the ongoing closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge, at your request I have evaluated our response data and here is what I can provide:

Population effected:

Princeton Terrace consists of 465 residential units, plus three single-family homes located directly on Clarksville Road within the isolated section.

Using the Township's average housing density of 2.64 residents per unit, the estimated directly affected population is approximately 1,235 residents.

This figure does not include residents impacted indirectly by altered response routes throughout the Township.

Response Comparison:

Pre-Closure (August 1, 2025 – November 1, 2025):

- 12 Fire/EMS responses to the affected area
- Average response time: 3 minutes, 54 seconds

Post-Closure (Since November 5, 2025):

- 16 responses to Princeton Terrace
- 5 additional responses to locations impacted by rerouted travel patterns (including Route 1 North addresses)
- Total: 21 responses
- Average response time: 12 minutes, 40 seconds

This reflects an average increase of nearly 9 minutes per incident.

The calls have included time-sensitive emergencies such as:

- Cardiac arrest

- Traumatic injuries
- Overdose
- Childbirth
- Gas leaks
- Fire alarms
- Assault-related incidents

One response to Osprey Way within Princeton Terrace required **18 minutes** due to heavy congestion.

The most significant concern is the traffic burden created throughout the Township as a result of the closure.

Between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., traffic congestion in many areas approaches gridlock conditions. West Windsor's roadway design presents inherent emergency access challenges under normal circumstances, including:

- Center roadway islands
- Single-lane roundabouts
- Limited shoulder space
- Constrained lane widths

These physical constraints make moving traffic for emergency vehicles difficult even during standard volume periods. With the additional detoured traffic and peak-hour congestion, emergency apparatus movement is substantially impaired.

In practical terms:

- Residents who were previously approximately one mile from emergency services are now accessed via routes exceeding four miles.
- Emergency vehicles must travel through heavily congested corridors not designed for this volume.
- Deployment patterns across the Township are affected, increasing strain on overall coverage and response reliability.

Public Safety Risk:

An increase from 3:54 to 12:40 in average response time represents a material degradation in emergency service delivery. For incidents such as cardiac arrest, trauma, fire, and hazardous conditions, minutes are critical.

The bridge closure has therefore created:

1. Measurable and significant response delays,
2. Increased operational strain on Fire and EMS resources,
3. Heightened life safety risk to over 1,200 directly affected residents and additional populations indirectly impacted by traffic congestion.

Basis for State of Emergency Consideration

Under New Jersey law, a State of Emergency may be declared when conditions of disaster or extreme emergency threaten the safety, health, or welfare of the residents of the State and exceed the capacity of local resources to adequately protect life and property.

The Clarksville Road bridge closure has created:

- A sustained and measurable degradation in emergency response capability;
- Significant and recurring traffic gridlock conditions that impede police, fire, and EMS access;
- Extended emergency response times to time-critical incidents including cardiac arrest, trauma, hazardous conditions, and fire;
- Increased risk to more than 1,200 directly isolated residents and additional populations indirectly affected by compromised response routes.

While West Windsor Township continues to deploy all available local resources, the physical loss of a primary transportation corridor and the resulting systemic traffic congestion represent conditions beyond normal operational variance. The ongoing impairment of emergency access presents a material threat to life safety and property protection.

For these reasons, the documented impacts meet the threshold for extraordinary executive action to safeguard public health, safety, and welfare.

Please let me know if I can help in any other way,

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Lynch, M.P.A., M.O., NJCEM
Chief of Fire & Emergency Services
Fire Marshal
Emergency Management Coordinator
West Windsor Fire & Emergency Services
(609) 799-2400 ext 350



WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Robert Garofalo PhD(c)

20 Municipal Drive ♦ P.O. Box 38
West Windsor, New Jersey 08550

Main: 609-799-1222 ♦ Records: 609-799-9282
Fax: 609-799-6338 ♦ Admin Fax: 609-897-9010

February 16, 2026

There are too many variables to come up with accurate data for police response times. Traffic varies different times of day. Police are generally not leaving from the station so depends where we are traveling from and which route we take. EMS/Fire may be able to provide more accurate delay times. What I did find is that according to google maps, it now takes 10 or 12 minutes to get to Kestrel Court from HQ, depending which route you take, whereas it used to take approximately three minutes. Again, those times would vary depending on traffic and whether it is a code1,2, or 3 call.

I did do a quick check of two EMS calls from before and after the bridge closure. Prior to the closure, it took EMS four minutes from the time they were "enroute," to the time they "arrived," to a call at the Princeton Terrace. A more recent call took EMS eight minutes from the time they were enroute, to the time they arrived, for a cardiac issue at the Princeton Terrace. Safe to say the bridge closure doubles response times for EMS depending on the location and type of call.

There is an obvious traffic burden on alternate routes which is evident based on crash data. Without having the ability to conduct traffic counts on these alternate routes, I can only rely on crash data. I checked the crash history from 12/1/2024 - 2/16/2025 and compared it to crash history from 12/1/2025-2/16/2026. Utilizing the same time frame during the same months pre bridge closure and post bridge closure, on the alternate routes used, I found the following:

Intersection:

	#Crashes Pre-Closure	#Crashes Post-Closure
Clarks/Post	0	5
Post/Village	0	5
Village/Quakerbridge	1	8
Post Roundabout	2	2
Alex/Vaughn	4	6
Alex/Roszel	1	2
Alex/Canal Pointe	1	1
Canal Pointe/Meadow	1	1
Meadow/Carnegie Round	0	2
Meadow/Bearbrook	0	2
Meadow/Clarks	2	2
Quakerbridge/Clarks	7	3





WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Robert Garofalo PhD(c)

All but one intersection saw an increase in the number of crashes, or stayed the same. The areas most affected were Clarksville Rd. At Post, Post at Village Rd. W., and Village Rd. W. At Quakerbridge Rd. I believe this to be a direct result of increased traffic utilizing other avenues to travel to Village Road West to Quakerbridge, rather than Clarksville Road, due to the closure at the train bridge.

As always, if there is anything else I'm not thinking of that you would like me to look into, let me know.

Walter Silcox
Traffic Sergeant
West Windsor Twp. Police Dept.

www.westwindSORpolice.com ♦ facebook.com/WWPolice ♦ [Twitter: @westwindSORpd](https://twitter.com/westwindSORpd)



**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING WEST WINDSOR'S REQUEST TO DECLARE A
STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE CLARKSVILLE ROAD CORRIDOR
PURSUANT TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT**

WHEREAS, on November 2, 2025, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) ordered the emergency closure of the Clarksville Road Bridge (CR 638), Bridge over Amtrak, located in West Windsor, NJ, due to severe structural corrosion discovered during a routine inspection; and

WHEREAS, the Clarksville Road Bridge serves as a critical regional artery, supporting an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of approximately 15,000 vehicles, many of whom utilize the corridor to access the Princeton Junction Train Station, employment, commerce, education, residential neighborhoods, and emergency response routes; and

WHEREAS, the continued closure has resulted in a public safety crisis, with emergency response times for West Windsor Fire, EMS, and County Hazmat teams often extended to four times their normal length and significantly putting residents at risk due to compromised response routes; and

WHEREAS, the bridge closure is overwhelming local residential streets with excessive traffic volume, leading to double the normal rates of traffic accidents while causing local gridlock, as reported by the West Windsor Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the continued bridge closure causes transportation disruptions throughout the West Windsor-Plainsboro School District, from pre-school through high school; and

WHEREAS, the bridge closure adversely affects over 1200 directly isolated residents, as well as affecting indirectly over 30,000 other West Windsor residents, and over 25,000 Plainsboro residents in the joint West Windsor-Plainsboro School District, as well as additional residents in the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, small businesses along the Clarksville Road corridor, particularly within Village Square, have reported catastrophic revenue losses exceeding 50% due to the loss of pass-by traffic and may be forced to permanently close; and

WHEREAS, critical repairs and structural assessments remained in a state of administrative gridlock for over three months due to the inability to quickly secure inspection permits from Amtrak, whose federal jurisdiction over the Northeast Corridor (NEC) rail lines has delayed state and local efforts to plan repairs or produce a timeline, showing a need to prioritize this project with Amtrak at the national level to proceed with actual repairs; and

WHEREAS, the Clarksville Bridge was already deemed structurally deficient and slated for replacement, and on August 22, 2022 the West Windsor Township Council adopted Resolution 2022-R193 in support and endorsement of the NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan to replace the "structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak."; and

WHEREAS, West Windsor's Mayor and Township Council finds that a State of Emergency would provide local and state agencies effective authority and leverage to compel timely action or coordination from Amtrak; and

WHEREAS, the continued absence of a defined inspection or repair timeline, combined with procedural impediments beyond local control, constitutes an extraordinary and escalating emergency condition that cannot be resolved through routine intergovernmental processes; and

WHEREAS, West Windsor's Mayor and Township Council further finds that executive-level intervention is necessary and urgent to protect public safety, stabilize the local economy, and restore essential transportation infrastructure; and

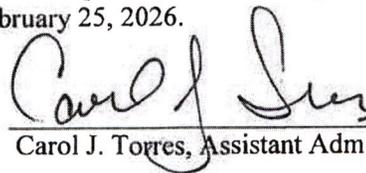
WHEREAS, a clear precedent for such intervention exists in Executive Order No. 383 (2025), wherein a State of Emergency was declared for Route 80 sinkholes to bypass administrative red tape, expedite construction through emergency procurement, and establish the "Route 80 Business Assistance Grant Program".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the West Windsor Township Council of the Township of West Windsor, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. **Petition for Emergency Declaration:** The Mayor and West Windsor Township Council formally petition Governor Mikie Sherrill to issue an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency for the Clarksville Road corridor to elevate the bridge's status from a "local maintenance issue" to a "critical safety crisis".
2. **Federal Intercession:** The Mayor and Council request the Governor utilize the authority of the State of New Jersey to intervene with the U.S. Department of Transportation to compel Amtrak to prioritize the necessary track outages for NJDOT repair crews.
3. **Emergency Procurement and Reduction of Bureaucratic Procedures:** The Mayor and Council urge the use of the Emergency Declaration for the authorization of emergency procurement powers and a reduction of ordinarily required bureaucratic procedures to allow for the immediate installation of a temporary steel bridge, deck reinforcement or other temporary solution to restore traffic flow.
4. **Economic Assistance:** The Mayor and Council request the activation of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) to establish a "Corridor Business Assistance Grant" and to facilitate access to federal SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) for impacted local merchants.
5. **Expedited Bridge Replacement:** The Mayor and Council urge the Governor to expedite the permanent replacement of the Clarksville Bridge as per the adopted NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan adopted on August 22, 2022.
6. **Distribution:** A certified copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Office of Governor Mikie Sherrill, U.S. Senator Corey Booker, U.S. Senator Andy Kim, State Senator Shirley K. Turner, Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman, General Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, General Assemblyman Anthony S. Verrelli, Mercer County Executive Dan Benson, the Board of County Commissioners, the Commissioner of the NJDOT and the President of Amtrak.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Township Committee of the Township of Plainsboro, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, a contiguous municipality of West Windsor, which shares a joint school district, supports West Windsor's resolution and specific actions requesting Governor Sherrill declare a State of Emergency.

I certify the above to be a true copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Plainsboro at a meeting held on February 25, 2026.



Carol J. Torres, Assistant Administrator/Clerk

Clarksville Road (CR 638) over Amtrak

Update February 27, 2026

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's highest priority is the safety of the public when traveling on our roads and bridges, as well as railways within the state. In making repairs to restore mobility, we will not compromise public safety.

Anytime a decision is made to close a bridge, it is not made lightly. The Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak's Northeast Corridor is in poor condition and is unsafe for travel. A regular inspection in October 2025 of the Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak's Northeast Corridor found severe corrosion of steel beams requiring the County to close the bridge on November 2, 2025.

Because of its location, NJDOT must coordinate with Amtrak to safely access the bridge to complete more detailed inspections and thorough analysis to determine the extent of repairs necessary. This takes time and the Department will not cut corners and compromise public safety in designing a repair.

The Northeast Corridor is a critical national rail line connecting New England with Washington, D.C. that is heavily traveled (by Amtrak and NJ Transit trains), which limits the time available to do the inspections without disrupting travel.

One of the challenges regarding inspections and repairs is the small window available to de-energize the catenary wires, set up the equipment, inspect the various elements of the bridge, and then de-mobilize before service resumes.

NJDOT understands the importance of Clarksville Road (CR 638) to residents and business community, and the effect it has on the efficient movement of traffic.

NJDOT will continue to work with Amtrak, as well as county and local officials, to advance the repairs as quickly and safely as possible.

As discussed, please see the requested information regarding a timeline to complete the inspection and analysis of the bridge.

TIMELINE

Estimates are based on worst case scenario and the cooperation of stakeholders like Amtrak and may be completed earlier than indicated.

Inspection

There are two phases for inspection:

Phase B is the center span of the bridge.

- Inspection using Hi-Rail Equipment
- Completed February 19, 2026

Phase A is inspection of the outer spans of the bridge.

- Inspection using ladders & scaffolding expected to begin next week and last up to 5 Weeks (dependent on Amtrak approvals)

Analysis

Analysis – 4 Months

- Load Rating and Pier Analysis
 - Multiple Options will be assessed in these calculations.
- SME (Subject Matter Experts) Final Decision Review

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, New Jersey Department of Transportation ("NJDOT") has informed the Township of West Windsor of their need to replace the structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak / Northeast Corridor rail line located in West Windsor; and

WHEREAS, a meeting was held on April 7, 2022 between representatives of the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), Mercer County and West Windsor Township concerning the Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak bridge replacement project; and

WHEREAS, the NJDOT's Preliminary Preferred Alternative 7 Construction Plan ("Plan") will replace the existing deteriorating bridge with a new bridge structure, which provides for two traffic lanes, two 8' shoulders and one 10' shared use path along the northbound side of the bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Plan will include improvements to the Clarksville Road - Meadow Road intersection; and

WHEREAS, the proposed construction staging for the NJDOT's Preliminary Preferred Alternative is to maintain traffic on the existing bridge while the new bridge is constructed off-line; and

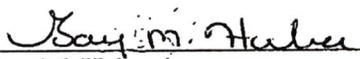
WHEREAS, the NJDOT agrees to remedy the geometric deficiencies in Clarksville Road (CR 638) by providing a new vertical and horizontal alignment of CR 638.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of West Windsor Township, support and endorse the NJDOT Preliminary Preferred Alternative Plan to replace the structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Clarksville Road Bridge over Amtrak.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

ADOPTED: August 22, 2022

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the West Windsor Township Council at their meeting held on the 22nd of August 2022.


Gay M. Huber
Township Clerk
West Windsor Township





Residents Petition to repair the Clarksville road Amtrak Bridge immediately

<https://www.change.org/p/repair-the-clarksville-road-amtrak-bridge-immediately>

change.org

My petitions

Membership

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Repair the Clarksville Road Amtrak Bridge immediately

1,779⁺

Change.org helps verify signatures are from real people.

Verified signatures 

