



NEW JERSEY SOCIETY OF MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS

Improving the Quality of Life in New Jersey Communities through Municipal Engineering

2026 MUNICIPAL PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The NJSME Project of the Year Awards recognize outstanding achievements by Municipal Engineers whose projects and programs demonstrate excellence in municipal engineering up and down the state of NJ. The awards honor innovative solutions that advance public health, safety, welfare, sustainability, resilience, and quality of life through exceptional planning, design, construction, project management, and implementation of municipal infrastructure improvements.

Licensed Professional Engineers who are either employed by the municipality directly or by a consulting engineering firm that has been retained by a municipality to design, manage, or implement a municipal engineering project or program are eligible to submit entries in various award categories as outlined below. You will note that In-house engineers (employed directly by the town) will compete only amongst themselves in these categories; Consulting Engineers will similarly only compete amongst themselves.

Consulting Engineers who are not the named Municipal Engineer, must submit, with their application, either a resolution from the governing body or a written endorsement from the Municipal Administrator identifying the Engineer responsible for the project or program and authorizing submission of the award application.

Awards will be presented in both the **Municipal (In-House)** and **Consultant** divisions. If sufficient entries are received and the judges concur, First Place, Second Place, and Honorable Mention awards may be presented in each division for the following categories:

- A. Outstanding Roadway Improvement Award** · In-house Engineer
- B. Stormwater Management, Resilience & Climate Innovation Award** · In-house Engineer
- C. Water/Wastewater System Excellence Award** · In-house Engineer
- D. GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award** · In-house Engineer
- E. Community Enhancement Award** · In-House Engineer
- F. Emergency Response Award** · In-House Engineer
- G. Equity in Infrastructure Award** · In-House Engineer
- H. Project Management Award** · In-House Engineer
- I. Outstanding Roadway Improvement Award** · Consultant

J. Stormwater Management, Resilience & Climate Innovation Award · Consultant

K. Water/Wastewater System Excellence Award · Consultant

L. GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award · Consultant

M. Community Enhancement Award · Consultant

N. Emergency Response Award · Consultant

O. Equity in Infrastructure Award · Consultant

P. Project Management Award · Consultant

Product Categories Breakdown

A/I Outstanding Roadway Improvement Award

- Honors exemplary achievement in roadway design and construction, including safety enhancements, paving programs, traffic-calming measures, and multimodal transportation improvements.

B/I Stormwater Management, Resilience & Climate Innovation Award

- Recognizes forward-thinking stormwater strategies, including green infrastructure applications, MS4 compliance leadership, and effective flood-mitigation solutions. Highlights projects addressing flooding, heat mitigation, or resilient infrastructure.

C/K Water/Wastewater System Excellence Award

- Celebrates significant improvements to water and wastewater infrastructure, such as treatment plant upgrades, pump station modernization, distribution system enhancements, and PFAS compliance initiatives.

D/L GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award

- Recognizes exceptional use of GIS, asset management, or digital tools to enhance municipal planning, engineering efficiency, or data-driven decision-making.

E/M Community Enhancement Award

- For downtown improvements, parks, playgrounds, trail design, or public space revitalization.

F/N Emergency Response Award

- For engineering leadership during storms, emergencies, infrastructure failures, or FEMA recovery.

G/O Equity in Infrastructure Award

- Recognizes planning or engineering that improves access, safety, or environmental quality for underserved residents.

J/P Project Management Award

- Recognizes exceptional leadership, organization, and execution in managing complex public infrastructure projects from concept through completion.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for consideration, each entry must meet the following requirements:

- **The project must be located within the State of New Jersey.**
- **Entries may be submitted in either of the following divisions:**
 - **Municipal (In-House)** – Projects submitted by the officially appointed Municipal Engineer who is employed by the municipality.
 - **Consultant** – Projects submitted by a licensed Professional Engineer employed by a consulting engineering firm who served as the Engineer responsible for the project or program on behalf of the municipality.
- **The Engineer whose name appears on the application must:**
 - have been the officially appointed Municipal Engineer for the municipality in which the project is located, or their designated representative; **or**
 - have been the Municipal Engineer or Consulting Engineer responsible for the project or program, or their designated representative.
- **Consulting Engineers, who are not the named Municipal Engineer, must submit, with the application, either:**
 - a resolution from the governing body; or
 - a written endorsement from the Municipal Administrator,

Identifying the Engineer responsible for the project or program and authorizing submission of the award application.

- **Signed and sealed plans and specifications shall be submitted, when applicable, for projects involving engineering design.**
 - This requirement does not apply to projects submitted in the **GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award (Categories D/L)**, **Emergency Response Award (Categories F/N)**, or **Project Management Award (Categories J/P)** when traditional engineering plans

and specifications are not required.

- The project must be substantially complete (minimum 85%) and operational by the application deadline.
- **Projects must not have been completed prior to June 30, 2025. (Projects that comply with this timeframe that were submitted in the previous year, may be resubmitted provided it did not receive an NJSME Project of the Year Award and all submission materials have been updated.)**
- **Entries shall be submitted in one of the following award categories:**
 - A/I Outstanding Roadway Improvement Award
 - B/J Stormwater Management, Resilience & Climate Innovation Award
 - C/K Water/Wastewater System Excellence Award
 - D/L GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award
 - E/M Community Enhancement Award
 - F/N Emergency Response Award
 - G/O Equity in Infrastructure Award
 - J/P Project Management Award
- Any number of projects or programs may be submitted; however, each project may be entered into one category only.
- **The submitting engineer must be a current NJSME member in good standing.**
- **No project may be submitted in more than one award category.**
- **The NJSME Awards Committee reserves the right to determine eligibility and reassign entries to a more appropriate category when necessary.**
- **Judges' decisions regarding eligibility, category placement, and award recipients are final.**

* The NJSME Awards Committee reserves the right to review all project entries and rules on eligibility and category placement.

** Judges' decisions regarding project awards are final.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

All entries **must** be submitted electronically through the NJSME website. Applications **must** be complete and include all required supporting documentation to be considered for judging.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant & Municipal Information

Provide the following information:

Applicant Information

- Division: **Municipal (In-House)** or **Consultant**

- Municipal Engineer or Individual Engineer Name
- Employer (if Consultant)
- Office Address
- Telephone Number
- Email Address
- Dates of Employment or Service to the Municipality

Municipal Information

- Municipality
- County

Mayor Information

- Name, Office Address, and Telephone Number
- Current Mayor
- Mayor at the time of project completion (if different)

Consulting Engineers, who are not the appointed Municipal Engineer, must also upload the required municipal resolution or written endorsement as outlined in the Eligibility Requirements.

2. Project Information

Provide the following information:

- Project Name
 - Award Division: **Municipal (In-House)** or **Consultant**
 - Award Category:
 - A/I Outstanding Roadway Improvement Award
 - B/J Stormwater Management, Resilience & Climate Innovation Award
 - C/K Water/Wastewater System Excellence Award
 - D/L GIS & Data Integration Excellence Award
 - E/M Community Enhancement Award
 - F/N Emergency Response Award
 - G/O Equity in Infrastructure Award
 - H/P Project Management Award
 - Project Location (Municipality and County)
 - Construction Start and Completion Dates (if applicable)
 - Total Project Cost (Estimated and Final, if applicable)
 - Project Description (300 words maximum)
 - Client Objectives
 - Major Project Considerations (maximum of 10)
 - Innovative Design Features, Technologies, or Solutions
 - Project Benefits, Performance, and Significance to the Municipality and Engineering Profession
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3. Supporting Documentation

Applicants shall upload the following:

Project Photographs

- Minimum of four (4) color or black-and-white photographs.
- Whenever possible, include before, during construction, and completed project photographs.
- Images should highlight innovation, engineering excellence, construction techniques, or unique project features.
- Photo captions are encouraged.
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF.
- Maximum file size: 2 MB per image.

Supplemental Materials (if applicable)

- Plans
- Illustrations
- Maps
- GIS exhibits
- Charts
- Renderings
- Project schedules
- Other supporting documentation relevant to the submission

Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PNG, or GIF (maximum 2 MB per file).

DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS

While the submission of a project display as part of the initial award application is optional, all Award Winners are required to prepare and exhibit a project display at the Annual Meeting. To assist recipients, NJSME offers a project display template that may be used by winning submission. Failure to provide the required display at the Annual Meeting will result in the winner being ineligible to participate in the Project of the Year competition the following year.

Each display shall:

Consist of one 24" x 36" rigid board (masonite, foam-core, illustration board, etc.) Any number of photographs, sketches, diagrams or other visuals and text may be used on the panel to clearly illustrate and describe the project /program features. It is suggested that the display be framed or that a clear covering be placed over the face of the board for protection. Total board thickness (including reliefs, display face, cover, frame, etc.) must not exceed one inch.

- Show on the front side of the panel, the name and location of the project, and the submitting Municipal Engineer's name (not a consulting firm's name). On the reverse side of the panel the Municipal Engineer's name, address, phone, and entry category

designation (A thru P) shall be indicated.

MISCELLANEOUS

- The person preparing the entry materials for this competition (i.e. the Municipal Engineer or his authorized agent) should sign and date the submission (preferably in the form of a cover letter or letter of transmittal) and provide an address and phone number where to be contacted.
- Calls of inquiry regarding the outcome of judging will be accepted by the Awards Chairman from the judging date (scheduled in October) until the date of the Annual Meeting in November.
- No extensions to the September 14th entry deadline will be permitted or allowed.

SUBMIT COMPLETED ENTRIES BY SEPTEMBER 14th

INQUIRIES ABOUT AWARDS PROGRAM CAN BE DIRECTED TO:

Tim Kernan

tim.kernan@colliersengineering.com

Olga Y. Garcia

oygarciape@gmail.com

JUDGING CRITERIA

Each of the following are scored as follows:

- 1. Originality / Uniqueness / Innovation (maximum score 20)**
 - Does the project represent an original approach or apply an existing technique in an innovative manner?
- 2. Social Significance (maximum score of 20)**
 - Does the project provide social benefits?
 - Does the project positively affect the balance of nature?
 - Are safety standards, public health, sound levels, nuisance, barrier-free access, or various age group facilities taken into consideration?
- 3. Environmental/Energy Considerations (maximum score of 10 / not applicable for construction management)**
 - Does the project make best environmental use of the property?
 - Does the project respond to national environmental guidelines?
 - Does the project respond to national energy guidelines (if any)?

4. Municipality Requirements (maximum score of 10)

- How did the final project cost relate to the original budget estimate?
- How does the project meet the planning goals of the municipality?
- Did the project meet the municipalities' time schedule?
- How were project constraints, if any, met?

5. Technical Value (maximum score of 20)

- Does the project represent an advancement of engineering state-of-the-art?

6. Complexity of Project (maximum of 10)

- Does the project represent extraordinary technological demands or considerations?

7. Presentation (maximum score of 10)

- Do the entry materials give a clear understanding of the project or program?



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