11.0 Healthy Communities

11.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION 11.1

11.1: Work with local communities and stakeholders to promote agricultural sustainability through healthy food choice initiatives such as access to affordable, healthy foods and the creation of community gardens, urban agriculture programs, mobile food stands/food truck courts, and farmers markets.

Purpose

Addressing the nutritional needs of residents provides the foundation for a healthy community. The county can assist municipalities in assessing the availability of nutritious foods and help coordinate efforts with stakeholders, such as the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, to provide better access to and education about healthy food choices and local food production.

Monmouth County Departments & Organizations Involvement

Division of Planning	Assist municipalities and other stakeholders in identifying and promoting healthy food needs and other initiatives; include these initiatives in the *Agricultural Sustainability Plan (ASP)* for Monmouth County when drafted; coordinate agricultural sustainability efforts with the Division of Economic Development through the Grown in Monmouth initiative.
Division of Economic Development	Continue to coordinate the Grown in Monmouth initiative; engage businesses and local economic development committees in the planning process; promote the local agriculture industry; assist in locating new agribusiness resources; provide local business networking opportunities; assist in agricultural sustainability efforts that promote local farm-to-table initiatives.
Agricultural Development Board (MCADB)	Continue to assist local farmers with preservation; promote the local agriculture industry; resolve right-to-farm issues in ways that protect the establishment and retention of farm stands and markets thus protecting the farmer's ability to produce and locally market their crops and value-added products.
Brookdale Community College (BCC)	Consider BCC a resource for marketing workshops and local assistance.

Other Project Stakeholder Involvement

Rutgers Cooperative Extensive (RCE)	Assist with outreach; provide expertise in local and statewide agricultural issues; provide access to research, commercial growers, and industry leaders.
Ag. Related Businesses	Identify business needs and opportunities to meet the needs of the local community.
Ag. Dependent Businesses	Identify ways to strengthen the association between local consumers and agricultural products in Monmouth County.
Farmers	Continue to provide fresh healthy foods locally; assist in identifying local opportunities for distribution of products.
Municipalities	Assist with education and outreach to residents, businesses, and the farming community on healthy food initiatives available at the local level.
Schools	Partner with local farmers and markets for Farm to School initiatives and community garden programs.
Residents and Local Businesses	Respond to outreach/surveys conducted regarding healthy food options, areas of deficiencies, and opportunities to fulfill community needs.
FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties	Provides distribution of food to individuals in need from donations received by individuals and charity partners; hosts nutrition outreach and education; provides culinary training and occasionally gardening space for fresh produce.
Board of Agriculture	Assist with outreach and provide industry specific perspective and expertise.

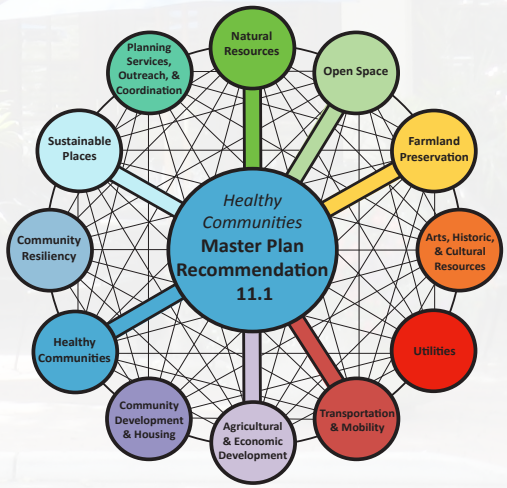
Boardwalk, Long Branch *Source: Steve daCosta*

Master Plan Goals, Principles, & Objectives (GPOs) Relating to 11.1

	GOAL 1			GOAL 2				GOAL 3						
PRINCIPLES	1.1 Comprehensive Planning	1.2 Coordination	1.3 Planning Approach	2.1 Environmental Resources	2.2 Farmland Preservation	2.3 Arts, Culture, & Historic	2.4 Preservation Investments	3.1 Vibrant & Sustainable Communities	3.2 Community Preservation	3.3 Housing	3.4 Economic Development	3.5 Agricultural Development	3.6 Recovery & Resiliency	3.7 Growth Investments
OBJECTIVES														
A.												●		
B.		●	●						●			●		
C.	●		●				●		●		●	●		
D.	●		●									●		
E.		●			●						●	●		
F.							●							
G.		●						●						
H.											●			
I.														
J.														
K.														
L.								●						
M.														
N.								●						

Implementation Strategy

- Assist in the promotion of healthy food initiatives with other county departments and agencies, the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), and municipalities.
- Identify healthy food initiatives in the *Agricultural Sustainability Plan (ASP)* for Monmouth County.
- The Monmouth County Environmental Council (MCEC) will offer opportunities to promote healthy food programs as a topic for their annual roundtable events.
- Continue to assist with the Grown in Monmouth Initiative.



Strongest Associated Master Plan Elements

11.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION 11.2

11.2: Continue to protect human health by assisting with the identification and removal of environmental hazards from the community and raising awareness about public health issues.

Purpose

In order to assure the residents, businesses, and visitors of Monmouth County are provided with healthy communities to live, work, play, and stay, efforts must be focused on the education, identification, and eradication of public health threats.

Monmouth County Departments & Organizations Involvement

Division of Planning	Assist the Monmouth County Health Department (MCHD) in identifying environmental hazards; conduct environmental reviews of community development projects as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
MCHD	Seek assistance when feasible from the Division of Planning on planning issues that could affect public health.
Reclamation Center Recycling and Solid Waste Planning	Provide support to municipalities for recycling and solid waste practices, including community cleanup efforts through the New Jersey Clean Communities program.
Mosquito Control	Use integrated pest management strategies to control mosquito population; respond to the public's requests to inspect properties where a mosquito problem is reported; post information and resources online about mosquito habitat, prevention, and vector born disease information.

Other Project Stakeholder Involvement

NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)	Continued enforcement of environmental regulations; review of environmental permit applications; support for environmental remediation and redevelopment.
Municipalities	Provide resources and guidance for potential local environmental impacts to public health.

Boardwalk, Long Branch *Source: Steve daCosta*

Master Plan Goals, Principles, & Objectives (GPOs) Relating to 11.2

	GOAL 1			GOAL 2				GOAL 3						
PRINCIPLES	1.1 Comprehensive Planning	1.2 Coordination	1.3 Planning Approach	2.1 Environmental Resources	2.2 Farmland Preservation	2.3 Arts, Culture, & Historic	2.4 Preservation Investments	3.1 Vibrant & Sustainable Communities	3.2 Community Preservation	3.3 Housing	3.4 Economic Development	3.5 Agricultural Development	3.6 Recovery & Resiliency	3.7 Growth Investments
OBJECTIVES														
A.			●					●					●	
B.		●	●										●	
C.		●	●						●				●	
D.	●									●				
E.		●		●									●	
F.				●										
G.		●											●	
H.											●			
I.														
J.														
K.														
L.								●						
M.														
N.														

Implementation Strategy

- Continue to provide support to the MCHD and other county departments and agencies on environmental and public health issues.
- Continue to provide environmental reviews for grant funding of potential projects.
- Monitor proposed changes to the NJDEP's Water Quality Management Planning Program.
- Monitor the *New Jersey Statewide Water Supply Plan (1996)* for updates and the potential impacts to Monmouth County.
- Monitor the water quality aspects of stormwater management planning.
- Continue to function as a designated planning agency for water quality and wastewater management planning.

Strongest Associated Master Plan Elements

11.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION 11.3

11.3: Provide planning support and services to the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office for public safety, law enforcement, crime prevention, and emergency response.

Purpose

One of the critical needs of a healthy community is safety and security. The mission of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office is to focus on creating and maintaining a safe and secure environment for the residents and businesses of Monmouth County. The Division of Planning will continue to provide services and resources, such as geographic information system (GIS) mapping and analysis, to the both offices to assist in furthering their mission.

Monmouth County Departments & Organizations Involvement

Division of Planning	Provide planning assistance to other county departments and agencies involved with emergency response, public safety, law enforcement, and crime prevention.
Sheriff's Office	Provide protection for the residents and businesses of Monmouth County; spearhead emergency management and planning efforts.
Prosecutor's Office	Coordinate with other law enforcement agencies within the county to provide prosecutorial needs.

Other Project Stakeholder Involvement

Municipalities	Assist with planning and implementation efforts related to emergency response and public safety.

Boardwalk, Long Branch *Source: Steve daCosta*

Master Plan Goals, Principles, & Objectives (GPOs) Relating to 11.3

	GOAL 1			GOAL 2				GOAL 3						
PRINCIPLES	1.1 Comprehensive Planning	1.2 Coordination	1.3 Planning Approach	2.1 Environmental Resources	2.2 Farmland Preservation	2.3 Arts, Culture, & Historic	2.4 Preservation Investments	3.1 Vibrant & Sustainable Communities	3.2 Community Preservation	3.3 Housing	3.4 Economic Development	3.5 Agricultural Development	3.6 Recovery & Resiliency	3.7 Growth Investments
OBJECTIVES														
A.			●											
B.		●	●										●	
C.		●												
D.														
E.										■				
F.	■		■		■				■	■		■		
G.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■	●	
H.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■		
I.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■	■	
J.	■		■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	
K.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
L.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
M.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
N.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■

Implementation Strategy

- Continue to provide input and assistance to the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office in their crime prevention and public safety efforts.

Strongest Associated Master Plan Elements

11.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION 11.4

11.4: Incorporate the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan (2009)* as a component of the *Monmouth County Master Plan's* Healthy Communities Element.

Purpose

The Monmouth County Reclamation Center is tasked with updating the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Plan*. The Division of Planning staff will provide support to the Recycling and Solid Waste Planning staff in preparing the plan.

Monmouth County Departments & Organizations Involvement

Division of Planning	Provide data and planning assistance, as requested, in the implementation of the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan;* provide outreach assistance with recycling programs; work with the New Jersey Clean Communities program on clean ups coordinated through the NJ Department Environmental Protection (NJDEP) AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador.
Planning Board (MCPB)	Incorporate the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan* as a component of the *Monmouth County Master Plan.*
Reclamation Center Recycling and Solid Waste Planning	Develop the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan;* continue working with municipalities on recycling initiatives; continue to promote and assist with local clean ups through the New Jersey Clean Communities program.

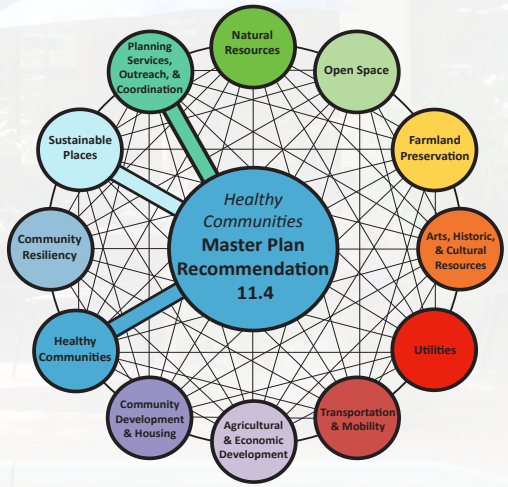
Boardwalk, Long Branch *Source: Steve daCosta*

Master Plan Goals, Principles, & Objectives (GPOs) Relating to 11.4

		GOAL 1			GOAL 2				GOAL 3						
		1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7
PRINCIPLES		Comprehensive Planning	Coordination	Planning Approach	Environmental Resources	Farmland Preservation	Arts, Culture, & Historic	Preservation Investments	Vibrant & Sustainable Communities	Community Preservation	Housing	Economic Development	Agricultural Development	Recovery & Resiliency	Growth Investments
OBJECTIVES	A.								●						
	B.		●												
	C.														
	D.	●													
	E.										■				
	F.	■		■		■				■	■		■		
	G.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■		
	H.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■		
	I.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■	■	
	J.	■		■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	
	K.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
	L.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
	M.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
	N.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■

Implementation Strategy

- Provide data and planning assistance, as requested, to Recycling and Solid Waste Planning.
- Incorporate the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan* as a component of the *Monmouth County Master Plan*.
- Monitor the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan* for updates and revisions, and the potential impacts of those changes on the county.
- The NJDEP AmeriCorps Ambassador will continue to work with the New Jersey Clean Communities/Program Coordinator Specialist to promote and schedule local clean ups.



Strongest Associated Master Plan Elements

11.0 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION 11.5

11.5: Incorporate by reference the *Monmouth County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) (2012)* as a component of the Healthy Communities Element and include studies, reports, and findings from the Monmouth County Health Department (MCHD) and other local health departments as consultative and supportive documents to the *Master Plan*.

Purpose

The MCHD is comprised of trained professionals in all areas of public health whose mission is to provide support to the community in identifying and resolving public health issues. In addition to the services they provide, the MCHD conducts extensive outreach and education efforts along with providing documented research in many areas related to environmental health.

Monmouth County Departments & Organizations Involvement

Division of Planning	Provide support for healthy initiatives in Monmouth County; update the *Natural Features Study for Monmouth County (1975)* utilizing applicable data compiled by the MCHD; provide the MCHD with geographic information systems (GIS) assistance as needed.
Planning Board (MCPB)	Incorporate the *CHIP* as a component of the Healthy Communities Element; acknowledge reports and studies produced by the MCHD as consultative and supportive documents the *Monmouth County Master Plan.*
MCHD	Coordinate with the Division of Planning on planning issues that could potentially affect public health.

Other Project Stakeholder Involvement

Municipalities	Provide resources and guidance regarding potential local environmental impacts on public health.

Boardwalk, Long Branch *Source: Steve daCosta*

Master Plan Goals, Principles, & Objectives (GPOs) Relating to 11.5

	GOAL 1			GOAL 2				GOAL 3						
PRINCIPLES	1.1 Comprehensive Planning	1.2 Coordination	1.3 Planning Approach	2.1 Environmental Resources	2.2 Farmland Preservation	2.3 Arts, Culture, & Historic	2.4 Preservation Investments	3.1 Vibrant & Sustainable Communities	3.2 Community Preservation	3.3 Housing	3.4 Economic Development	3.5 Agricultural Development	3.6 Recovery & Resiliency	3.7 Growth Investments
OBJECTIVES														
A.			●					●						
B.		●											●	
C.	●	●												
D.	●			●										
E.				●						■				
F.	■		■	●	■				■	■		■		
G.	■	●	■		■	■	■		■	■		■	●	
H.	■		■	●	■	■	■		■	■		■	●	
I.	■		■		■	■	■		■	■		■		
J.	■		■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	
K.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
L.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
M.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	●	■	■	■	■	■	■
N.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■

Implementation Strategy

- Incorporate by reference the *Monmouth County CHIP (2012)* as a component of the *Monmouth County Master Plan*.
- Adopt, by reference, reports, and studies produced by the MCHD as part of the Healthy Communities Element of the *Monmouth County Master Plan*.
- Continue to provide support and assistance to the MCHD in the implementation of county public health initiatives.
- Utilize MCHD data for updates to the *Natural Features Study for Monmouth County* and other applicable plans, reports, and studies.

Strongest Associated Master Plan Elements

11.0 Healthy Communities

"….our greatest health challenges are complex, interconnected and closely associated with the social and environmental determinants of health, such as access to health care, education and jobs, community support, economic conditions, transportation, and public safety"

- Excerpt from the Healthy Communities Policy, Long Beach California

11.1 Introduction

The Healthy Communities Element falls substantially within *Monmouth County Master Plan* Goal #3: Promote beneficial development and redevelopment that continues to support Monmouth County as a highly desirable place to live, work, play, and stay. *Master Plan* Goal #3 defines principles and objectives regarding the balance of development and redevelopment while conserving resources and maintaining/ enhancing community character. The principles consist of guidelines critical to creating and maintaining healthy communities, including, housing, economic development and redevelopment, recovery and community resiliency, and vibrant and sustainable communities.

When describing a healthy community, factors that extend beyond the physical and mental well-being of its members must be examined and addressed to ensure an environment that will provide the necessities for the utmost quality-of-life. A community that provides safety, employment opportunities, options for housing that will meet the needs and financial capabilities of all, access to health care and transportation options as well as a sustainable ecological environment is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a healthy community.

Figure 11.1 displays the primary components of a healthy community:

Figure 11.1: Components of a Healthy Community

- **Public Health:** Protecting the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play (American Public Health Association).
- **Public Safety:** Protecting a community and providing a safe environment for all members of a community.
- **Mental, Physical, and Social Well-being:** Providing mental, physical, and social opportunities for interaction and enhancement within a community for the welfare of the population.
- **Environmental Impacts:** Minimizing negative impacts to natural resources, such as clean air and water.

- **Housing:** Providing safe and affordable housing options to the meet the needs of the population at all life-stages.
- **Mobility and Access:** Integrating transportation options which give community members access to destinations essential for a healthy lifestyle.
- **Community Design:** Planning and providing a safe and healthy environment and lifestyle that meets the needs of a community.

11.2 Existing Conditions

11.2.1 Supportive Reports and Guiding Documents

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA): As part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, all nonprofit hospitals are required to prepare a CHNA at least once every three years as a condition of maintaining their tax-exempt status. The first round of CHNAs were due in 2012. These CHNAs contain an in-depth analysis of specific community needs along with an implementation strategy of how the hospital will meet the identified needs. CHNAs are intended to assist public health agencies, local officials, hospitals, policymakers, community leaders, and other stakeholders in better understanding their community's health needs. These assessments include identifying local public health needs along with an area's specific barriers and points of interests. Quantitative data (including prevention/ wellness measurements, demographics, obesity rates, mortality rates, uninsured residents, disease prevalence, and incidents) and qualitative data (including survey content analysis) are both examined during CHNA development. The three major hospital systems in the county have completed CHNAs.

Meridian Health, which recently merged with **Hackensack University Health Network**, manages the **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** in Neptune City, **Riverview Medical Center** in Red Bank, and **Bayshore Community Hospital** in Holmdel along with two other hospitals in Ocean County. Meridian Health produced the *2015 Community Health Needs Assessment for Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey*. This 2015 assessment was follow-up to similar studies conducted in 2006 and 2011. Meridian's CHNAs intend to identify Monmouth and Ocean County residents' health status, behaviors, and needs along with providing valuable information to decision makers and guiding community health/wellness improvement efforts. The 2015 assessment includes an introduction (project overview, goals, and methodology along with a summary of findings), a community description of population characteristics and social determinants of health, the general health status, infectious disease, births, modifiable health risks including nutrition, physical activity, weight status, substance abuse and tobacco use, access to health services, healthcare information, advance care planning, palliative/hospice care, and local resources. The three identified overarching goals of this CHNA are:

1. To improve residents' health status, increase their life spans, and elevate their overall quality-of-life.
2. To reduce the health disparities among residents.
3. To increase accessibility to preventive services for all community residents.

CentraState Medical Center, located in Freehold Township, produced the *Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan FY2013*. CentraState's service area is comprised of Western Monmouth County municipalities along with Jackson and Monroe Townships. Their CHNA contains a forward, mission and vision, community served by the hospital, process and methods, identified health needs, significant health needs, implementation plans, and monitoring/evaluation. Significant health needs identified in their *CHNA FY2013* are heart disease, obesity, and access to primary care. Specific implementation plans to address these identified significant health needs are detailed in the CHNA as well.

Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, a member of Barnabas Health System, produced the *Monmouth Medical Center Community Health Needs Assessment 2013*. This CHNA includes an introduction, a methodology, an overview of Monmouth County, and a Monmouth County/Service Area Health Profile consisting of Health Outcomes and Health Factors along with an assets and gaps analysis. Health Factors analyzed include socioeconomic status, access to care, clinical care measures, health behaviors, physical environment, and behavioral health. This assessment identified the five top health issues as addressing the needs of the "frequent flyer" (patients who are willfully abusing access to emergency care), prevention and management of chronic diseases, physician prescribing patterns with regards to narcotics, pharmacy counseling for geriatric patients, and care transitions.

These types of assessements increase hospital capacity to better serve residents and address their health care needs while improving community relationships and engagement. The intention of these CHNAs is for hospitals to take a proactive lead in creating healthy communities.

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps- Building a Culture of Health, County by County: This program is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. The goals of this program are to create awareness of the many factors influencing health, provide reliable local data to communities, engage local leaders from many sectors in creating sustainable communities, and empower community leaders working to improve health. The *County Health Rankings* measure policies and programs, vital health factors of the physical environment, social and economic factors, clinical care, and health behaviors, and health outcomes including length of life and quality-of-life. The *Monmouth County Overall Rank* provides a snapshot of how health is influenced where we live, learn, work, and play. The *Roadmaps to Health* provide strategies to move from education to action along with guidance and tools to understand the data.

Figure 11.2 **Source: RWJF**

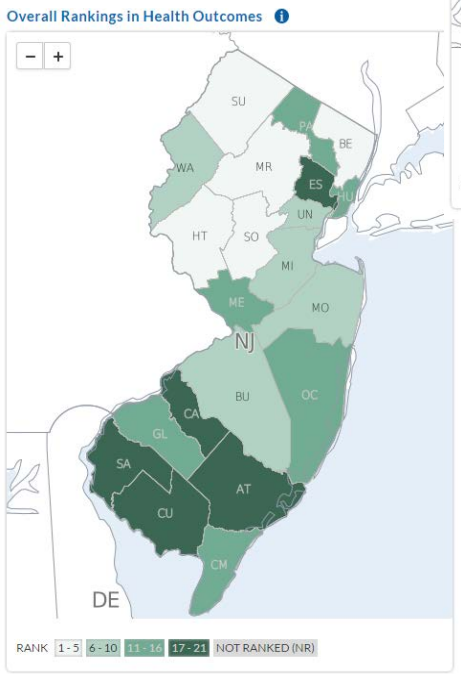
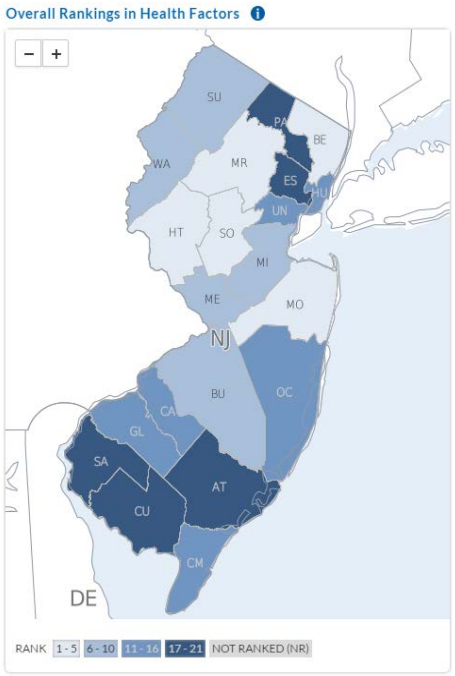


Figure 11.3 **Source: RWJF**



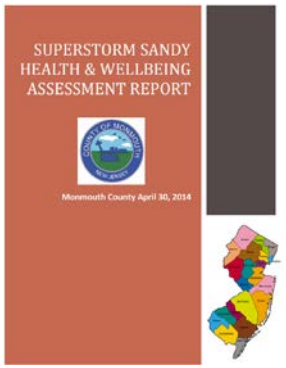
As seen in Figure 11.2: Overall Rankings in Health Outcomes, the 2015 report ranked Monmouth County 6th amongst all 21 New Jersey counties in Health Outcomes; a measure of the current health of the county-based on a combination of length of life (premature death) and quality-of-life (poor or fair health, poor physical health days, poor mental health days, and low birth weight).

Monmouth County also ranked 5th in an analysis of the Health Factors that influence a county's current and future health, including health behaviors (adult smoking, adult obesity, physical inactivity, teen births, access to exercise opportunities, etc.), clinical care (uninsured, diabetic

monitoring, preventable hospital stays, etc.), social and economic factors (children in poverty, income inequality, unemployment, etc.), and the physical environment (air pollution, severe housing problems, long commute, etc.). This is displayed in Figure 11.3: Overall Rankings in Health Factors.

Monmouth County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP): In 2005, the Health Improvement Coalition of Monmouth County, a partnership of representatives from the Monmouth County and Freehold Departments of Health, Meridian and CentraState Healthcare Systems, community organizations, educational institutions and citizens, joined forces to improve the health and well-being of Monmouth County residents. Their mission was to develop a plan to meet the needs of the citizens by identifying and addressing the issues and challenges of a healthy lifestyle. The vision for the countywide health improvement plan was "to be a model community committed to empowering all residents to achieve optimum health." The first *CHIP* was developed in 2007 with the updated *Monmouth County, New Jersey Community Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016* released in 2011 following a review of the updated health statistics compiled as part of surveys and focus group responses. After a review of the assessment findings, the coalition prioritized the health needs of the county to determine which issues were the most severe as well as those that the coalition would be able to address. In September of 2011, the coalition adopted the three key community health priorities, discussed in 11.2.2 Monmouth County Existing Conditions.

Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan: As required by legislation in 1977, Monmouth County adopted its first *Solid Waste Management Plan* in 1979. This plan identifies existing solid waste management practices and facilities to assist in determining future anticipated waste disposal needs and practices for the county. The most recent *Solid Waste Management Plan*, including revisions and an update pursuant to the *NJ State Plan*, was adopted by the Freeholders in 2009.



Superstorm Sandy Health & Wellbeing Assessment: Superstorm Sandy, one of the most destructive storms to hit the Northeast coast, resulted in an unprecedented emergency response by many county agencies to assist in disaster relief for those impacted by the storm. In 2013, the Monmouth County Health Department received federal grant funding for the purposes of assessing and coordinating recovery activities that would address health, behavioral health, and social services needs associated with the aftermath of the storm. The 2014 assessment sought to identify the existing recovery efforts and needs of survivors to determine their future needs as part of a Long-Term Recovery Plan. Some of the recommendations from the assessment included working closely with healthcare providers to address post-Sandy related health issues, creating a network of information in multiple formats and raising awareness to health and social needs available to Sandy survivors and first responders, as well as an understanding of potential health impacts associated with disasters.

11.2.2 Monmouth County Existing Conditions

Monmouth County CHIP: The *2012-2016 CHIP* focuses on three major issues facing the county along with the goals and indicators that will assist in developing and implementing strategies to target each issue. The three key health issues are:

1. **Risk Factors for Heart Disease:** Considered the number one cause of death in the county, 81.4% of adult Monmouth County residents have at least one risk factor for heart disease.
2. **Obesity and Overweight for Children and Families:** Lifestyle also plays a key role in an individual's body weight and health. With a rise in obesity creating health related issues, over 62% of adults and almost 29% of children ranging in age from 6 to 17 are at risk of developing heart disease and diabetes as a result of their status as overweight or obese.
3. **Access to Comprehensive Health Care:** The lack of adequate health care and access to affordable health care has created an increase in the uninsured and underinsured in the county each year.

AARP Public Policy Institute Livability Index: In 2015, AARP developed the Livability Index, a web-based tool to measure community livability. AARP defines a livable community as "one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life." The index provides an overall livability score, from 1 to 100, at address, neighborhood, or county-level. The score is calculated using a holistic approach that takes into account seven livability categories: housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity. For each category, the index evaluates current conditions using a diverse set of metric indicators, and considers policies and programs that can enhance community livability over time.

Overall, the county was found to be average in terms of overall livability, with a livability score of 51. The county ranked above average for neighborhood, health, engagement, and opportunity. The highest scoring category was engagement, which the county scored 61 due to the county's high internet access rate. The county ranked below average for housing, transportation, and environment. Livability indices are relative to a location and can vary widely from place to place within the county. For example, although engagement indices are above average, SCAN (Social Community Activities Network) has been working on bridging the digital divide for low income seniors, many of whom are prevented from accessing substantial information, services, family and friends; affecting their ability to stay connected in the larger community. The most effective way to raise Livability Indices is by focusing healthy community initiatives on improving below average categories that affect our highest at-risk and most vulnerable populations.

Food Access and Nutrition: One of the greatest challenges to maintaining a healthy community is meeting the nutritional needs of its population. Created by Feeding America, a national network of food banks, the Map the Meal Gap research project was an opportunity to conduct a national study of the impact of hunger at the local level in order to identify the needs and strategies for communities to address hunger. The results of their research found approximately 10% of the population in Monmouth County is comprised of food insecure individuals, who lack adequate access to food sources at some point in time; whereas the overall food insecurity rate in NJ is estimated to be 12.4%; approximately 1.1 million of the 8.9 million individuals that make up the state's population. Of Monmouth County's total population under the age of 18, 15.3% are children living in food insecure households. USDA describes food insecurity as not having enough food due to lack of access or unavailability of adequate nutrition choices to all members of a household to maintain a healthy lifestyle. In many instances, the choice must be made between putting healthy food on the table versus meeting the basic needs of a sustainable life that may include paying bills

to assure a place to live. In Monmouth County, 4.3% of low-income individuals do not have access to a grocery store within close proximity to their home. (2011 Food Insecurity & Food Cost In the U.S.) (2011 Child Food Insecurity & Food Cost in the U.S.)

Potable Water Quality/Quantity: One of the key components of a healthy community is the availability of a clean water supply to meet the needs of its residents. Providing potable drinking water for human and animal needs as well as the protection of water resources for aquatic life, agriculture, recreational, and other uses requires safeguarding surface and ground water from pollution generated from wastewater and stormwater discharges as well as other sources of nonpoint pollution. The protection of water recharge areas is also necessary to ensure the continual replenishment of the ground water supply to our aquifers.

The protection of drinking involves long-term planning and the implementation of programs that can limit certain types and the amount of development to prevent potential contamination near water supplies and sources. Maintaining water quality is more cost effective than the cost of cleanup of contamination afterwards (see Elements 3.0 Natural Resources and 7.0 Utilities).

As a major water purveyor for Monmouth County, New Jersey American Water (NJAW) provides an average of 43 million gallons per day to its customers. The Coastal North System provides groundwater from the Potomac-Raritan-Magothy Aquifer (PRM) and surface water from the Glendola Reservoir, Manasquan River Reservoir, Shark River, and Swimming River Reservoir to the Shrewsbury area. The Howell area of the system includes one surface water supply and 15 wells, the sources of which includes the Englishtown, Kirkwood-Cohansey, Mount Laurel-Wenonah, Potomac-Raritan-Magothy and Upper Potomac-Raritan-Magothy and Vincentown aquifers. NJAW also provides approximately 500,000 gallons of water per day to Union Beach customers from the PRM aquifer and Swimming River Reservoir. NJAW releases Water Quality Reports outlining the source and quality of the Coastal North System's drinking water including a Coastal North Basic Water Quality Summary and Coastal North Detailed Water Quality Report in 2015.

Recreational Activity Opportunities: Most municipalities provide opportunities for physical activity, social gatherings, and health and wellness programming at municipally owned and maintained parks and recreation facilities. Information can be found on individual municipal websites or by contacting local Recreation departments. In addition to the municipal and county park offerings, the State of New Jersey provides additional open space for the purposes of natural resource conservation, historic preservation, wildlife habitat, and recreation at the following locations:

Peaceful sunset in Keansburg Borough
Source: Joe Barris

- Allaire State Park which includes Historic Allaire Village
- Monmouth Battlefield State Park
- Seven Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) including Assunpink, Imlaystown Lake, Manasquan River, Navesink River, Pleasant Run, Shark River Access and Turkey Swamp
- Two golf courses including Cream Ridge and Spring Meadow
- A state marina located in Leonardo (Middletown).

Gateway National Recreation Area, which borders the Atlantic Ocean and Sandy Hook Bay, provides visitors with multiple year-round recreational opportunities including hiking, bathing, bird and seal watching, and the seven-mile long Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) used by cyclists, walkers, and joggers as well as the opportunity to visit the oldest lighthouse in the U.S.. In addition, visitors may tour the historic Fort Hancock, commissioned by the U.S. Army in 1895 to protect the NY Harbor and decommissioned in 1975. Fort Hancock is now under the authority of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Monmouth County's federal, state, and county open space parks and facilities are displayed in Figure 4.1: Monmouth County Open Space and Parkland Map. Refer to Element 4.0 Open Space for more information on recreational activity opportunities in the county.

Lead Exposure: Children's exposure to lead hazards continues to be a problem in a number of Monmouth County communities. The CDC has lowered the level of concern and the state of NJ has bills before the Assembly and Senate to do the same. Lead pipes in older dwellings may contribute to increased lead levels in children. The increased lead levels can have high societal costs. Special Education, criminal justice costs, and long-term social service needs are all associated with increased childhood lead levels. Removing lead based paint from dwellings is the best way to prevent childhood lead poisoning and ensure safe and healthy housing for future generations. The work must be done following lead safe work practices. When extensive work is being conducted, residents should be relocated and may only return once the work is completed.

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

During 2015, 9,885 children under the age of six, living in Monmouth County were screened for elevated lead levels. Of those screened 245 children had lead levels that exceed the CDC's level of concern of 5 micrograms per deciliter of lead. This translates to 2.5% of the children screened had elevations. It is important for residents to be aware of the dangers of lead hazards and to ensure that all children are screened.

Monmouth County Junior Master Garden Grow Team Program through Master Gardeners of Monmouth County
Source: Mary Ellen Scott

Junior Master Gardener growing good kids

11.3 Emerging Issues and Long Range Challenges

A meeting of the Healthy Communities Working Group was held during 2014, with several follow-up staff to staff meetings between the Environmental and Sustainability staff and members of the Monmouth County Health Department (MCHD). During the meetings, discussions focused on some of the health-related issues facing Monmouth County. A number of the concerns discussed by the group have already been touched upon in Section 11.2 Existing Conditions but deserve further consideration for the purposes of improving and enhancing a community's health and well-being. Also, through extensive research and discussion, additional emerging issues were identified by staff during the drafting of this *Master Plan* Element. Some of the notable concerns identified by the Working Group, MCHD, and Division of Planning staff include the following.

11.3.1 Emerging Public Health Issues

- There is a need for improved communication and access between primary care physicians, hospital care and/or continued medical care
- Physicians need to educate parents on the actual and perceived risks associated with childhood vaccinations.
- There is a continuous public heath threat caused by the potential outbreak and spread of both infectious and communicable diseases.
- There needs to be more effective outreach and treatment that deals with the rise of preventable chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.
- The *Monmouth County, New Jersey Community Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016* and previously identified hospital CHNAs detail high levels of child and adult obesity with goals to reduce the prevalence of obesity in children and families living in Monmouth County. Obesity has long-term health risks such as type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart disease, and several types of cancer.
- There are many health consequences of failing septic systems including groundwater contamination, bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Municipalities and homeowners need to be proactive in ensuring their system is properly maintained running during its design lifespan.
- Increase threat of vector-borne diseases stemming from climate change and emerging from other regions of the country is compounded by the spread of international diseases attributed to global trade and travel.
- The NJ Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse released the *2014 Report Confronting New Jersey's New Drug Problem: A Strategic Action Plan to Address A Burgeoning Heroin/Opiate Epidemic Among Adolescents and Young Adults*. The report indicates "heroin and other opiates has become the number one health care crisis confronting New Jersey" and "drug overdose deaths now surpass the number of deaths resulting from motor vehicles accidents, which has always been the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S." The CDC reports across the nation some of the greatest increases in heroin use are among women, the privately insured, and people with higher incomes. The expanding use of this drug and an alarming increase in the number of reported overdoses has caused Monmouth County officials to declare a 'heroin epidemic' in 2013 (NJ.com).

11.3.2 Emerging Public Safety Issues

- Hazard mitigation planning needs to look more at localized issues such as temporary debris management, at-risk utilities (e.g. pump-stations, electric grid, etc.), temporary housing for out-of-state support teams (e.g. American Red Cross volunteers, utility workers, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff, etc.), and better use of transportation assets (e.g. evacuation routes, local airports, major highways, etc.).

- Active shooters planning, training, and integration among various entities can save lives. It is critical to have coordinated, interagency responses when such devastating events occur. Comprehensive planning for these events is vital and incorporates mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. These events are emotionally powerful and can have longstanding effects on a community. Psychological and emotional support along with mental health services need to be readily available.
- The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) recently released the Disaster Debris Management Planning Tool Kit for New Jersey Municipalities (2015). These new guidelines encourage municipalities to conduct pre-disaster planning and develop emergency debris management plans in coordination with the Monmouth County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Monmouth County Recycling and Solid Waste Planning Office. The guidelines state each municipality has to submit a designated Temporary Debris Management Area (TDMA).

11.3.3 Emerging Mental, Physical, and Social Well-being Issues

- NJ has the highest rates in the nation with 1 in 41 or 2.5% of children identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). New data released in 2016 depicts a 12% increase from two years ago. Communities need to plan for family services and adult accommodations for residents with special needs. High quality educational programs and treatment services for children with ASD are also encouraged (AutismNJ.org).
- Recognition of environmental justice conflicts is important so that when developing, implementing, and enforcing environmental policies, regulations, and laws all people and populations are provided the same level of protection from environmental health hazards.
- Residents are still living with the aftermath and recovery from Superstorm Sandy's devastation. For many, the physical loss, stress, and anxiety remain. This means it is important to continue mental health and wellness services for our residents through innovative programs, education, advocacy, and community partnerships.
- According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), research shows that some people who are injured or ill recover faster when they are exposed to open, undeveloped land, also known as green space. Planning needs to consider accessibility to green spaces as an important cornerstone of healthy community design.

11.3.4 Emerging Environmental Health Issues

- There is a need for sustainable wildlife management practices which promote native species and control nuisance/invasive species.
- Invasive species have the potential to alter our county's natural landscapes. The MCPS provides information regarding Protecting the Open Space Landscapes of Monmouth County. The NJ Invasive Species Strike Team works to prevent the spread of these species and provides valuable resources along with an interactive invasive species map.
- Protect both surface and groundwater quantity and quality.
- Municipalities should be proactive in planning for climate adaptation. Measures are discussed further in Element 12.0 Community Resiliency.
- Improving environmental health through proper containment and mitigation of contamination sources, especially on those sites associated with brownfield remediation and undergoing redevelopment.

Implications of Smoking

Cigarette smoking overall among adults in the nation is down yet remains high among populations with low education, males, young adults, disabled, certain race/ethnicities, lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, and populations below the poverty level (CDC). Meridian Health's *2015 CHNA* reports 15.1% of their service area currently smoke cigarettes. Prevention and cessation educational programs known to effectively reduce smoking, save lives, and save money for are recommended.

In 2016, Hawaii became the first state to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21. NJ legislation is currently proposing passing similar measures. While NJ allows municipalities to pass more stringent local laws regarding tobacco use, several municipalities have increased the age to 21 including Princeton, Highland Park, Sayreville, and Teaneck. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids notes that raising the age to 21 would significantly reduce smoking (NewsWorks). Numerous municipalities in Monmouth County have passed ordinances regarding smoking on beaches and public recreation areas.

NJ also became the first state to ban e-cigarette use in bars and restaurants during 2010. The *2015 National Youth Tobacco Survey* released by the CDC reported from 2011 to 2015 a huge rise in the use of e-cigarettes among high school studies 1.5% to 16%. E-cigarette use is also increasing in adults. Although they are intended to help smokers end the use of cigarettes, future and long-term health implications of e-cigarettes are not known at this time.

11.3.5 Emerging Housing Related Issues

- When lead contaminated homes receive remediation, families are often left with no place to live. Housing relocation options need to be established to ensure normality.
- There are no local, state, or federal regulations governing mold contamination in residential dwellings. The NJ Department of Health provides Mold Guidelines for New Jersey Residents. However, more education and outreach needs to be promoted to residents.
- Replacing existing, older, smaller, housing stock with larger, more resilient a types of housing will price some longtime residents of the shore out of their own housing market and preclude subsequent generations from affording homes in the neighborhoods and hometowns they grew up in.
- There needs to be a mix of housing choices in any given community that will enable populations to more readily cycle through different life-stages, giving residents an opportunity to age in place.

11.3.6 Emerging Mobility and Access Issues

- CentraState's *CHNA FY2013* states "many individuals in parts of the county, including minority populations in the Boro of Freehold in western Monmouth County, suffer with a lack of health insurance or have insurance that is accepted by too few providers (e.g. Medicaid)." Furthermore, the data indicates "that the number of uninsured and underinsured has steadily increased each year." Meridian Health's *2015 CHNA* for Monmouth and Ocean Counties details difficulties accessing services, barriers to access, and lack of health insurance coverage. Findings of the report indicate 38.5% of adults report some type of difficulty or delay in obtaining healthcare services in the past year with women, adults under the age of 65, lower-income residents, and Hispanics more often reporting difficulties. Barriers include prescription and doctor's visit costs. The

Monmouth County, New Jersey Community Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016 also details accessibility barriers.

- Elevating houses will lead to emergency responder and elderly accessibility issues along with dangers during inclement weather.
- Improved accessibility to human services and vital community resources for a growing aging and special needs populations requires better accommodations.

11.3.7 Emerging Community Design Issues

- Use design as a tool to promote more physical activity and walking; create safer public areas and spaces; improve access to healthy food options to improve eating habits and reducing obesity concerns; accommodate alternative methods of transportation and mobility; and protect/enhance the environment.
- Maximize social connectivity.
- Include a range of mobility options for an aging population.
- The CDC recognizes community design influences both physical and mental health and wellbeing. (Healthy Community Design Video)

11.3.8 Long Range Challenges: During workshop sessions, the Healthy Communities Working Group also identified several Long Range Challenges that they believe will require further consideration well beyond this *Master Plan's* 10-year lifecycle.

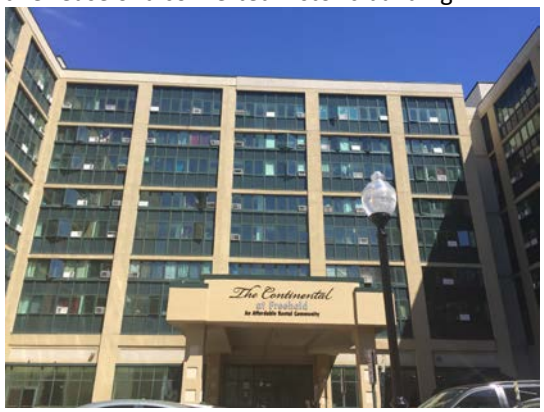
- Our communities continue to recover from Superstorm Sandy's destruction. Impending related health issues to Superstorm Sandy include: potential increase in lead dust, mold, trip/fall/puncture injuries, the mental health of our residents, home elevation encumbering mobility (relocation and accessibility), and new government guidelines/mandates that may be cost prohibitive to continued home ownership.
- The public and elected officials need a better understanding and awareness of what components comprise a healthy community and how this subject fits into the broader context of sustainability.
- The growing drug epidemic threatens the safety and security of families and neighbors while undermining the community's bonds, safety, desirability, resources, money, and talent. Monmouth County Prosecutor, Christopher Gramiccioni, recently stated in a press conference following his permanent appointment announcement that "people will often talk to me about what is killing the most people in Monmouth County, and there is a misconception that it's violent crime or vehicular accidents. Those are certainly terrible, but it pales in comparison to the heroin and opiate deaths," adding the county has averaged about 80 heroin or opiate-related deaths over the last few years. He notes the pilot naloxone program is a rousing success in the county. (NJ.com)
- Private investment and property value in a community are often influenced by the crime and safety perceptions.
- There is a need to better integrate new technology into healthy community approaches (data, movement, locations, access).
- The region's economy will respond to the needs and services of an aging population beyond that of health and mental services.
- Local, accessible, and comprehensive health services remains out of reach for some residents.
- There needs to be an acknowledgement and strengthening of programs that address the association between housing conditions and accessibility to better housing and the physical and mental health of residents.
- Development remains vulnerable in floodprone areas.
- Protection of water supply and water quality remains a natural resource priority.

- A diminishing supply of developable land in Monmouth County has become the incentive to identify brownfield redevelopment opportunities that can provide the mechanism to revitalize a struggling local economy. A Brownfield is "any former or current commercial or industrial site, currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been, or there is suspected to have been, a discharge of a contaminant" (Brownfield and Contaminated Site Remediation Act, N.J.S.A. 58:10B-1 et seq.). For land that has become nonproductive due to confirmed or perceived environmental contamination, redevelopment and reuse of such sites provides an opportunity to improve the quality of the environment, quality-of-life for its residents and subsequently increases economic incentives and revenue at the local level. The New Jersey Business Action Center's Office for Planning Advocacy provides guidance and resources for the redevelopment of brownfields into locations that will enhance the local economy as well as restore its environment.

Local Brownfield Redevelopment

Three local examples of successful brownfields remediation projects in Monmouth County include the redevelopment of the former **Manasquan Borough Hall property** into residential townhouses and the cleanup and redevelopment of the former Keyport Public Works yard into the **Keyport Waterfront Park.**

The former **A&M Karagheusian Rug Mill** located in Freehold Borough, once considered one of the major employers in Monmouth County in the early 1900s, fell victim to abandonment and deterioration after a fire destroyed the building. Following the remediation of lead and asbestos contamination, common in structures built during that time period, the Rug Mill became home for low-income and senior citizens as a mixed-use project that included housing, office, and retail space. An example of adaptive reuse of a converted historic building.



The Continental at Freehold:
An Affordable Rental Community
Source: Mary Ellen Scott

In 2004, the Monmouth County Planning Board published *The Brownfields Redevelopment Handbook: A Step-by-Step Guide for Municipalities*.

The former site of the Lily Tulip plant, where Dixie cups were once made, was transformed into a shopping center, the Commons at Holmdel, and an active adult community, Cedar Village.
Source: Steven daCosta

11.4 Healthy Communities Stakeholder Actions and Efforts

11.4.1 Monmouth County Efforts

A number of county agencies and departments are involved in programming that supports healthy communities.

Monmouth County Health Department (MCHD): Comprised with a diverse background of health professionals, the staff of the MCHD provides information and guidance on health related topics to the residents of Monmouth County. The Health Department's speaker's bureau conducts training on public health and safety topics that may affect residents. Grant funding has enabled the staff to train hundreds of residents on how to maintain a healthy home following the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. Community organizations are encouraged to contact the MCHD for public health and safety informational opportunities.

The MCHD provides assistance to other county departments and local health departments in all aspects of water quality monitoring to address water pollution issues. Since 1987, the MCHD in cooperation with NJDEP has conducted surface water monitoring as required under the County Environmental Health Act (CEHA), N.J.S.A. 26:3 AZ-21 et seq. Some of the objectives of the program are providing background water quality data, tracking data to identify trends over time with relation to land use, and providing support for watershed partnerships. Temperature, Enterococcus, E. coli, and pH, and salinity (of estuary sites) levels are sampled from ten monitored sites throughout the county on a rotating basis. The criteria for collecting and providing the data can be found in

the MCHD Environmental Laboratory's *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Ambient Stream Monitoring (FY2014/2015)*.

The MCHD also monitors the county's coastal bathing beaches weekly for potential bacteria during the bathing season as part of the Cooperative Coastal Monitoring Program (CCMP), administered by NJDEP. The results of the weekly monitoring can be found on the MCHD Beach Sampling webpage. Current beach status, closures, water quality reports, and other important information is also available online.

In 2016, the MCHD launched our county's first public health e-newsletter. Residents can sign up for the free e-newsletter on the county webpage. E-newsletters will contain information on provided services and public health issues affecting residents. Included issues thus far have been topics like rabies clinics, hazardous waste collection, preparing for emergencies, illness prevention, and local health fairs.

Also contained within the MCHD is the Monmouth County's Medical Reserve Corps (see Public Safety, Emergency Management discussion).

Monmouth County Reclamation Center (MCRC): As required by legislation in 1977, Monmouth County adopted its first *Solid Waste Management Plan* in 1979. That plan identified existing solid waste management practices and facilities to assist in determining future anticipated waste disposal needs and practices for the county. Over the years the plan was revised and amended in response to state regulatory changes and requirements. In 2009, following an update to the *NJ State Solid Waste Plan*, the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan* was amended and adopted by the Freeholders. The most recent plan provides an extensive review of existing waste disposal and recycling practices for increasing recycling rates through the implementation of new practices and programs.

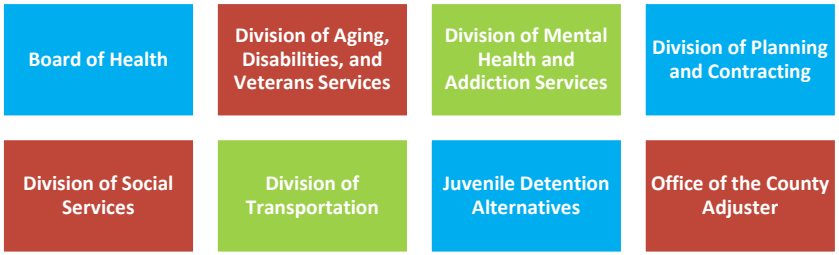
The Monmouth County Recycling and Solid Waste Planning staff provides technical support and guidance to municipalities on solid waste management and recycling activities and conducts educational outreach and training for schools and the general public. With an emphasis on the need to recycle to reduce waste and enhance the environment, the Recycling staff provides training in backyard composting and recycling in the workplace. Staff also generated an annual Recycling Directory to provide all information and resources related to recycling in Monmouth County, 2016 Recycling Directory.

The Recycling and Solid Waste Planning staff works directly with volunteer organizations and municipalities as part of the Monmouth County Clean Communities Program, sponsored by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and funded by an annual NJDEP grant through New Jersey Clean Communities Council. This program focuses on litter abatement, enforcement, and education. All 53 municipalities receive a grant for these purposes based on the miles of roadways in their town and their population. This program works closely with the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Inmate Labor Program, an innovative, tax-saving resource enabling towns to complete labor-intensive projects. Any other entity, business, or volunteer that wishes to initiate or engage in a community service project is encouraged to reach out to this program.

In 2015, Keyport and Matawan were the first towns to receive funding for recycling programs as part of the new Monmouth County Recycling Stimulus Initiative grant program. The intent of the grant program is for municipalities to increase their rates of recycling and to expand the community's awareness of recycling opportunities. Keyport received a

$6,000 grant for recycling containers, a paper shredding event, and for the purchase of educational books on the subject of recycling to be donated to the Central School Library

Department of Human Services: Established by the Board of Chosen Freeholders in 1987, this department works to address the needs of citizens who are struggling with unexpected events and to enhance the overall quality-of-life of Monmouth County residents. The department of Human Services consists of eight divisions including:



Mosquito Control Division: Monmouth County has had an active mosquito control program since 1914. The mission of the Monmouth County Mosquito Control Division is to provide county residents and visitors with protection from arthropod-borne diseases, while maintaining an environmental comfort level that is suitable for the enjoyment of outdoor activities. In 1998, the Board of Chosen Freeholders designated the Mosquito Control Advisory Board as the first Mosquito board in NJ to also provide services to educate residents about tick-borne diseases.

The Mosquito Control Division's program follows an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach where a variety of strategies, methods, and products are used to keep mosquito populations low. Much of the division's efforts involve source control which is the reduction or elimination of the standing water where mosquito larvae flourish. Where possible, the division works with nature to control mosquitoes by introducing fish that eat mosquito larvae or cleaning a stream to improve water flow. The division responds to the public's requests to inspect properties where a mosquito problem is reported. Inspectors look for standing water sources that support mosquito larvae. If larvae are found, the inspector will treat the water and/or eliminate the breeding source if they are able to do so.

Public outreach and education is an important component of the mosquito control program as many mosquitoes emanate from standing water in small containers around the home. The division posts information and resources online about mosquito habitat, prevention, and vector-borne disease information. Presently, there is growing concern over the spread of the Zika virus throughout the U.S.. Although Zika is the most recent public health threat to commandeer media attention, mosquitoes in NJ are more likely to carry other diseases such as West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, Malaria, and other maladies. The division monitors mosquitoes for these viruses as well as emerging diseases including Zika, Dengue, and Chickungunya virus. Ticks pose a similar threat in that they can carry Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and a number of other life-threatening illnesses. The division offers tick-testing of female deer ticks for Lyme disease to county residents and conducts surveillance of tick habitats on public lands to assess tick populations and infection rates.

Division of Planning, Office of Community Development: Providing opportunities for safe and affordable housing options to meet the needs of Monmouth County residents is one of many responsibilities of the Monmouth County Community Development Program. With the assistance of federal funding, projects that target rehabilitation of existing vacant homes, construction of new affordable housing on vacant properties and improvements to infrastructure in areas of low-to moderate-income communities provide new opportunities for residents to reside in a healthier community. Coordinating the requirements of

federally funded programs involves the cooperation from a number of public and private entities from application to project completion. An environmental review of a potential project site must be conducted as a requirement to obtain federal funding to determine compliance with regulatory requirements. Performed by the Environmental and Sustainability Section within the Monmouth County Division of Planning, the environmental review process provides assurance that a project will provide a safe and healthy environment for those who will benefit from a new home, have use of a public facility, and gain from improvements to infrastructure. See Element 10.0 Community Development & Housing.

Public Works and Engineering, Complete Streets Policy: The overarching goal of Complete Streets is to create a community with safe access for all users of all methods of transportation regardless of age or ability to meet the needs associated with a livable and walkable community. Complete Streets is an important component of healthy Community Design. Some of the benefits of Complete Streets include: revitalization of downtowns, improving the health and safety benefits of the population through the encouragement of the use of alternative methods of transportation, and the reduction in environmental impacts and transportation costs associated with traditional transportation methods. New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) created and approved a Complete Streets Policy in 2009 for federal or state funded transportation projects. NJDOT provides assistance to municipalities that wish to adopt similar policies when seeking Local Aid funding. The Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders adopted a Complete Streets Policy on July 22, 2010. In addition to Monmouth County, the following municipalities have adopted resolutions establishing and adopting a Complete Streets Policy:

- Red Bank: 8/9/10
- Freehold Boro: 4/2/12
- Fair Haven: 7/12/12
- Sea Bright: 11/18/13

Note: Also refer to Element 8.0 Transportation & Mobility regarding Monmouth County's Complete Streets Policy.

Division of Planning, Agricultural Sustainability Plan: *Master Plan* Recommendation 9.1 seeks to coordinate the county's agricultural initiatives such as the *Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan* and Grown in Monmouth initiative through one comprehensive guiding document called the *Agricultural Sustainability Plan (ASP).* The aforementioned Grown in Monmouth marketing strategy is the first step in the development of a broader ASP.

Division of Economic Development, Grown in Monmouth Program: The Division of Economic Development, in conjunction with the Division of Planning and Rutgers Cooperative Extension, applied for a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant in October 2014 to obtain funding that will lay the groundwork for a marketing and branding program to be known as Grown in Monmouth. The goal is to provide marketing assistance and business training to small and emerging agricultural producers located in rural areas of the county. Grown in Monmouth aims to connect producers and buyers, expand small agricultural businesses, and contribute to job growth in the local area. The county also sponsors an annual Made in Monmouth Expo each spring that features local producers of food and agricultural products among others crafts and goods. In addition, it publishes a hyper-local holiday shopping

guide on its website. (See Element 9.0 Agricultural & Economic Development)

Monmouth County Public Safety: There are two aspects that Monmouth County Public Safety focuses on: law enforcement and emergency preparedness.

Law Enforcement

Child Seat Safety Checkpoint: As part of a joint effort between the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, a child safety seat program known as Safe C.A.R.G.O. "Children And Restraints GO together", provides voluntary child seat safety checkpoints for inspections of proper car seat installation and potential manufacturer recall. Schedules and locations for checkpoints can be found on the Sheriff's Office website.

Animal Welfare: The Monmouth County Animal Response Team (CART) works under direction of the Monmouth County OEM and Sheriff's Office to facilitate interagency local animal disaster preparedness and response development. The Sheriff's Office also works with municipal animal control offices, the Associated Humane Societies, and the Monmouth County Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MCSPA) to prevent animal cruelty throughout the county. The MSCPA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and advocating for all animals in Monmouth County. The MSPCA is charged with enforcing the State of NJ Animal Cruelty Laws in Monmouth County.

The NJ Department of Health's Office of Animal Welfare establishes the statewide laws and rules addressing animal control, animal facility licensing and sanitary rules, dog licensing, and the training of Animal Control Officers and Animal Cruelty Investigators. They work to ensure sanitary and humane conditions in pet shops and shelters; educate on public health animal-related rules and regulations; promote solutions to animal control and welfare concerns; and promote the humane care of stray, unwanted, and homeless animals through animal control, impoundment, and sheltering throughout the state of New Jersey.

Other Outreach and Educational Programs: Additional opportunities to educate the public on both the role of law enforcement and the assistance of community members in crime prevention are offered as part of the Citizen Police Academy and the Sheriff's Youth Week programs. Instruction on the proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency system is offered through A.C.E.S. (Adults Calling Emergency Services) to both children and adults. The Sheriff's Office and representatives of the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey (BIANJ) visit schools throughout the county to teach the importance of Bicycle Helmet Safety.

Special Projects Unit: The Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office Special Projects Unit, the community outreach segment of the Prosecutor's Office, provides training on crime prevention and public safety. Members of the Speakers Bureau will address topics related to bias and community relations; the criminal justice system; juvenile crime and safety (including Internet safety); gangs, drugs and violence; sexual assault; and child abuse to community organizations and schools.

Emergency Preparedness

Monmouth County Emergency Operations Plan, Office of Emergency Management (OEM): This 2013 plan was created and implemented by OEM providing guidance on countywide actions necessitated during an emergency. Protecting lives and property of a community involves the efforts of many emergency services including police, fire, medical and other governmental agencies and organizations. When major disasters or events requiring the deployment of a combined effort of services occur, the planned and coordinated response by all to address the impacts of the situation and the resulting recovery needs of those affected is the directive of emergency management. The coordination of emergency management during events warranting emergency

response throughout the county is the responsibility of the OEM within the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT): Originally created by the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1985, a 1987 earthquake emphasized a need for civilians to be trained to respond and assist during times of major disasters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified the need for the assistance of trained civilians during times of crises and in 1993 made training available to communities throughout the country. The Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) Program provides classroom training combined with simulated exercises to prepare individuals with basic disaster response knowledge and skills to provide immediate assistance in emergency situations before and as a supplement to the support of professional emergency response team members. In addition to the county's CERT Team within the OEM, Monmouth County has 11 active municipal CERT Teams as well as regional assistance from CERT Teams representing the NJ TRANSIT Police Department, the U.S. Air Force, the NJ Wing Civil Air Patrol stationed at McGuire AFB, and a team from Monmouth University that responds to campus emergency needs.

Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (OEM): Addressing the impacts of events proactively before their occurrence to reduce the negative effects upon a community is the act of mitigation. Planning in advance for the possible outcomes of disasters can result in a reduction of loss of lives and property and the long-term recovery efforts necessitated when disaster occurs. The resulting effort of advance hazard mitigation planning creates a more sustainable community. With funds provided by FEMA, the *Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan* for Monmouth County *(2015)* was developed with the assistance of all 53 municipalities and input from other stakeholders. The first plan was approved by FEMA in 2009 with requirements for regular monitoring, evaluation, and updates every five years. The current plan was approved by FEMA in April 2015.

11.4.2 Partnership Efforts

Monmouth County Human Relations Commission (MCHRC): The MCHRC was formed in 1990 by a resolution of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. The commission works to promote understanding and tolerance among the many cultural groups in Monmouth County by enhancing human relations and addressing issues proactively. They work to end the causes of bias and discrimination that result in acts of violence, vandalism, and civil right violations. The MCHRC advocates for victims, creates school resources, conducts outreach, educates employees and employers, and works to improve police/community relations. They offer a hate/bias hotline for people to call and confidentially report incidents or complaints relating to age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, or other factors. (Hotline telephone number: 732-303-7666)

Clean Communities Program: Maintaining a healthy and clean community by means of reducing debris and litter in public locations is the goal of the New Jersey Clean Communities program which was formed in 1986 following the passage of the Clean Communities Act. Funding provided by the act is distributed to municipalities and counties annually as state aid. Educational and cleanup programs that involve volunteer participation in environmental renewal provides an opportunity for community members to improve the health and aesthetics of their surroundings, while at the same time improving the environmental quality of the community. Administered by the New Jersey Clean Communities Council, in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the New Jersey Department of Treasury, additional volunteer cleanup programs include New Jersey's Adopt-A-Beach and Adopt-A-Highway programs.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC): Following the events of 9/11, the Federal Government created an organization of professionals and laypersons to respond in times of emergencies within their communities. MRC includes individuals with healthcare skills as well as

volunteers who are trained in emergency response to provide additional resources to existing emergency and public health teams within their municipalities. In the absence of emergency situations requiring their assistance, members of the MRC also provide education and outreach to communities to better prepare residents for potential crises. The State of NJ created the New Jersey Medical Reserve Corps (NJMRC) within the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management as part of the New Jersey Citizen Corps program. This program provides opportunities for all members of a community, within their capabilities and area of interest and expertise, to assist those in need during all types of emergency events.

The **Monmouth County's Medical Reserve Corps** includes volunteers trained to respond to emergencies and to present at educational events throughout the county. With the increase in unforeseen emergencies continuing to rise, the need for additional members to join the team also increases. Individuals interested in assisting their community in this capacity can apply through the Monmouth County Health Department.

Health Improvement Coalition of Monmouth County (HICMC): The HICMC is an ongoing coalition focusing on the implementation of the 2012-2016 Monmouth County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The coalition consists of county officials, local health department staff, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and community representatives. Efforts have begun on the 2017-2021 CHIP.

New Jersey Department of Agriculture Programs

Jersey Fresh: As an educational marketing program for consumers of agricultural products, Jersey Fresh has created awareness to the importance of quality, variety, and availability of NJ grown produce.

Jon Bon Jovi (JBJ) Soul Kitchen

With two current locations, in Red Bank and Toms River (Ocean County), JBJ Soul Kitchen offers an innovative way to address local food security barriers. Run by the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation, the JBJ Soul Kitchen is a *pay it forward* community restaurant where guests can enjoy a farm-to-table, healthy meal. Guests can either pay for the meal or volunteer in the JBJ Soul Kitchen as their form of payment. One hour of volunteer time in the kitchen is equivalent to a dining certificate that feeds the volunteer and up to four family members. Volunteering in the kitchen also provides culinary training and skill building. Those that do pay for the dinner can also pay it forward to someone else's meal. Prices are not listed on the menu and the guest selects their donation. Opened in 2011, world renounced guest chefs visiting the JBJ Soul Kitchen have included Diane Hendericks, Todd English, Mario Batali, and Tom Colicchio. Meals include a three-course American cuisine often times harvested from their organic, onsite garden. The mission of the JBJ Soul Kitchen is to address issues of food insecurity while allowing diners the dignity of a meal without judgment.

The JBJ Soul Foundation furthered local philanthropy by collaborating with the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties and the Peoples Pantry to create the B.E.A.T. (Bringing Everyone All Together) Center in Ocean County. This one stop shop serves as a FoodBank satellite location including a food distribution center, culinary training, at-risk after school children programs, and health care and free tax preparation.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture provides locally grown commodities to many different outlets including retail stores, restaurants, and schools, in order to reach those who desire the freshest fruits and vegetables that provide the best quality, greatest amount of nutrients, and excellent flavor for a healthy and nutritious diet. Reduction in the time from harvest to consumption as well as promoting and supporting sustainable agriculture in the Garden State are the driving forces behind the program.

Division of Food and Nutrition: The division administers the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Summer Food Service Program, Child and Adult Day Care Food Program, Family Day Care Program, Commodity Food Distribution Program and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Providing healthy and nutritious food to those in need is the work of these programs. Child and Adult Care Food Program provide nutritious meals and snacks to daycare centers and family daycare homes, homeless shelters, and after school programs to assure a well-balanced meal can be obtained by everyone in need. Food banks and pantries receive food donations from the Federal Government to be distributed as part of TEFAP.

Jersey Fresh Farm to School: Improving the health and performance of students through proper nutrition and awareness of the importance of consuming fresh and healthy products are some of the objectives of this initiative. Schools are able to obtain fresh agricultural products provided by local growers that will not only provide healthy meal options to students but will also support the local farming industry. The program also provides educational opportunities to apply farming knowledge to all areas of education through onsite school gardens.

FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties: In Monmouth County, the mission of the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties is to alleviate hunger and build food security in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

Community gardens, like the Oceanport Community Garden, offer residents an opportunity to grow fresh produce and herbs
Source: Mary Ellen Scott

Monmouth County Crime Prevention/Community Policing Association (MCCPOA): As the means to promote crime prevention awareness through outreach and education, the MCCPOA, a nonprofit organization comprised of civil and law enforcement representatives, was created to provide Monmouth County residents and community members with the skills and opportunities they would need to assure a safe environment for their communities. Law enforcement representatives include officers involved in programs such as D.A.R.E. and TRIAD targeted at

educating age specific populations including schools and senior citizens. Educational programs are offered by the association to individuals and community organizations to increase awareness and knowledge in areas such as home and business security, personal safety, risk management, and identification of potential scams. MCCPOA also provides community members with assistance to create Neighborhood Watch Programs as a means to take control of their communities through crime prevention.

Monmouth Arts: Enhancing a community's quality-of-life through the arts is the foundation for the work of the Monmouth Arts. Through grants, education, special events, and other programs, community members have the opportunity to support and participate in cultural experiences that can unite and enrich a community through music, art, and theatre. (Refer to Element 6.0 Arts, Historic, & Cultural Resources)

The **Monmouth County Long-Term Recovery Group** continues to assist individuals and families by assessing and meeting their recovery needs with the goal of restoring and rebuilding communities through long-term planning and access to available resources.

11.5 Additional Resources and Funding Opportunities

Public Health

- American Planning Association (APA) and the American Public Health Association collaborated to develop Plan4Health
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Community Health Improvement Navigator
  - Community Health Status Indicators (CHSI 2015)
  - Division of Community Health (DCH)
    - National Implementation and Dissemination for Chronic Disease Prevention
    - Partnerships to Improve Community Health
    - Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health.
  - National Environmental Health Tracking Network
  - *Planning and Health Resource Guide for Designing and Building Healthy Neighborhoods*
- Feeding America:
  - Map the Meal Gap
- FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties
- National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)
- New Jersey Hospitals Association (NJHA)
  - Keep NJ Healthy
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)
  - A Culture of Health
  - New Jersey Health Initiatives
  - New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids
- Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County (RCE)
  - Family and Community Health Science Department
  - Get Moving-Get Healthy New Jersey
  - New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) housed in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
- Rutgers Against Hunger (RAH)
- State of New Jersey Department of Health
  - Federally Qualified Health Centers
  - New Jersey Environmental Public Health Tracking Program (EPHT)
  - ShapingNJ
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- YMCA
  - Healthier Communities Initiatives (HCI)
    - Making the Case to Stakeholders: Linking Policy and Environmental Strategies to Health Outcomes Guide

Public Safety

Refer to 11.4 Healthy Communities Stakeholder Actions and Efforts.

Mental, Physical, and Social Well-being

- CPC Behavior Healthcare
- Guide to Mental Health Services in Monmouth County
- Mental Health Association of Monmouth County
- MHA – Mental Health Association of Monmouth County

Environmental Impacts

- Department of State
  - New Jersey Office for Planning Advocacy Redevelopment/Brownfield Program
    - Brownfields Redevelopment Task Force
      - Brownfields SiteMart: New Jersey's Online Searchable Database for Brownfield Properties
      - Brownfields InterAgency Team
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
  - Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP)
    - Drinking Water Watch
  - Office of Brownfield Reuse (OBR)
    - Site Remediation Program (SRP)
      - Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund (HDSRF) a partnership with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA).
      - Known Contaminated Sites Report
      - NJDEP's Data Miner
- New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (NJEIT)
- New Jersey Water Savers
- Rutgers Master Gardener Program of Monmouth County
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
  - Brownfields Program
  - Compliance Assistance Centers
  - Environmental Health Resources for Community Members
  - Local Government Environmental Assistance Network (LGEAN)
    - International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

Housing

See 10.0 Community Development & Housing Element for Additional Resources and Funding Opportunities related to Housing.

Mobility and Access

- New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center
- New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT):
  - Complete Streets Policy
    - Making Complete Streets a Reality: A Guide to Policy Development
    - New Jersey's Guide to Creating a Complete Streets Implementation Plan
  - Meadowlink (discussed further in 8.0 Transportation & Mobility Element) is the designated SRTS Regional Coordinator for Monmouth County.
  - Safe Routes to School (SRTS)
    - New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center
    - SRTS Infrastructure Grant Program
- Smart Growth America, National Complete Streets Coalition
- U.S. Department of Transportation
  - Transportation and Health Tool

Community Design

- Center for Disease Control (CDC) Healthy Places
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
  - Center for Sustainable Communities
- LEED Neighborhood Design (LEED-ND)
- New Jersey Redevelopment Authority (NJRA)
  - New Jersey Redevelopment Investment Fund (RIF)
  - New Jersey Urban Site Acquisition (NJUSA) Program
- Sustainable Jersey (SJ)

11.6 Master Plan Recommendations and Stakeholder Strategies

Six *Master Plan* Recommendations and numerous Stakeholder Strategies were identified from Working Group meetings and additional input from stakeholders.

Master Plan Recommendations

Recommendation 11.1: Work with local communities and stakeholders to promote agricultural sustainability through healthy food choice initiatives such as access to affordable, healthy foods and the creation of community gardens, urban agriculture programs, mobile food stands/food truck courts, and farmers markets. Providing communities with better access to healthy food choices often requires partnerships and coordination with likeminded stakeholders working together, to assist communities with their assessment of healthy food availability and the identification of opportunities to provide for better food choices. Agricultural activity in the county provides a foundation for sustainable and healthy communities. Preserved farmland will continue be a source for local food production that helps secure the sustainability of our local agricultural industry while at the same time ensures that locally grown, fresh quality food remains a viable option for consumers.

Recommendation 11.2: Continue to protect human health by assisting with the identification and removal of environmental hazards from the community and raising awareness about public health issues. Provide assistance to agencies in identifying environmental hazards that threaten public health along with the best methods in which to eradicate them. The use of all available sources of technology will better inform the public about environmental health issues.

Recommendation 11.3: Provide planning support and services to the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office and Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office for public safety, law enforcement, crime prevention, and emergency response. Planning for public safety and emergency response requires coordination among state, county, and local agencies and departments. Promoting planning methods, such as flood mapping, with the use of all available and emerging technologies, will increase a community's ability to adapt to and overcome the impacts resulting from an emergency or disaster.

Recommendation11.4: Incorporate the *Monmouth County Solid Waste Management Plan (2009)* as a component of the Monmouth County Master Plan's Healthy Communities Element. By working together, county departments can provide a well-rounded planning and programming approach for a healthy county. As a result of collective efforts between county departments involved in promoting recycling and solid waste to municipal stakeholders, a greater awareness of the benefits of solid waste planning exists.

Recommendation 11.5: Incorporate by reference the *Monmouth County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) (2012)* as a component of the Healthy Communities Element and include studies, reports, and findings from the Monmouth County Health Department (MCHD) and other local health departments as consultative and supportive documents to the *Master Plan*. The identification and elimination of public health hazards will result in healthier natural and built environments. To effectively plan and implement measures which affect the health and well-being of the county, coordination and collaboration with community stakeholders at all levels must occur. The utilization of reference documents, including documented research reports and studies, compiled by the MCHD in numerous areas of environmental health, becomes important when addressing public health issues. In response to potential health implications caused by natural or manmade disasters, preparation and training are important components of a community's recovery.

Stakeholder Strategies

General

- Evaluate potential public health impacts associated with land use decision-making to enable improvements that will result in healthier communities.
- Plan for 'complete communities' that encourage safe and vibrant street-level activity by minimizing incongruous streetscapes through the implementation of complete street policies, the use of infill and redevelopment for vacant and underutilized properties, and the application of creative placemaking.
- Continue brownfield and closed landfill identification to assist in determining which sites could potentially be redeveloped, adaptively reused, or provide the site of a new useful purpose that is economically viable and protective of human health and the environment.
- Encourage municipalities, schools, hospitals, and other entities to develop active shooter protocols and training similar to that being done at the county.

Arts, Historic, & Cultural Resources

- Encourage the use of design guidelines for new development that emphasize compatibility in size, style, and scale with historic structures and their environs while promoting healthy community lifestyles.
- With an aging population, it becomes increasingly important to offer arts and history programming for the elderly that reduces their isolation from the larger community and contributes towards their continued sense of self-worth.
- Promote the use of arts in youth-at-risk programming (e.g. City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program) and youth engagement (e.g. Howell Police Athletic League Theater Company).
- Use arts programming as one of the methods called upon to help us manage conflict resolution, mental health crisis, and community healing in the wake of a community tragedy or disaster.

Utilities

- Support the use of alternative, renewable energy resources such as geothermal, solar, hydro, tidal, and wind power to reduce the reliance on nonrenewable resources and pollution emissions from fossil fuels.
- Encourage distributed energy generation solutions to improve system efficiency, reliability, and resiliency.
- Encourage water resource conservation while protecting water quality through education, advanced technology, and reuse of captured wastewater.
- Maintain safe and efficient storm and sanitary sewers for safe communities.
- Support infrastructure investments necessary for the continuation of safe, vibrant, and vital communities.

Transportation & Mobility

- Support mobility and accessibility policies that accommodate multi-modal transportation options that:
  - lead to a healthier lifestyle;
  - improve access to recreation facilities, natural/open spaces, job opportunities, and quality/affordable health services;
  - improve pedestrian safety and circulation by means of "complete streets" design guidelines and National Center for Safe Routes to Schools programs; and
  - build, redesign, and better utilize sidewalks, bicycle lanes and networks, and multi-use trails (including equine) to increase mobility within a community and the larger region.
- Encourage municipalities developing mobility plans to consider resident accessibility to health services from community-based treatment clinics to regional trauma centers.

- Prioritize policies that decrease automobile dependency as the prominent mode of transportation.
- Encourage transportation improvements that reduce existing obstacles (e.g. traffic), expedite the local food transportation, and increase pedestrian safety.
- Encourage safe access to all community destinations.
- Work with state, county, and municipal agencies to reduce the distraction and aesthetic nuisance of sign clutter along roadways, particular in historic districts and along scenic roadways.

Agricultural & Economic Development

- Encourage year-round local food production and processing of value-added products to increase food security and economic opportunities for farmers.
- Encourage, promote, and conduct outreach for Monmouth County's Grown in Monmouth initiative.
- Promote the establishment of local food distribution hubs, farmers markets, and other opportunities to increase fresh food accessibility.
- Foster partnerships with FoodCorps and other similar groups that promote healthy food in schools through nutritional education, hands-on gardening, cooking opportunities, and farm to school programs.
- Create mentorship or apprenticeship programs between local businesses and students, specifically in low-income areas where educational resources are scarce.
- Promote private investment in the community that leads to a wider range of job opportunities for local residents.

Community Development & Housing

- Prioritize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program projects that reinforce safe and healthy communities.
- Recognize the need for various types of housing options for all residents, including those with special needs and vulnerable populations (i.e. group homes and senior housing).
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of substandard, underutilized, or abandoned structures for temporary and permanent housing, where appropriate.
- Recognize the direct relationship between healthy communities, housing design standards, and the physical and mental health of residents.
- Promote the use of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Healthy Housing guidelines for housing development and redevelopment projects.
- Ensure all communities use adequate lighting for safety and security purposes.
- Promote adequate trash and recycling receptacles for clean communities.
- Foster programs that intend to improve the economic conditions of lower-income neighborhoods in an effort to improve resident's physical and mental health.
- Incorporating the principles of Healthy Homes into our communities can help abate many housing issues.

Planning Services, Outreach, & Coordination

- Provide for a range of recreational needs and community facilities for a diverse, aging, and multi-generational population.
- Encourage opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, and a sense of community within neighborhoods.
- Encourage collaboration amongst civic organizations and businesses in offering constructive, positive, and supportive projects and programs that engage citizens of all ages, interests, and abilities to reinforce community stewardship and civic values.

- Work with students, educators, and mental health professionals in devising effective anti-bullying campaigns that create safe havens in schools-free from physical and emotional pressures that threaten productive learning environments.
- Encourage collaboration between health departments and student health screenings in lower-income school districts to help identify health concerns and treatment options.
- Support law enforcement's public engagement programs that seek to improve community relations as a means of crime prevention and reduction.
- Engage in proactive crime deterrence strategies such as educating and involving the community in crime prevention strategies, collaborating with law enforcement in public safety awareness campaigns, and offering youth-at-risk and youth mentoring programs as a means of improving quality-of-life.

Community Resiliency

- Encourage the provision for temporary emergency housing and heating/cooling shelters in underutilized facilities, such as schools, libraries, or houses of worship when not being used for their primary purposes.
- Identify potential post-disaster physical and mental health issues associated with survivors and caregivers to ascertain necessary and available resources when planning disaster recovery efforts.
- Locate all development out of Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) or strongly encourage the purchase of flood insurance if located in a SFHA, lowering the potential for loss of life and/or property.

Sustainable Places

- Support municipalities that are considering sustainable ordinances that would allow such things as xeriscaping, front yard vegetable gardens, etc.
- Use community design that fosters safe and secure places.
- Strengthen and support the integration of locally grown products into nonagricultural communities including places that have limited accessibility to fresh, healthy produce.
- Promote resident resiliency training by providing access to resources in multiple formats and languages represented within the community.

Natural Resources

- Engage organizations to advance public education on environmental issues such as water conservation and nonpoint source pollution.
- Encourage multi-jurisdictional cooperation in the management and restoration of coastal lakes, waterways, and beaches affected by regional stormwater discharge.
- Support legislation that further protects vital water resources from contamination, deterioration, or depletion, particularly potable water supplies, coastal water resources, and Category One waters (C1 waters).
- Promote the preservation and improvement of water resources through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure a high quality of water and the conservation of all water resources.

Open Space

- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to recreation facilities, open space, and natural lands, as a means to improve the mental and physical health of residents.
- Use publically preserved land for environmental educational purposes.
- Support urban recreational opportunities, acquisitions, partnerships, and programs.
- Support public acquisition of open space and conservation easements and the development of recreational facilities, particularly through partnerships, grant programs, and innovative funding mechanisms.

Farmland Preservation

- Preserve agricultural land and open spaces for groundwater recharge.
- Promote the development of new market opportunities for locally grown agricultural products.
- Preserve farmland to retain our bucolic and historic landscapes.