

**OVERVIEW:** Work on the Master Plan update began in the summer of 2013. It was officially introduced as a project of the Monmouth County Division of Planning with a public kick-off event on October 22, 2013. At that time, the concept of developing a new Master Plan focused on six key themes: (1) consolidate prior planning efforts, (2) promote beneficial economic development, (3) preserve the quality of community life, (4) encourage efficient land use, (5) improve environmental quality, and (6) improve intergovernmental coordination. These six key themes have been sustained within the Master Plan through various drafts and prior iterations. The October 2013 kick-off event was the first of many public outreach and engagements efforts intended to increase public awareness of the value of planning, garner input from the public and feedback into the planning process, and establish community stakeholder relationships that lead to project support and eventual assistance with implementation. Throughout development of the Plan's Vision Statement, Goals, Principles, and Objectives (GPOs), as well as the Recommendations and Stakeholder Strategies, professional staff from the Division of Planning and members of the Monmouth County Planning Board lead numerous discussions with issues-based Working Groups. Outcomes from these Working Groups, comprised of community stakeholders, planning board members, elected officials, and other government representatives, lead to the creation of the 12 Primary Elements of the Master Plan.

- Adopted by the Monmouth County Planning Board on October 17, 2016, the first comprehensive update in 34-years.
- The third comprehensive *Master Plan* for Monmouth County since the establishment of the Planning Board in 1955. This new *Plan* builds upon a successful planning legacy
- This *Plan* was initiated in response to a fundamental change in planning from one that had emphasized growth management during an era of mass suburbanization (post WWII) to one that recognizes and responds to changes in growth patterns, demographic shifts, and markets demands.
- *Monmouth County Master Plan* is the culmination of a three-year planning study led by the Monmouth County Planning Board and created entirely in-house by the professional staff of the Monmouth County Division of Planning estimated to have saved over \$500,000.00 in consultant fees.
- Planning Board members has been involved in every step of the process and received updates and provided staff input at their monthly meetings.
- Feedback and input was provided by numerous community stakeholders including topical working group members, elected officials, municipal representatives, businesses, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, county departments, other government agencies, and residents of Monmouth County
- The *Master Plan* is the principle guiding document regarding land use coordination in the county and concurrence on planning outcomes with the county's municipal partners and community stakeholders
- 10-year planning horizon and is limited in scope to planning issues, public investment strategies, and community outcomes that are meaningful to those that live, work, play, and stay in Monmouth County

- Provides elected officials, and other community decision makers and stakeholders a compelling list of recommendations and strategies to choose from that promote and advance the goals, principles, and objective outlined in the *Master Plan*. It aligns our planning Goals, Principles, and Objectives (GPOs) with investment is in growth, revitalization, and natural resource protection that reinforces our existing community character and landscapes
- The 12-Primary Elements, each has a chapter, are similarly presented throughout the Plan; each containing an introduction to the Element’s topic area, a review of existing conditions, a discussion about Emerging Issues and Long Range Challenges, highlights of stakeholder actions and efforts, as well as a section on resources and funding opportunities.
- The 12-Primary Elements are broken down into three focus areas; Preservation (Natural Resources, Open Space, Farmland Preservation, Arts/Historic/Cultural Resources), Economic Development (Arts/Historic/Cultural Resources, Utilities, Transportation, Agricultural & Economic Development, Community Development & Housing) and Whole Communities (Community Development & Housing, Healthy Communities, Community Resiliency, Sustainable Places, and Planning Services, Outreach and Coordination) .
- Each Element contains *Recommendations* are the official “actions steps” that the Monmouth County Planning Board and Division of Planning, as the lead agency, may pursue in order to achieve the purpose and intent ascribed by the *Master Plan’s* GPOs. They will guide the Division of Planning’s work program during the *Plan’s* 10-year lifecycle.
- The Stakeholder Strategies area also found in each of the 12-Primary Elements are a list of suggestions, informal recommendations, and ideas for the county’s planning partners and other community stakeholders to consider when developing their own plans, programming, and outreach efforts.
- A unique attribute of the *Monmouth County Master Plan* is that it carries over some elements of the prior *Monmouth County Growth Management Guide (1982)* in addition to integrating several new documents that are officially incorporated into this *Master Plan* by reference. The *Master Plan* also cites numerous other documents of significance (e.g. maps, plans, reports, inventories, studies, etc.) that provide important information and resources that support specific *Master Plan* Elements. Although not recognized as official components of the adopted *Monmouth County Master Plan*, they complement one or more *Master Plan* Elements and should be consulted alongside the *Master Plan* during policy formation and program development.
- The Appendices (Volume II) contains a number of documents important to the *Master Plan’s* broader context and further support the *Plan’s* findings.