

Monmouth County Division of Planning

2024 Year-in-Review Highlights



E NVIRONMENTAL S USTAINABILITY P LANNING

- Environmental Planning
- Farmland Preservation & Stewardship Programs
- Community Rating System Program
- Wastewater Management Planning



ESP-ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

FEMA FMA Grant/Shared Service

Monmouth County obtained a \$300,000 Flood Mitigation Assistance grant from FEMA to support the county's shared service agreements with its municipal Community Rating System (CRS) Users Group partners and Forerunner. Forerunner is a floodplain management software platform. There are 16 municipalities that have/will be signing agreements. Planning Division staff gave a presentation about this initiative at the October NJ Association of Floodplain Managers Conference.

FEMA PARC PILOT PROGRAM

FEMA's PARC (Planning Assistant for Resilient Communities) incorporates **artificial intelligence (AI)** into Hazard Mitigation Planning and activities to enhance effectiveness and streamline disaster recovery efforts. Staff from the Planning Division spent several days over the summer testing out FEMA's generative AI programs in their development phase.



ESP ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

NJCRC Coastal and Climate Resilience Conference

March marked the inaugural New Jersey Coastal and Climate Resilience Conference hosted by the New Jersey Coastal Resilience Collaborative (NJCRC) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The 3-day conference took place at Monmouth University and was organized with assistance provided by the University's Urban Coast Institute (UCI). Staff presented at a workshop entitled Resilience Planning and Action in Support of NWS Earle and led a mobile workshop focused on flood hazard mitigation projects in Monmouth County. Planning for the 2026 conference is underway.

Stormwater Ordinance Reviews in Response to New Legislation

In response to an update to N.J.A.C. 7:8, all municipal stormwater control ordinances were to be revised by July 18, 2024. The mandated changes incorporate measures to implement the latest New Jersey Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits. Monmouth County has been tasked with reviewing the ordinance amendments. Accordingly, the Monmouth County Planning Division staff, with support from the Planning Board's Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee, has approved 42 ordinances and granted conditional approval to 6 others as of 12/2/24.

NJ PACT REAL Rule Proposal

Staff reviewed the 1000+ page NJ DEP rule proposal, presented a summary to the Planning Board, and shared its comments with the Board of County Commissioners.



ESP FARMLAND PROGRAMS

Farmland Easement Acquisitions

Two farm owners accepted offers from the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board to acquire agricultural easements on their properties. Staff is also working on obtaining deliverables for a REPI easement acquisition project.

Carbon Sequestration Grant

The county received a \$665k carbon sequestration grant from the US Navy for a 235-acre equine farm on Hockhockson Road in Colts Neck that was preserved at the end of 2023.

Post-closing Stewardship

Staff developed and began beta testing a landowner survey to precede annual easement inspections. The survey is being distributed in multiple formats (paper, writeable PDF, and Survey 123). The response rate has been high so far. The MCADB adopted two deed interpretation resolutions, one Special Occasion Event permit approval, and two ag labor housing unit approvals.



I NTEGRATED **S** TRATEGIC **P** LANNING

- Development Review
- Long-Range, Strategic Planning
- Transportation Planning
- Annual Planning Board Merit Awards
- Special Projects & Assignments



ISP DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

- Development Activity
- Development Review Database
- Development Regulation



ISP-DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Development Activity (through November 2024)

226 new development applications (208 in 2023)

146 revised plans applications, as well as (44 in 2023)

26 requests for inspections of required right-of-way improvements.

9 developer and hold harmless agreements were prepared

\$244,750 in application, revised plan, inspection and agreement preparation fees (\$241,068 in 2023)

Affordable housing and warehouse development continue to comprise the primary types of proposed development in 2024.

New Development Review Database

Planning staff worked with MCITS staff to roll out a new SQL database replacing the former outdated Access database. The new database expands the capability to prepare action letters and provide the public with data driven reports summarizing development activity in the County. The database will be further developed to eventually allow applicants to submit and track development applications online.



ISP-DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Revised Development Regulations (Volume I)

- Staff completed an update of Volume I of the County of Monmouth Development Regulations. Proposed amendments are intended to clarify required submittals and the process to review development applications, as well as to ensure procedures are consistent with current enabling legislation.
- The new regulations have been sent to Administration for review and are anticipated to be adopted in 2025.

Note: Staff anticipates starting an update of Volume II so that the stormwater and traffic safety standards are consistent with current applicable regulations and professional practice.



ISP
**LONG-RANGE,
STRATEGIC
PLANNING**

- Insight Reports
 - At-A-Glance
 - County Profile
- Bond Call Report Viewer
- Planning Board Annual Merit Awards



ISP-LONG-RANGE, STRATEGIC PLANNING

Insight Reports (At-A-Glance and County Profile)

Planning staff continued to evolve the 2024 editions of the Monmouth County At-A-Glance and County Profile reports, which are now prepared in an online format for convenience and functionality. Improvements this year included a revamped format that breaks down each municipality by topic for a better user experience

Bond Agency Report Viewer

Division of Planning prepared a Bond Agency Report Viewer to maintain and update information utilized by bonding companies to rate the county's bond rate. The viewer provides decision-makers and the public with meaningful information and insights into the planning issues facing Monmouth County. It highlights the county's demographic trends and economic initiatives involving both the public and private sectors. The viewer collects and summarizes demographic and economic data from various public and private sources, and continually updates such data on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis depending on release schedules.



ISP-LONG-RANGE, STRATEGIC PLANNING

State Plan Update (Cross-Acceptance HUB & Survey 123)

To facilitate the upcoming update to the State Plan,, the Planning Division working in close partnership with IT's GIS Division leveraged the County's ESRI Enterprise system to develop an innovative online Cross-Acceptance Project HUB. This centralized digital platform serves as a "one-stop shop" for program resources and information. It enables Cross-Acceptance participants to stay updated on program progress, access critical State documents and forms, upload relevant information, and review, annotate, and submit proposed changes to their community's State Plan Map. Using ESRI's Survey123, the Division of Planning initiated the project's data-gathering phase by launching an online survey, the Cross-Acceptance Response Template (CART-1), designed to collect detailed information about each town and its municipal master plan. Once the Preliminary State Plan is released, a follow-up survey (CART-2) will be distributed to solicit municipal feedback on the proposed plan and its associated policy documents.



ISP-LONG-RANGE, STRATEGIC PLANNING

Planning Board Annual Merit Awards

Eight (8) projects were nominated in 2024, six (6) of which were presented with a merit award. Submission of applications was moved to an online format last year to streamline the process of compiling information for each application for presentation to the Planning Board.

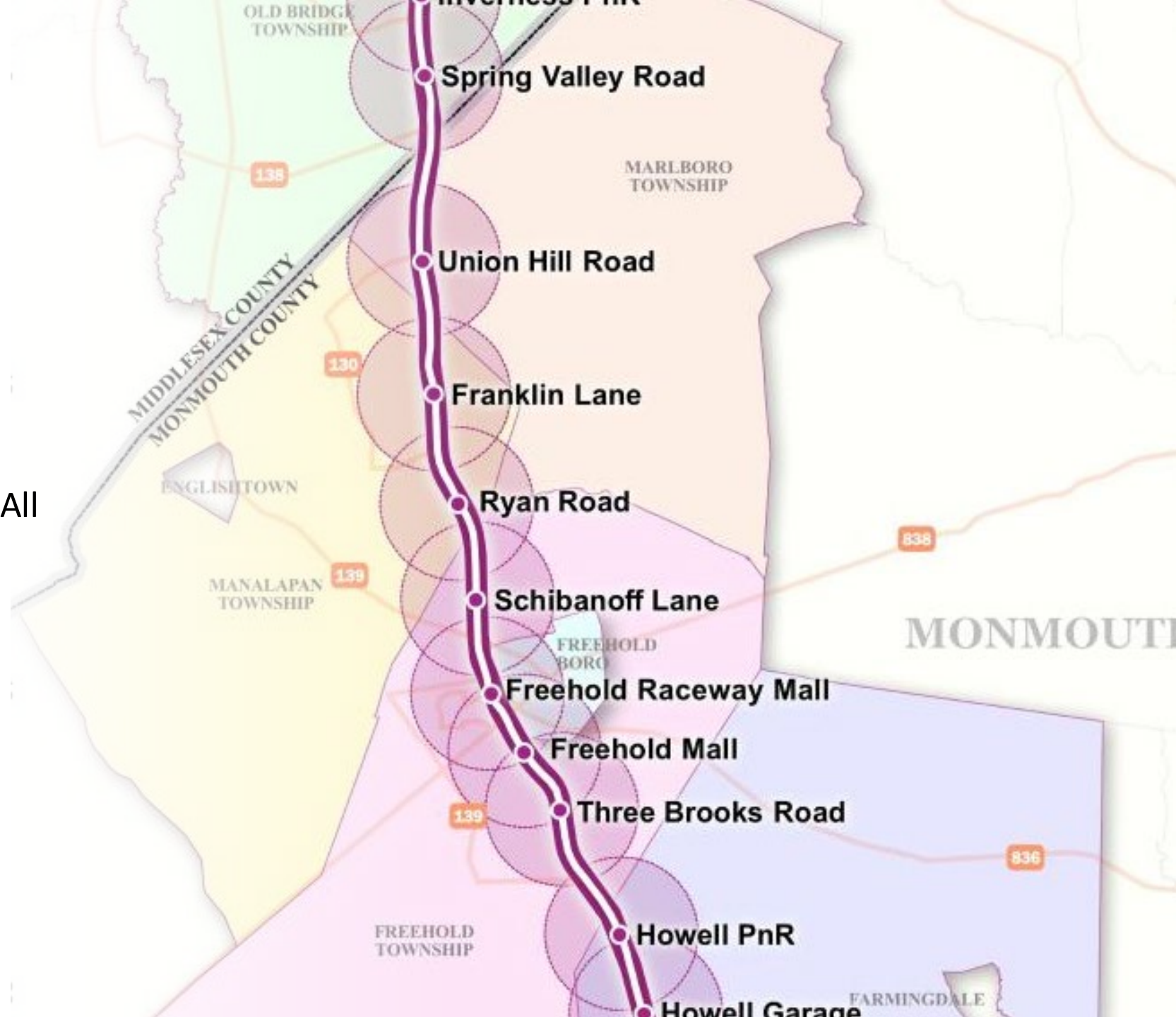
Planning Board Merit Award recipients for 2024 include:

- Central Jersey Bank and Trust Clock, Freehold Borough: Historic Preservation/Restoration
- Farmingdale Fire House, Farmingdale Borough: Historic Preservation/Restoration
- REPI (Readiness & Environmental Integration Program) Land Preservation Pilot Program, Monmouth Conservation Foundation: Environmental Sustainability, Resiliency, Public/Private Partnership
- Emergency and Respite Childcare Services, Pinwheel Place: Creativity & Innovation, Community Health & Wellness
- Creative Expressions Arts & Wellness Program, Monmouth Arts: Creativity & Innovation, Community Health & Wellness
- Native Plant Propagation, Rutgers Cooperative Extension: Environmental Sustainability & Resiliency



ISP TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- SS4A a.k.a. Safe Streets for All
- Monmouth PATHS: Access for All
- SCAT Ridership Data
- Transportation Services



ISP-TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

SS4A a.k.a. Safe Streets for All (Federal Highway Administration)

This federal grant has been underway, with the County's project poised to release a request for proposals. Agreements have been sent to the three municipalities performing plans under the County's administration.

Monmouth Paths: Access for All (NJTPA Subregional Study)

Monmouth Paths: Access for All study has been completed and is available for download on the County website. The study examined barriers to mobility for all travelers throughout the County.

SCAT Ridership Data

Planning staff analyzed SCAT ridership data in order to evaluate current operations and develop recommendations for improving SCAT services.

Transportation Services

Planning staff, in coordination with the Health Department and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, assisted in the development and implementation of a wellness transportation program providing free transportation for the purposes of accessing healthcare and wellness services. The service was handed off to the Department of Human Services for further development and integration with the County's social service network.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- 2024 Community Development Allocations
- 2023 Allocations
- Program Highlights
- CARES ACT Funds
- Fair Housing Poster Contest



CD-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2024 Community Development Allocations from HUD

- \$2,494,675 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (\$2,499,282 in 2023)
- \$1,351,741 in HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) (\$1,621,258 in 2023)
- \$200,235 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) (\$206,782 in 2023)

2023 Community Development Expenditures

During the FY2022 program year (July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024) Monmouth County expended:

- \$2,546,423 million in CDBG funds
- \$1,167,783 million in HOME funds
- \$297,533 in ESG funds



CD-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Program Highlights

- 3 small façade improvement grants
- 67 Home Repair Program (HRP) participants
- 5 households were provided grants up to \$10,000 in downpayment assistance through the Monmouth County First Time Homebuyer Program
- HOME funds towards:
 - Six (6) affordable rental units and 4 affordable homebuyer units
 - Twelve (12) households were provided Tenant Based Rental Assistance through HOME
- Completed Public Facility and Infrastructure Projects in in Allenhurst, Avon By the Sea, Farmingdale, Millstone, Neptune Township, Howell Township and Belmar
 - Over 6,000 county residents benefitted from municipal infrastructure improvements (sidewalks, street, sewer)
 - Over 3,000 residents benefitted from improved ADA access to public parks and municipal facilities
- Provided funds to seven (7) nonprofits providing assistance to over 1,500 low/moderate income residents of Monmouth County



CD-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CARES ACT funds to date

Monmouth County was awarded a total allocation of:

\$7,588,266 in CDBG-CV funds designated to help *eligible* small businesses and nonprofits recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. 371 small business and nonprofits were assisted through this program.

\$2,525,700 in ESG-CV funds designated to local nonprofits assisting 2,066 clients through rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention, emergency shelters, and street outreach programs.

\$5,523,901 in American Rescue Act funds for nonprofit and private grantees creating affordable rental opportunities for those earning 0-30% of area median income through the construction of affordable units. One project was completed and open for occupancy in Fall of 2024. Two other projects are currently under construction with completion estimated in mid-2025.



CD-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Fair Housing Poster Contest

In 2024, 144 Monmouth County sixth grade students entered the Monmouth County Fair Housing Poster Contest. This contest helps to raise public awareness, to promote Fair Housing priorities, and to help eliminate housing discrimination. An awards luncheon was held at the Sheraton Eatontown to recognize the 25 prize winners. The 2025 calendar featuring the award-winning submissions was distributed in December 2024.



CLERICAL

- OPRA
- Municipal Documents Received and Processed
- Public Meeting Coordination
- Construction Board of Appeals
- Archives



CLERICAL

OPRA

As of 12/5/24, answered 137 OPRA requests (136 for all of 2023)

Records

As of 12/5/24, processed 205 municipal documents (ordinances, plans, etc.) (193 for all of 2023)

Public Meeting Coordination

Special Meeting noticed and public hearing held on February 14, 2024, to consider the recommendation of the Amendment Review Committee concerning Site Specific Amendment of Colts Neck Building Associates, LLC.

Public Hearing at Meeting of June 17, 2024 for Subsurface Disposal System, AAESUF Property, LLC, Upper Freehold, be included in the Areawide Water Quality Management Plan and Future Wastewater Service Area Map.

Archives

31 Development Review and historic planning documents kept on the 2nd Floor Annex have been properly placed in archives for storage.



CLERICAL

Construction Board of Appeals

- Received 20 Appeal requests that were returned unprocessed, for either being filed untimely, or request withdrawn before application could be processed. (25 returned in 2023)
- Received 1 Appeal request from Ocean County (due to a conflict they had). After Attorney and Chairman's review, determined it was not a Construction Violation. Was not processed and sent back with explanation letter.
- Processed 19 Appeal requests. One per statute, had check fee waived due to failure of local agency to act within a certain timeframe. (32 appeal requests) in 2023
- \$1800.00 collected in filing fees.
- 7 Appeals heard and decisions processed, plus 1 appeal that had been adjourned from 2023.
- 12 appeal requests were settled and withdrawn prior to hearing dates.
- In accord with cross-training of clerical staff, Marissa McBride covered the Planning Board Meeting of April 15, 2024; Nailah Pile covered Construction board of Appeals Meeting of November 21, 2024.

