

---

**Focus Area 6: Create vibrant places and neighborhoods**

*Issues/Concerns*

- Safety can be a barrier: Preference for free-flow of traffic; lack of coordination between local and county can interfere with safety; concern about liability and maintenance costs (bike lanes)
- Lack of leadership, coordination and priority-setting between the levels of government
- High-level support is critical in order to successfully implement initiatives and projects

*Suggestions*

- Focus on benefits of collaboration and cooperation (bring together different groups and train people for community engagement and on how to build effective partnerships)
- Do a better job of articulating all the available resources to local governments (TNJ newsletter may be one mean for promoting some of the materials, initiatives or activities)
- Livability could work with elected officials and Mayors to raise the profile of certain topics. League of Municipalities may be a good venue in coordination with Sustainable Jersey.
- A timeline of grant application dates would be very helpful
- Technical assistance for grant writing (most of the people do not know how to apply for them)
- Training exploring considerations, benefits and challenges of a road diet in Northern NJ perhaps in coordination with NJDOT and FHWA (similar to efforts done in South Jersey).
- Potential training for local governments and planners about the benefits of collaboration and cooperation and bringing different types of people to the table (e.g., tourism, master planners, BIDs, bike, Sustainable Jersey, Green Teams, economic development, arts and education, community gardening, town council, local hospitals). Bringing a cross-section of people together; training people for community engagement and building effective partnerships.

**Focus Areas 8A and 8B: Housing supply**

*Issues/Concerns*

- RPM builders doing innovative work with fair housing (good resource to look into)
- NIMBYism is a well-recognized challenge with housing
- HUD has developed regulations related to Assessment of Fair Housing (will require planning studies)

*Suggestions*

- Provide technical assistance to local HUD grantees (CDBG and Public Housing) to build awareness of HUD's new regulations requiring an Assessment of Fair Housing and to encourage initiatives that support movement to opportunity.

**Focus Area 9: Education**

*Issues/Concerns*

- Task Force needs to focus on the issue of school funding; More funding not always the answer (quality and of teaching and content), but increases in funding may be needed to preserve some core programs

### *Suggestions*

- Look into pre-school expansion, technology advancement programs, etc.
- Consider holding a policy discussion-type event to raise awareness of regional or innovative solutions such as consolidation, magnet schools, pre-K school expansion and funding formulas. While it may not be feasible in their current political environment, consolidation of districts or countywide districts (e.g., Maryland) can promote efficiencies and more socio-economic integration such as through magnet schools. Current funding based on property tax is a barrier, but countywide property tax collection could be a solution.
- SRTS focuses on addressing the environmental barriers on the way to school; in the urban centers, where children are already walking to schools, crime is a major issue and promoting or developing a CPTED training that focuses on the safe routes to school objective may be of interest.
- NJEA and NJ School Boards initiative Healthy School Now (building safe and healthy schools)

### **Focus Area 12: Health**

#### *Issues/Concerns*

- Need to maintain a focus on the strong overlap between health and education/environment

#### *Suggestions*

- Engage with the NJ Healthy Communities and North Hudson Community Action Corporation
- Look into 'Start School Later' Initiative

### **Focus Area 15: Arts and culture**

#### *Issues/Concerns*

- Several initiatives to integrate arts and culture in master plans (i.e. – MOCO established by Monmouth Arts)
- Need to demonstrate economic benefits of creative place-making to local leaders; provide a clear and illustrative story how this works
- Americans for the Arts is a good resource (publications that explain policies to support arts)
- Foster an educational process or training events to support interest in the arts (spending and interest highly correlated) and its connections to community and economic development. Need to build an understanding with politicians, local leadership, folks in the improvement district. Need to build understanding among local leaders and demonstrate the economic development benefits.
- Urban/suburban agriculture as an arts and culture corollary

#### *Suggestions*

- Look into NJ Transit Arts Program; grants from National Endowment of the Arts; Arts Bergen; Rutgers Expressive Arts (through the Cooperative Extension Program)
- Promote best practices on the TNJ website through news articles, video. Perhaps focus on the new initiative arts project in Morris County (i.e., totem pole honoring immigrant community) or highlight Monmouth County Arts Corridor (video that was already produced).
- Fund or implement a demonstration project (e.g., arts mural)
- Hold a training-type event that promotes effective collaborations. Invites artists to the same table with planners, real estate professionals (developers and commercial realtors), economic development, and local leadership to learn to speak the same language.

**Priority Actions for TNJ**

- Provide task force with a survey of all strategies and actions in each focus area in order to prioritize for action and rate based on feasibility and impact
- Overwhelming interest in Focus Area 6, followed by 15, then 9, then 12, then 8A, then 8B

**Other Parties to be included in the task force**

Jim Hickey, MoCo Arts Corridor

Department of Environmental Protection

Builders (i.e. – RPM)

NJEA and school board members

Healthy Schools Now

Fund for New Jersey / ETS

Bill Lovett, NJ Healthy Communities Network

Start School Later

MOCO / Monmouth Arts

Rutgers Expressive Arts

PM Magazine

Pre-K Our Way