

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF METUCHEN  
PLANNING BOARD SUPPORTING AND ENDORSING  
THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY OPEN SPACE AND  
RECREATION MASTER PLAN AS ADOPTED BY THE MIDDLESEX  
COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

**WHEREAS**, the Middlesex County Planning Board has adopted the Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan on or about October 10, 1995; and

**WHEREAS**, the said Plan details the ways in which additional lands can be acquired and developed for public recreational use; and

**WHEREAS**, the said Plan is designed to conserve the important environmental and cultural features of Middlesex County; and

**WHEREAS**, the objectives of the County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan are as follows:

- A. Acquire at least 7,000 additional acres of developable land for public access, improvement and enjoyment as major recreation areas.
- B. Conserve additional land where public access is not required, so as to effectively maintain prime farm areas, protect natural resources, and preserve locations that have environmental, cultural, historic or scenic value.
- C. Provide a variety of recreational, cultural, and educational programs meeting the interests and needs of County residents.

- D. Expand County recreational facilities so as to meet current and future demands for different forms of recreational and cultural activity.
- E. Establish a network of greenways that interconnect public open spaces and activity areas and that contribute to the conservation and public enjoyment of the County environment.
- F. Provide a stable source of County funds so as to invest in open space and recreation.
- G. Promote innovative and efficient measures that result in the cost effective delivery of public recreation services.
- H. Locate open space facilities and provide recreation programming throughout the County so as to adequately serve its residents.
- I. Encourage efforts at all levels of government so as to preserve open space and provide environmental and open space design standards to assist local land use planning.
- J. Provide public access, recreation, and resource protection in waterfront areas.
- K. Encourage and support development of a regional cultural center in New Brunswick.
- L. Continue comprehensive planning for, and administration of, County open space land and recreation facilities.
- M. Provide continuing opportunities for public participation and programming for open space preservation and recreation activities in Middlesex

County.

- N. Provide a County wetlands mitigation site as part of the County open space system.


**WHEREAS**, the Planning Board of the Borough of Metuchen reviewed and discussed the said Plan at its March 21, 1996 Meeting;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Planning Board of the Borough of Metuchen, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That the Planning Board of the Borough of Metuchen hereby strongly supports the Open Space and Recreation Master Plan as adopted by the Middlesex County Planning Board.
2. That the Planning Board of the Borough of Metuchen does hereby urge the County to continue its fine efforts in this regard.
3. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the following:
  - Middlesex County Planning Board
  - Middlesex County Legislative Delegation
  - All Middlesex County Planning Boards
  - Metuchen Mayor and Council
  - Metuchen Environmental Commission

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that the foregoing statement is a true copy of the Resolution prepared to reflect the actions of the Planning Board of the Borough of Metuchen on March 21, 1996.

Dated:

  
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Sharon Hollis, Board Secretary

SUMMARY OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

A. Overview

- The Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by the Middlesex County Planning Board on October 10, 1995.
- The plan indicates that a major public effort is needed over the next fifteen years to acquire and develop additional land for public recreation use and to conserve the important environmental and cultural features in Middlesex County. The County plan proposes that 7,000 acres be added to the County park system.
- The plan proposes that facilities for soccer, golf, baseball, basketball, and tennis be expanded and that facilities be considered for other types of activities, such as, but not limited to volley ball. The plan also suggests providing facilities for skating, boating, fishing, and camping, as well as a greenway trail system for walking, bicycling, hiking and horseback riding. Other suggested facilities include an historical display farm, an environmental center, a Raritan River and Bay museum, and a County music and arts festival area south of the Raritan River. In addition, the County should acquire easements to preserve farmland.

B. Implementation

- To implement the Master Plan a list of recommended sites for acquisition as County open space will be compiled and reviewed and updated annually. For each site that is acquired and dedicated to County recreation and open space use, a master plan and capital improvement program will be prepared.
- The plan indicates that funding to expand the County open space system should be provided by a County open space trust fund that is supported by County tax revenues and apportioned to fund County recreation and open space projects, farmland preservation, and municipal recreation and open space projects that meet County objectives.
- User fees and program fees will also be considered to help meet operating costs and expand the recreational programming offered through the County park system.

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C. Plan Objectives

1. Acquire at least 7,000 additional acres of developable land by the County for public access, improvement, and enjoyment as major active recreation areas.
2. Conserve additional land where public access is not required, through easement acquisition or measures that effectively maintain prime farm areas, protect natural resources, or preserve locations that have environmental, cultural, historic, or scenic value.
3. Provide a variety of recreation, cultural, and educational programs meeting the interests and needs of County residents with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of self-funded programs that are offered.
4. Expand County recreation facilities to meet current and future demand for different forms of recreation and cultural activity with a particular emphasis on developing major special use facilities or facilities that can support multiple recreation or cultural pursuits.
5. Establish a network of greenways that interconnects public open spaces and activity areas and contributes to the conservation and public enjoyment of the County environment.
6. Provide a stable source of County funds to invest in open space and recreation and supplement those funds with other revenue sources including the State Green Trust, the State Farmland Preservation Program, Federal programs such as ISTEA, and corporate or individual donations.
7. Promote innovative and efficient measures that result in the cost effective delivery of public recreation services. Innovations could include, but not be limited to, user fees, revenue producing or self funding programs, the use of volunteers, and mutually beneficial arrangements with municipal, State, or Federal government, the business community, and non-profit organizations.
8. Locate open space facilities and provide recreation programming throughout the County to adequately serve the people.
9. Encourage efforts at all levels of government and coordinate with non-profit organizations to preserve open space and provide environmental and open space design standards to assist local land use planning.  
  
For instance, each municipality should preserve at least 3% of its area as public open space. Municipalities can also exercise their authority under the Municipal Land Use Law to provide open space and preserve the environment.
10. Provide public access, recreation, and resource protection in waterfront areas.

11. Encourage and support development of a regional cultural center in New Brunswick.
12. Continue comprehensive planning for, and administration, monitoring and maintenance of County open space land and recreation facilities.
13. Provide continuing opportunities for public participation in planning and programming for open space preservation and recreation activities in Middlesex County.
14. Provide a County wetlands mitigation site as part of the County open space system.

Wetlands mitigation sites are needed for County projects, such as road construction or widening, that impact upon existing wetlands. Private projects also require mitigation sites to replace wetlands that are lost to development.

D. Proposed County Greenway System

- Greenways are continuous strips of land or water under public control through ownership, easement, or other agreement. Greenways often occupy natural corridors such as streams, ridgelines, and woodlands or man-made corridors such as railroad and utility rights-of-way. Stream valley parks, trails, bikeways, parkways, equestrian trails, and scenic roads are examples of Greenways.

Preliminary Greenway Recommendations  
Involving Metuchen

1. **Metuchen to Perth Amboy Greenway**

Location: Conrail Perth Amboy Branch abandoned rail right-of-way from Metuchen to Perth Amboy.

Objectives: Habitat protection greenway.

Issues: Close to heavily developed areas.

Access limitations in industrialized areas.

Depressed segments of the right-of-way and bridges/overpasses require structural analysis, stormwater control, and monitoring and maintenance feasibility assessment.

2. **South Plainfield to Metuchen Greenway**

Location: Conrail Perth Amboy Branch, Bound Brook and Dismal Swamp Area in South Plainfield, Edison and Metuchen.

Objectives: Habitat, stream corridor, wetland and flood plain protection.

Continuation of Perth Amboy to Metuchen Greenway and trail to link with Middlesex County's Spring Lake Park.

Issues: Rail right-of-way is still actively used.

Proximity to the heavily developed area at northern end in South Plainfield poses access limitations.

### 3. Edison to Port Reading Greenway

Location: Conrail (Port Reading Branch) right-of-way from Edison Township through Metuchen and Woodbridge to the Arthur Kill at Port Reading.

Objectives: Habitat protection greenway.

Trail system linking municipal and county parks to the Arthur Kill waterfront.

Issues: Existing railway is still in use for freight service.

Commercial/industrial redevelopment of the Port Reading area will determine the long term viability of the railway.

Access limitations in industrial areas.

Depressed segments of the right-of-way and bridges/overpasses require structural analysis, stormwater control, and monitoring and maintenance feasibility assessment.

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