
METUCHEN
NEW  JERSEY

WELCOME TO METUCHEN

Located in the heart of central New Jersey, Metuchen captures the spirit of “small town USA.” Metuchen’s residents often walk or jog down its tree-lined streets, shop in the quaint Main Street stores, frequent the many playgrounds and parks, and gather at the annual events like parades, the arts & crafts festival and the “country” fair. Metuchenites often get to know their local merchants and get personalized service they find missing at large chain stores in the nearby shopping malls.

Aside from its “neighborly” small-town friendliness, Metuchen’s age differentiates it from its more modern suburban neighboring towns. From the Victorian era horse watering trough on Middlesex Avenue to its many charming restored historic homes, Metuchen retains a historic character and timeless stability.

Also known as “The Brainy Borough” because of the many professionals, artists, educators and literary figures (and now even a former Governor) who lived here, Metuchen developed primarily due to its location and access to key transportation routes. From Metuchen it is easy to commute to New York City by train or bus, or to Newark, Trenton, or nearby Rutgers University in New Brunswick.

A Brief History

The earliest known residents of the area were members of a subtribe of the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians. The first Europeans arrived in 1665 under the leadership of Lord Carteret. To populate the region, Carteret traveled to New England where he encouraged others to return south by the promise of generous land grants. One of the earliest records relating to the area is a bill of sale from the Indians to Lord Carteret dated 1677.

It has become generally accepted that the area became known as Metuchen after the Indian chief, Matouchin, who lived between 1630 and 1700. The Lenape word “Matouchin” or “Metachen” either means “firewood” (there was supposedly abundant dry firewood in the region), or “rolling hills” (foothills of the Watchung range).

As the area became settled, a small farming village developed at the crossroads, and a meeting house was built in 1717. The first commercial establishments were a general store and taverns. A tavern, known as Harriot’s Inn, was located on the site of the present Borough Hall, and another, Mrs. Catharine Allen’s tavern, was built in 1740 on Durham Avenue next to the present Campbell School. This building, known as the King House, is one of the oldest in town and is now a private residence.

In the early 19th century, Metuchen grew as a way station for coaches carrying passengers between New York City, Newark, Perth Amboy, New Brunswick and Trenton, as two of the most important of the early turnpikes passed through the town. One was the Middlesex-Essex Turnpike (now Route 27), which ran from Newark to New Brunswick, and the second, the Perth Amboy Turnpike, followed the current Amboy Avenue from Perth Amboy to Piscatawaytown.

In 1835, Metuchen became a stop on the New Jersey Railroad (later the Pennsylvania Railroad, now Amtrak) and the easy travel it afforded allowed Metuchen to become, in the period after the Civil War, a bedroom community of New York City. Many of Metuchen's older homes were built during this era, as was Metuchen's train station (1888), one of the oldest in New Jersey.

Through the 18th century, an area called "Metuching" was bounded on the south by the Raritan River, on the west by Piscataway, on the north by the Short Hills, and on the east by Rahway. In March 1870, an act of the State Legislature created a new township named Raritan, formed from parts of Woodbridge and Piscataway, that extended north from the Raritan River about three miles, and Metuchen became the natural center of this area. It stayed that way until 1900, when Metuchen broke away from the township to become an independent borough.

Today, Metuchen and surrounding Edison Township have a combined population of about 120,000 people. Metuchen continues to attract people for the same reasons it has for the past 100 years: good schools, fine homes, good transportation and friendly people.

Population and Demographics

Middlesex County is a major transportation corridor of the state, and for this reason, has experienced continued increases in population and economic activity. The county estimates that more than 7,000 new jobs have been created each year since 1980, and people have come to Middlesex County, and Metuchen, to fill them.

Metuchen, a desirable small town convenient to many major employers in the region, is within two miles of several of the state's major transportation arteries: the NJ Turnpike, the Garden State Parkway, Interstate Route 287, U.S. Highway 1 and State Highway 27. Also, Metuchen's direct and convenient railroad service to New York City (and to New Brunswick and Trenton) has attracted many commuters.

For years, the area has had major employers in pharmaceuticals, health care, financial services, and higher education (Rutgers University). In addition, a "high tech corridor" has developed in recent years along Route 1, between New Brunswick and Princeton, and many people living in Metuchen work there.

Metuchen's population in the 1990 census was 12,804, within the borough's roughly 2.8 square miles. Population jumps to 91,676 (or 33,539 households) within a mere three-mile radius, making the area the sixth largest population center in the state. Middlesex County is the third largest county in the state, with 671,000 people, and that figure is projected to grow to about 750,000 by the year 2000.

According to 1990 census data, about half of Metuchen's residents are between 25 and 59 years old, with a median age of 37.9. Metuchen has a highly skilled and productive labor force: 41 percent are professional and management; 34 percent in sales and administration, and 23 percent in trade, production or self-employed. An unskilled labor pool is available nearby.

The median family income in Metuchen in 1990 was \$61,046, with more than 50 percent of the households earning more than \$50,000. Disposable family income was estimated at nearly \$38,000, which is 20 percent higher than the county average. Within a three-mile radius, just about 50 percent of the households earn more than \$50,000.

[More](#)

METUCHEN'S TOTAL POPULATION FROM THE 1990 CENSUS IS 12,804:

White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other
11,056	763	592	362	31

AGE STATISTICS:

18-20	21 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 59	60 to 64	65 & over
393	568	4,254	1,520	664	755	1,984

Half of Metuchen's Residents are Between 25 and 59 Years of Age. Median age is 37.9 Years.

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT:

0-8 Years of School	High School	College Graduates & Beyond
522	2,628	3,474

INCOME

Household Income:

Description	1 Mile Radius	2 Mile Radius	3 Mile Radius
Population:	13,320	42,982	91,676
Households: 5,110	16,202	33,539	
Household Incomes			
Under \$5,000	1.7%	2.3%	1.9%
\$5,000 to \$14,000	8.4%	6.3%	6.0%
\$15,000 to \$34,000	18.9%	20.3%	21.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,000	16.7%	19.3%	20.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,000	27.3%	26.4%	26.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.8%	14.2%	13.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	8.6%	7.9%	7.4%
\$150,000 plus	3.6%	3.3%	2.5%

(Included in Radius is Parts of Edison/Woodbridge/South Plainfield)

	Per Capita	Median Household	Median Family	Disposal (based on Family)
Metuchen	\$23,174	\$53,226	\$61,046	\$34,849
Middlesex County	\$18,714	\$45,623	\$51,835	\$32,138

EMPLOYMENT:
Total Labor Force:

Total Labor Force	High Skilled Mgrs/Professionals	Technical/Sales/ Administrative	Production/Trade/ Self Employed
7,323	3,029	2,400	1,894

Description	1 Mile Radius	2 Mile Radius	3 Mile Radius
Population (16+)	10,850	35,098	74,977
Employment Status			
Unemployed	6.92%	6.88%	6.90%
Not in the Labor Force	28.5%	28.2%	27.9%
Professional	22.3%	17.7%	16.0%
Management	18.8%	19.2%	18.2%
Administrative	18.0%	20.3%	20.5%
Technical	4.7%	5.2%	5.3%
Sales	11.8%	12.1%	12.3%
Production	7.3%	8.2%	8.6%

(Included in Radius is Parts of Edison/Woodbridge/South Plainfield)

As you can see, Metuchen is a vibrant town with a highly skilled labor force available and many attractive to a growing business.

For more information on locating your business in Metuchen, contact the Metuchen Development Commission.



For a small town, there's a lot going on. Metuchen offers many activities that involve the community and attract residents of neighboring communities as well.

Special events like the spring Arts & Crafts Festival and the fall Country Fair, the Kidsfest, and the annual town-wide garage sale bring throngs of people to Metuchen each year. Metuchen's residents also line the streets for the annual parades on Memorial Day and for the holiday season. Other seasonal event attractions are the First Night celebration on New Year's Eve and Halloween activities like the "Haunted Trail."

One local attraction is The Forum Theater, which opened in 1927, and offers a regular series of musicals, drama, comedy and shows for children, with equity actors. Movies are shown during the off season. Home-grown talent is featured in monthly "coffeehouses" at the Borough Improvement League Building, including classical, popular and folk musicians, poets, and dramatists, served up with coffee and pastries from a local gourmet coffee store.

In the summer, an outdoor musical concert series is held at Tommy's Pond, ranging from classical to country & western, and even klezmer. Metuchen has eight playgrounds, nine ballfields (including a Little League field), tennis courts, three parks and a municipal swimming pool. The Metuchen pool complex, with a new and expanded snack bar and covered eating area, attracts nonresidents (neighboring Edison has no municipal pool) as well as Metuchenites. It offers instructional swim classes as well as social activities for different age groups.

Children's plays and other special events are held at the Metuchen Public Library, a focal point of the community since it opened as a small reading room in 1870. The current structure, dedicated in 1937, has been expanded several times and serves as a meeting place for scores of community and civic groups.

Another place to gather and grow fit in Metuchen is the Metuchen-Edison YMCA. The "Y," founded in 1921, provides comprehensive health and fitness programs to all age groups, including numerous aquatics programs and exercise classes, and state-of-the-art exercise equipment. It professes to be the largest provider of child care in Middlesex County and a leader in the development of services for the elderly and physically challenged. The Y has recently completed a campaign to expand and renovate the facility, as its membership has more than doubled in the past few years.

The Borough of Metuchen offers another alternative for youth and senior citizens to congregate. A Teen Center was established in a former schoolhouse for young people to meet and socialize. A newly built Senior Center has an arts & crafts room with a pottery kiln; a kitchen and eating area; social areas, and an exam room for visiting physicians to offer blood pressure screenings and other health services.

In addition, the Metuchen Recreation Commission and Cultural Arts Commission each offer a wide range of programming for area residents (some noted above).

Beginning a Business in Metuchen

Where do I begin?

Once you have decided to open a business in Metuchen, you will need to create a business entity through incorporation, partnership, proprietorship, etc.

What rules must I follow in Metuchen?

The first step is ensure the property is zoned for the proposed use. If not, an application will have to be made to the Zoning Board. Metuchen has instituted a Technical Review Committee (TRC) process for both the Planning and Zoning Boards to aid in the development of property and structures. The purpose is to allow an informal meeting between yourself and the regulating board to review your concepts and proposals for your particular site. This early step is an effective way to work together to ensure that your intentions and the borough's requirements are one in the same, before large expenditures are made in a formal presentation. Preliminary floor plans, building elevations, site plan (as applicable), and the proposed usage are items that should be brought to this meeting. The secretary of the Planning and Zoning boards will be able to inform you of the specific requirements for your project. The office number is 732-632-8514.

What happens next?

If your business usage requires a TRC meeting, one will be scheduled with the appropriate board, and the process for a formal application to the governing body will be started. Again, the planning and zoning secretary will inform you of the requirements.

How can I tell if my business or building project is within the proper zone?

The Borough Zoning Map and Land Use Ordinance are the governing documents, and may be obtained in the planning and zoning office.

What else do I need?

Proof that the property in question has no delinquent taxes. If you are, or are going to be a tenant, the property owner's written consent to your application is required.

Once I have approval, what is next?

Building permits are required for any internal or external work. Contact the construction code official and building inspector's office at 732-632-8515. Architectural and/or engineering drawings will have to be submitted for approval.

What if my business is a food or restaurant operation?

You will need approval for the Metuchen Health Department. Call Borough Hall at 732-632-8503 for information.

Please be advised this is only a summary, specific regulations are set out in an application.

The Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit volunteer organization of businesses and individuals which has been serving Metuchen for nearly 50 years. The Chamber plays an active role in promoting the interests of its members as well as that of Metuchen's citizens in striving to maintain the economic health, growth and well-being of Metuchen.

The Chamber acts as an information clearinghouse and legislative representative with state and local government. It supports and sponsors educational seminars, disseminates valuable information to its members and the public, and offers services to augment the economic development of Metuchen. Through these and other activities, the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce strives to create and sustain Metuchen's reputation as a great place to work and live.

Community Involvement

The Chamber provides its members with the opportunity to become involved in the community in which they operate. Chamber members are respected as Metuchen leaders, people who make a difference in the community.

To enhance partnership between the Chamber and the borough, the Chamber is a sponsor of the following annual events:

- Country Fair
- Winter Parade, and the Miss Merry Christmas Contest
- Spring Arts & Crafts Festival
- Town-wide Garage Sale
- Taste of Metuchen (showcases foods from local restaurants)
- Community Service Award Dinner, and naming the Metuchen Citizen of the Year (designed to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations who have greatly contributed to improving the quality of life in the borough)

Networking

Membership in the Chamber serves as an excellent networking resource to help develop business contacts.

Business Referrals

The Chamber serves as a primary contact point for businesses, industries, consumers and visitors who are interested in Metuchen. The Chamber then forwards these important leads to its members.

Advertising

Membership in the Chamber can provide an avenue for members to advertise their services/products to the community/consumer. Chamber membership lends credentials for being reputable to businesses/individuals within the community (similar to a Better Business Bureau "seal of approval"). The Chamber's advertising capabilities can increase the advertising strength of individual members.

Representation

The Chamber appears before local and state government and speaks on behalf of its business members.

Educational Resource

The Chamber sponsors valuable seminars, giving businesses the opportunity to learn more from business experts about topics ranging from increasing sales to money management.

[More](#)

Solicitation Control

The Chamber reviews solicitation requests and works with law enforcement agencies to identify and measure the reliability of outside companies soliciting in the area.

Affiliations

The Chamber maintains membership with the following agencies which provide additional information, support and assistance to our local Chamber: United States Chamber of Commerce, New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce and the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce.

For information about joining the Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce, please contact:

The Metuchen Area Chamber of Commerce
323 Main Street, Suite B, Metuchen, NJ 08840
Tel: (732) 548-2964
Fax: (732) 548-4094
Website: www.metuchen-nj.com
E-mail: metuchenchamber@metuchen-nj.com

Support Services/Useful Contacts

Borough of Metuchen

Planning & Zoning Office	(732) 632-8514
Technical Review Committee & Planning Board Sec'y	" 632-8554
Construction Office	" 632-8515
Public Works	" 632-8519
Police & Fire Departments	" 632-8500
Health Department	" 632-8503
General Information	" 632-8540

Utilities

Bell Atlantic	(800) 339-9911
Middlesex Water	(732) 634-1500
PSE&G	(800) 436-7739
Elizabethtown Gas	(908) 289-6400

Hotels/Conference Facilities*

Clarion (Edison)	(732) 237-3500
Holiday Inn (Raritan Center)	" 494-2000
Sheraton at Woodbridge Place & Towers	" 634-3400
Hilton at Woodbridge	" 494-6200

Temporary Help (Personnel)*

EMI (Metuchen)	(732) 603-9700
Metro Temp (Metuchen)	" 321-9300
Altco Temp (Edison)	" 549-6100
Joule Temporaries (Edison)	" 906-0906

Financial, Technical Assistance & Human Resource Services

Middlesex County Office of Economic Development	(732) 745-3433
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Newspaper Advertising*

Metuchen/Edison Review	(732) 722-3000
The Criterion	" 548-8300
The Home News & Tribune	" 246-5500
The Star Ledger	(973) 877-4242

Cable TV

METV (Local Access)	(732) 562-2305
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*Not intended as a complete listing of available resources

I. Where in New Jersey: Proximity and Location

Introduction; Transportation Summary

II. Greater Metuchen

Shows proximity to NYC, Newark Airport, Port Newark and other points of interest

III. Modified Street Map

Details Downtown Business District, Liberty

Corporate Park; Major highway access routes and interchanges
(legend on back)

IV. Zoning Map

Overlay of Zoning Districts on Modified Street Map (legend on back)