



The Grove at Centerton - 1022 Almond Road Pittsgrove, NJ 08318
February 15, 2024 - Noon

"Draft" Minutes

A meeting of the Cumberland Salem Cape May Workforce Development Board was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the Grove at Centerton.

Those in attendance were:

Workforce Development Board Members:

Barbara Jones, Betsy Reed, Cheryl Golden, Cristina Chillem, Dawn Hunter, Denise Beckson, Donna Groome, Edward Geletka, Hugh McCaffrey, Jerry Velazquez (Alternate), Jody Classen, Louis Joyce, Melissa Niles, Dr. Michael Gorman, Richard Stuart, Sherwood Taylor (Alternate), Susan Jurusz (Alternate), Thomas Sommers, Tom Smith, Tom Wysocki,

Guests:

Ed Ramsey- Salem County Commissioner (liaison), **Amy Ronketty** – Salem County One Stop Center, **Jaime Gomez**- Cumberland County Division Director, **Mary Bailey** – OJT Writer/Department of Labor

Staff:

Amanda Barnes, Anthony Bontempo, April Gomez , Christy DiLeonardo, Cindy Angelo

Public Representation:

Nancy Ridgway

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes:

Dawn Hunter welcomed all attendees and began the meeting with the reading of the Open Public Meeting Act, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting began at 12:17 p.m. Dawn briefly introduced herself as the new Chairperson to the Board.

A motion was requested from the floor to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2023 meeting.

2023 November 16 Minutes

1st Dr. Mike Gorman 2nd Louis Joyce

Vote Passes

Two new board members, Carol Musso and Richard Stuart, were introduced and given an opportunity to say a few words.

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items only

The floor was opened for public comment. No comments were shared by the public.

III. MOU / IFA Draft

Christy DiLeonardo- The vote to approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement will need to be tabled. As the MOU was being revised and

updated, more direction was given along the way causing its completion to take slightly longer than expected. Christy stated that we are still waiting for feedback on a few items pertaining to the Employment Service Division in Cumberland, Salem, and Cape May. Once received and the MOU is completed, Cindy Angelo will gather the necessary signatures from all three counties Commissioners and Directors as well as any partners who are required to sign. The MOU will be sent out to all board members for review, any additions, comments, or feedback. The board will vote to approve the MOU at the next CSCM WDB meeting on May 16th. The deadline to submit the completed MOU to the state is March 31, 2023.

CSCM WDB Newsletter- The first CSCM WDB newsletter was released on Tuesday, February 6, 2023. Any local area partners, organizations, or businesses are encouraged to submit anything they feel would be beneficial to promote in the newsletter such as programs, anniversaries, success stories, or events.

IV. Draft Policies / RFP's

April Gomez- Policy Analyst/Contract Manger for the CSCM WDB presented 3 draft policies to the board for a vote of approval. She explained that the Youth Work Experience Policy was a pre-existing policy which was updated. The changes were indicated on the handout with a strikethrough and highlighted text. The Marketing/Advertising Policy and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy were new policies created and mandated by federal and state government. Christy added, in regard to the Marketing/Advertising Policy, that in past years funds were not permitted for use of promotional or marketing items. The only way to have usable funds for marketing would have been through grant funding, which is why this policy is so important to have in place. NJDOL as well as WIOA are now permitting funds to be utilized by local One Stop Employment and Training departments to market to their customers.

Youth Work Experience Draft Policy

1st Edward Geletka 2nd Dr. Mike Gorman

Vote Passes

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Draft Policy

1st Hugh McCaffrey 2nd Cheryl Golden

Vote Passes

Marketing & Advertising Draft Policy

1st Donna Groome 2nd Louis Joyce

Vote Passes

April announced that In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth RFP's have been posted on the Cumberland and Salem procurement sites. The next RFP that is expected to be released by the end of March will be for Career Services. To avoid conflict of interest the Career Services RFP for Salem and Cape May will go out through Cumberland County's Purchasing Portal and Cumberland's Career Services RFP will go out through Salem County. There is currently discussions happening in legislation which are exploring the possibly of not requiring procurement for Career Services in the future.

V. PY 22-23 Financial Reports and Local Updates

Christy presented the handout for Program Year 2022-23 Financial Status Report which is a report of the combined funds for all three counties that must be spent/obligated by June 30, 2024.

Attention was directed to the bottom of the page which displayed the individual balances each county had remaining. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds must be expended by 6/30/24. These include Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker. WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) funds, which consist of TANF, GA/SNAP, are no longer spendable. The expenditure extension received for Workforce Learning Link (WLL) must be fully expended by 6/30/24. Christy assured the board that this will happen.

On separate pages in the meeting packet, a breakdown of each county was provided which showed the balances as of December 31st. The WLL funds are in Cumberland, however Cumberland serves Salem and Cape May County and can use the WLL resources to Upskill residents in all three counties. Cape May County's report reflected a large balance with the majority being in Youth. Cheryl Golden asked if money left over in one county could be shifted to another county to utilize. Christy confirmed that funds can be shared between the three counties. Cheryl added that the TANF funds were difficult to spend due to individuals not being sanctioned, however the ability to sanction is expected to resume in March.

Mellissa Niles asked if Cape May has a summer Youth Program. Donna Groome stated that there are no summer youth programs in Cape May, but that there are two youth contracts. Jersey Cape Diagnostics Center has an In-School Youth and an Out of School Youth contract which are now both performing very well. Due to the formula the state follows which has not been shared, Cape May gets the most funds out of all three counties.

- **Cumberland**

Jaime Gomez - The WIOA funds will be spent and she will possibly be requesting more funds. Jaime recently conducted an analysis of all training that has been done through WIOA and WFNJ funding sources since July 1st. 187 people have been trained, two were TANF. The analysis showed that more than 50% of the training went towards individuals for CDL-A training. Another analysis showed that the number of people obtaining jobs in that training field (CDL-A) was not satisfactory. A promise of employment has been put back in place for anyone who wants to go to CDL-A training. Cumberland has put in the application to run the Summer Youth Work Experience Program. Jaime stated that Cumberland Employment & Training will also be applying for an In-School Youth program and for the Career Services RFP when that becomes available.

- **Salem**

Amy Ronketty – reported that she has taken over the One Stop Operations and explained that she and Richard are still getting acclimated to the changes since Kathy Lockbaum's retirement. A new and much needed building is in the process of being built for Salem by the Cumberland County Improvement Authority and is expected to be completed in two to three years. This will allow Salem to better provide services to customers and allow old and new programs to run smoothly in an organized environment. Jerry Velazquez said the floor plan is done and he expects it to go out for bid in the next three to four months.

- **Cape May**

Donna Groome - revisited the balance sheet for Cape May County and explained that she is not overly concerned about the amount. She went on to explain that although the youth population is no longer as high as it used to be in Cape May, the county is still given a lot of funds for Youth. She speculated that the funding formula may be from many years ago when more youth resided in Cape May. The two youth contracts are performing very well and are expected to spend their funds and request additional funding. She and Christy have had

conversations regarding a Summer Youth program and determined that the program would not be successful due to the fact that jobs are plentiful for youth in Cape May, some at \$20 per hour in many areas. Training is going well, however has slowed down a bit. During the fall months, Cape May sees an increase in training, particularly for LPN, Dental Assistant, and CDL training.

Cape May has a \$14,000 plan for outreach through marketing and advertising utilizing various sources.

Donna gave a shout out to the Business Services unit and presented an article from The Herald which talked about a company in Cape May that developed a lightweight tracking device that uses cellular technology to track bird and their flight patterns. The company also developed Terra, which is a system that uses artificial intelligence to identify bird songs. The end of the article stated that state funding was used for on-the-job training on the manufacturing end of the business.

VI. Old and New Business

- Workforce Development Board Certification 2023 – 2025- Christy directed attention to the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission handout in the meeting packet. Every few years the Workforce Development Board goes through a re-certification. The certification process includes making sure policies are on the website, MOUs and IFAs are in place, and labor information/posters are up at everyone One Stop. The monitors visited Cumberland, Salem, and Cape May in the summer of 2023 to conduct an evaluation.

Their report had two findings and one area of concern:

1. *The Workforce Development Board did not establish a fiscal oversight committee.*
2. *PY 22 Procurement Documents did not include the required federal disclosure.*

**Area of concern - Career Services has not yet been procured- Procurement isn't due to be in place until July 2024*

- Long Story Short: South Jersey - The Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey created a report detailing what is unique about the seven most Southern counties of NJ as well as hurdles to economic growth and workforce development. To save paper, only Cumberland, Salem, and Cape May were printed for the meeting packets, however the link to the full report was provided via email. Some of the data was collected from the Workforce Development Board Local and Regional Plans. The report also detailed the top 4 issues for Southern NJ, the first two being a lack of PublicTransportation and Broadband Accessibility.

VII. Public Comment

Nancy- Thanked everyone for a nice meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Dawn requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Cheryl Golden and seconded by Edward Geletka. The meeting ended at 1:25 p.m.

PY 2022-23 Financial Status Report

Expenditures represent YTD cash + accruals+ obligations as reported to NJLWD on the official December 2023 Financial Report

WIOA GRANTS		WIOA ADULT	WIOA YOUTH	WIOA DISLOCATED	TOTAL WIOA
ADMIN	Staff W&FB	\$ 175,093	\$ 181,881	\$ 76,418	\$ 433,392
	Operating Costs	\$ 39,740	\$ 55,859	\$ 26,808	\$ 122,407
	TOTAL ADMIN EXPENDED YTD	\$ 214,833	\$ 237,740	\$ 103,226	\$ 555,799
PROGRAM	Staff W&FB	\$ 451,199	\$ 418,389	\$ 211,704	\$ 1,081,292
	Operating Costs	\$ 112,181	\$ 161,354	\$ 53,186	\$ 326,721
	Contracts	\$ 1,255,951	\$ 575,631	\$ 482,024	\$ 2,313,606
	Participant Support	\$ 29,535	\$ 29,476	\$ 8,627	\$ 67,638
	TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDED YTD	\$ 1,848,866	\$ 1,184,850	\$ 755,541	\$ 3,789,257
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDED		\$ 2,063,699	\$ 1,422,590	\$ 858,767	\$ 4,345,056
BUDGET		\$ 2,404,641	\$ 2,515,497	\$ 1,065,816	\$ 5,985,954
AVAILABLE BALANCE		\$ 340,942	\$ 1,092,907	\$ 207,049	\$ 1,640,898

WFNJ GRANTS		WFNJ TANF	WFNJ GA/SNAP	TOTAL WFNJ
ADMIN	Staff W&FB	\$ 137,129	\$ 88,981	\$ 226,110
	Operating Costs	\$ 92,170	\$ 60,826	\$ 152,996
	TOTAL ADMIN EXPENDED YTD	\$ 229,299	\$ 149,807	\$ 379,106
PROGRAM	Work Subsidies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Education & Training	\$ 312,111	\$ 277,807	\$ 589,918
	CAVP	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Other Work Activities	\$ 552,016	\$ 347,495	\$ 899,511
	Case Management	\$ 450,415	\$ 338,003	\$ 788,418
	Needs Based Work Supports	\$ 58,083	\$ 49,717	\$ 107,800
	Work Verification	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	On-The-Job Training (OJT)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDED YTD	\$ 1,372,625	\$ 1,013,022	\$ 2,385,647
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDED		\$ 1,601,924	\$ 1,162,829	\$ 2,764,753
BUDGET		\$ 1,968,904	\$ 1,298,110	\$ 3,267,014
% EXPENDED YTD		81.36%	89.58%	0.00% 84.63%
AVAILABLE BALANCE		\$ 366,980	\$ 135,281	\$ 502,261

MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS		WLL	DATA ANALYSIS	TOTAL OTHER
TOTAL EXPENDED YTD		\$ 116,755	\$ 12,971	\$ 129,726
BUDGET		\$ 130,000	\$ 12,971	\$ 142,971
% EXPENDED YTD		89.81%	100.00%	0.00% 90.74%
AVAILABLE BALANCE		\$ 13,245	\$ -	\$ 13,245

ALL NJLWD 2022-23 GRANTS		TOTAL
TOTAL EXPENDED YTD		\$ 7,239,535
BUDGET		\$ 9,395,939
% EXPENDED YTD		77.05%
AVAILABLE BALANCE		\$ 2,156,404

CUMBERLAND	\$ 316,147
SALEM	\$ 524,512
CAPE MAY	\$ 1,315,745
	\$ 2,156,404

- NOTES:
- (1) WIOA funds must be expended by 6/30/24.
 - (2) WFNJ funds are final.
 - (3) Expenditure extension received for WLL - must be fully expended by 6/30/24.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

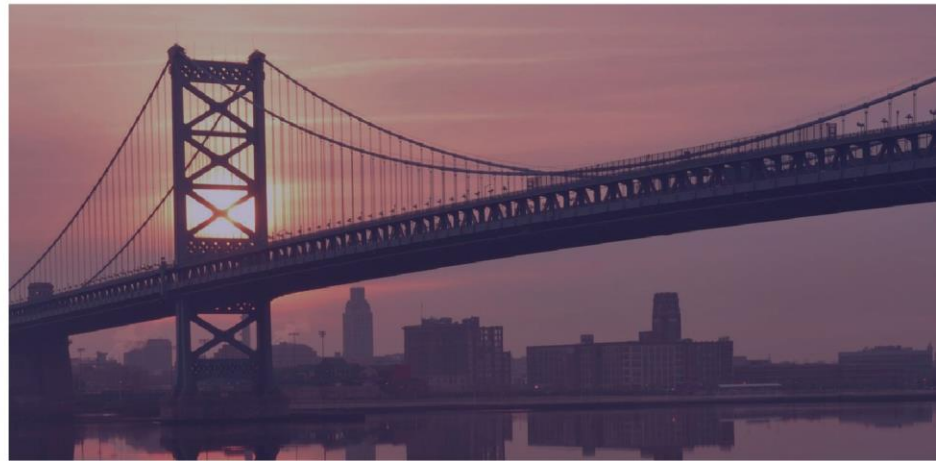
	PY 22-23 BUDGET	PY 22-23 EXPENDED	DIFFERENCE	
WIOA				
Adult	\$1,260,204	\$1,259,599	(\$605)	
Dislocated Worker	\$710,829	\$632,575	(\$78,254)	
Youth	\$1,064,702	\$923,984	(\$140,718)	
TOTAL WIOA	\$3,035,735	\$2,816,158	(\$219,577)	92.77%
WFNJ				
TANF Work Activities/CM	\$1,170,816	\$1,102,910	(\$67,906)	
TANF CAVP	\$17,522	\$2,103	(\$15,419)	
TANF NBWS	\$58,083	\$58,083	\$0	
GA/SNAP WorkActivities/CM	\$790,289	\$790,289	\$0	
GA/SNAP NBWS	\$49,717	\$49,717	\$0	
TOTAL WFNJ	\$2,086,427	\$2,003,102	(\$83,325)	96.01%
TOTAL WIOA/WFNJ	\$5,122,162	\$4,819,260	(\$302,902)	94.09%
OTHER				
Workforce Learning Link (WLL)	\$130,000	\$116,755	(\$13,245)	
WIOA Data Reporting & Analysis	\$12,971	\$12,971	\$0	
TOTAL OTHER	\$142,971	\$129,726	(\$13,245)	90.74%
GRAND TOTAL ALL	\$5,265,133	\$4,948,986	(\$316,147)	94.00%

SALEM COUNTY

	PY 22-23 BUDGET	PY 22-23 EXPENDED	DIFFERENCE	
WIOA				
Adult	\$232,384	\$169,584	(\$62,800)	
Dislocated Worker	\$161,192	\$111,163	(\$50,029)	
Youth	\$272,299	\$211,521	(\$60,778)	
TOTAL WIOA	\$665,875	\$492,268	(\$173,607)	73.93%
WFNJ				
TANF Work Activities/CM	\$472,567	\$256,943	(\$215,624)	
GA/SNAP Work Activities/CM	\$311,599	\$176,318	(\$135,281)	
TOTAL WFNJ	\$784,166	\$433,261	(\$350,905)	55.25%
GRAND TOTAL ALL	\$1,450,041	\$925,529	(\$524,512)	63.83%

CAPE MAY COUNTY

	PY 22-23 BUDGET	PY 22-23 EXPENDED	DIFFERENCE	
WIOA				
Adult	\$912,053	\$634,516	(\$277,537)	
Dislocated Worker	\$193,795	\$115,029	(\$78,766)	
Youth	\$1,178,496	\$287,085	(\$891,411)	
TOTAL WIOA	\$2,284,344	\$1,036,630	(\$1,247,714)	45.38%
WFNJ				
TANF Work Activities/CM	\$249,916	\$181,885	(\$68,031)	
GA/SNAP Work Activities/CM	\$146,505	\$146,505	\$0	
TOTAL WFNJ	\$396,421	\$328,390	(\$68,031)	82.84%
GRAND TOTAL ALL	\$2,680,765	\$1,365,020	(\$1,315,745)	50.92%
TOTAL CSCM WIOA	\$5,985,954	\$4,345,056	(\$1,640,898)	72.59%
TOTAL CSCM WFNJ	\$3,267,014	\$2,764,753	(\$502,261)	84.63%
TOTAL OTHER	\$142,971	\$129,726	(\$13,245)	90.74%
	\$9,395,939	\$7,239,535	(\$2,156,404)	77.05%



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY**
Connecting the region since 1873

LONG STORY SHORT: *South Jersey*

**A Busy Policymaker's Guide to
Understanding a Misunderstood Region**

INTRODUCTION

“Brevity is confidence. Length is fear.”

– *Smart Brevity: The Power of Saying More with Less* by Jim VandeHei, Mike Allen and Roy Schwartz.

WHAT: This research report details in a short, but not shallow format, what is unique about the seven most southern counties of New Jersey, possibilities and hurdles to economic growth and workforce development, and policies that should be assessed or could be adopted at a state level to enhance the region’s economic prosperity.

“[New Jersey is like] a beer barrel, tapped at both ends, with all the live beer running into Philadelphia and New York.”

– *Benjamin Franklin*

WHERE: For the purposes of this report, South Jersey is defined as the seven-most southern counties of New Jersey – Cape May, Atlantic, Cumberland, Salem, Gloucester, Camden and Burlington.

“Be not afraid of going slowly. Be afraid only of standing still.”

– *Chinese proverb*

WHEN: This research report took a year to develop by the CCSNJ. Research commenced in March and concluded in October of 2023. Writing began that same month and concluded in January of 2024. The report went live in February of 2024 shortly after the start of the 221st Legislative Session.



“If you have an opportunity to use your voice you should use it.”

– Samuel L. Jackson, American Actor

WHY: South Jersey is deeply misunderstood by statewide policymakers. The region’s differences make holistic legislative measures difficult to enact, and as a result, South Jersey is often neglected when well-intentioned policies are crafted and intended to have a statewide benefit. With this report, the CCSNJ aims to educate policymakers on the region with the goal of better educating elected officials on the region’s unique policy needs, so more holistic measures can be crafted.

“The best research you can do is talk to people.”

– Sir Terrance Pratchett, English author, humorist, and satirist.

HOW: The research for this report included nearly 30 interviews with economic development leaders, regional agencies, and other economic and workforce development stakeholders from across the seven most southern counties. It also involved a thorough review of many comprehensive policy reports already in circulation, including county annual reports, strategic plans, and exhaustive regional workforce development proposals. A full list of resources can be found on the “citations” page at the end of this report, and the CCSNJ is grateful that so many individuals were willing to share their time and expertise with our team.

“The rumors are terrible and cruel but honey, most of them are true.”

– Lyric from *New Romantics*, song by Taylor Swift, American singer and songwriter.

WHY NOT: What this report *does not discuss* is that the state’s high cost of living, highest in the nation property taxes, fourth highest in the nation corporation business tax, high income tax rate and confusing, overly aggressive regulatory framework all work simultaneously to stunt economic growth, not just in South Jersey, but the entire state. Although these factors are collectively making New Jersey an unfriendly place to do business that is not the purpose of this report. Instead, the CCSNJ aims to help policymakers better understand what makes South Jersey, South Jersey leading to economic development policies that consider the unique landscape and needs of the region.

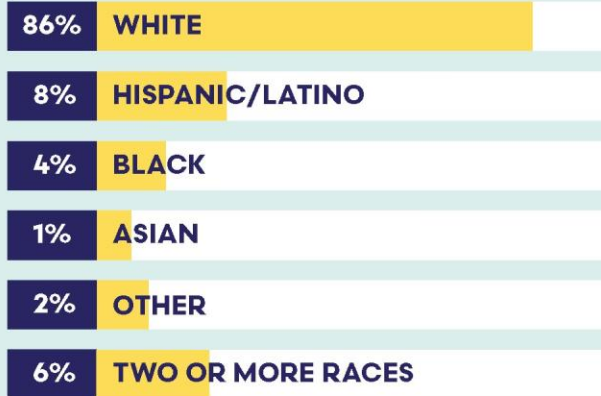
CAPE MAY COUNTY



COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN OF POPULATION



FUN FACT

Cape May, city and county, were named after a Dutch Captain, Cornelius Jacobsen Mey. Due to a misspelling on the original paperwork, Cape "Mey" became Cape "May".

THE TOP THREE

INDUSTRIES

- 01 Seasonal Tourism/Hospitality
- 02 Healthcare
- 03 Fishing and Farming

EMPLOYERS

- 01 Cape Regional Health System
- 02 Morey's Pier
- 03 Colonial Electric Supply

HIGHER EDUCATION



Atlantic Cape
Community College

USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



1.4%

ECONOMIC GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

POSSIBILITIES



The opportunities in **unmanned aircrafts/drone development** are plentiful in the county due to the Cape May County Airport's designation as one of the FAA's UAS (unmanned aircraft systems) test sites.



Continued expansion of **wineries/breweries**, and the overall agritourism industry, to elongate the traditional summer tourism season and provide more year-round job opportunities.



Targeted **economic incentive programs** to attract companies that can grow the labor pool outside of the county's dominant tourism industry.



Increase in skilled workers and **cross certifications for skilled labor** with neighboring counties, which can help bolster employment opportunities in the county.

HURDLES



Lack of **year-round jobs** due to the county's reliance on the tourism industry.



Environmental restrictions that limit development and redevelopment opportunities, and therefore the diversification of the economy.



Lack of **public transit** options, specifically limited bus routes and no rail access in the county. **Route 55's incompleteness** also provides a hurdle for residents and tourists during the summer season and poses a safety hazard during weather incidents limiting access in and out of the county.



Certain areas with limited **broadband access** and broadband infrastructure impede economic growth possibilities.

TOP THREE POLICY SUGGESTIONS

01

INCENTIVES FOR NEW INDUSTRIES: Working with the New Jersey Legislature and NJEDA to identify incentive programs that can help diversify the county's economy with year-round jobs, specifically in potential growth industries including aviation research and agritourism.

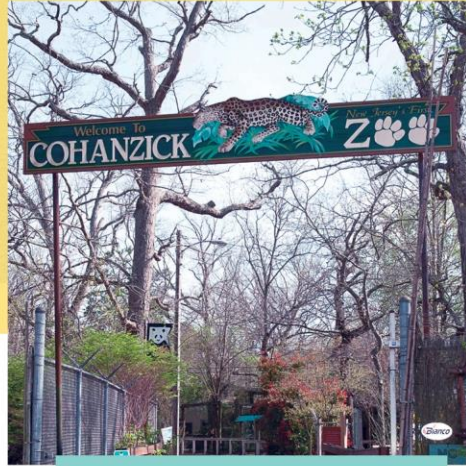
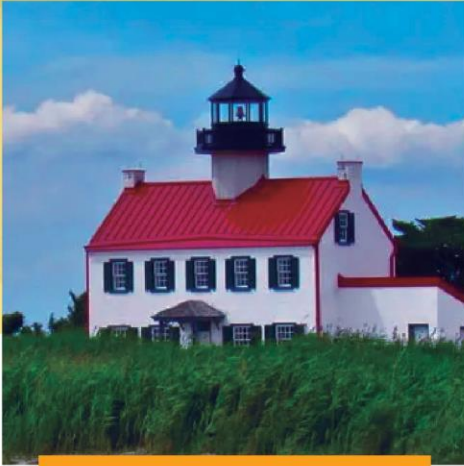
02

TRANSPORTATION: Increase public transportation options to assist county residents, grow tourism opportunities, and relieve traffic congestion in the summer months. Revisit the environmental concerns around the extension of New Jersey state highway Route 55, which was in the original design plans from the early 1960s but canceled in 1975.

03

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Cape May County has seen the largest increase in housing prices in the state, as well as a large increase in the homeless population. Affordable housing options are needed to continue to combat homelessness and keep current residents in-county to grow the economy and fuel the local workforce.

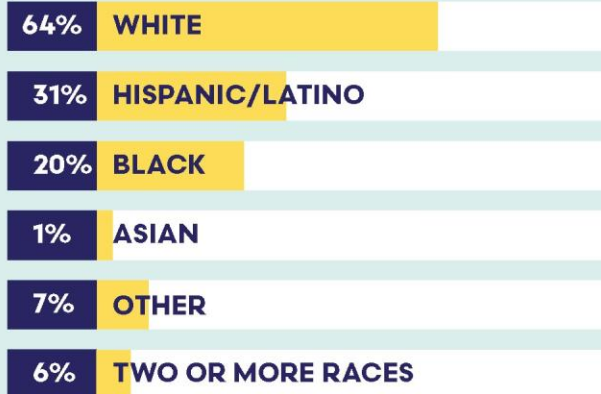
CUMBERLAND COUNTY



COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN OF POPULATION



FUN FACT

Cumberland County was a critical stop on the Underground Railroad. Notable local abolitionists such as William Still and James Still were integral in helping escaped slaves find safe passage to freedom.

THE TOP THREE

INDUSTRIES

- 01** Manufacturing
- 02** Warehousing/Distribution
- 03** Agriculture

EMPLOYERS

- 01** Inspira Health
- 02** F&S Produce/Pipco Transportation
- 03** Durand Glass/ARC International

HIGHER EDUCATION



Rowan College
South Jersey

USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



1.7%

ECONOMIC GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

POSSIBILITIES



Cumberland County is one of the few counties with a premium of **buildable land**, along with an easily accessible location and overall low cost of living for New Jersey.



Growth in **food processing** and **food manufacturing**, due to the Cumberland County Food Specialization Center, which includes shared warehousing, processing, and cold storage space, and the Food Innovation Center at Rutgers, which supports established early-stage entrepreneurs and existing food companies.



Warehousing, transportation and **logistics** have growth potential, providing new employment opportunities for county residents and rising rateables, which help keep property taxes some of the lowest in the state.



Hospitality/recreational opportunities centered around the forthcoming Trout National – The Reserve, a collaboration between MLB star Mike Trout and golf icon Tiger Woods, which will bring a championship-level 18-hole golf course and world class amenities to Vineland.

HURDLES



The county has the highest **year-round unemployment rate** in New Jersey with only 15 percent of the total population having a Bachelor's degree or higher.



Lack of **public transit options**, and the affordability of the options that exist, are a hurdle to revitalizing the county's economy.



The **agricultural nature of the county**, combine with its low population and large urban centers, provide a challenge to economic prosperity.



Lack of **broadband infrastructure** and availability, which hinders all aspects of residential life and business growth in the county.

TOP THREE POLICY SUGGESTIONS

01

MARKET DEVELOPABLE LAND: Identify and map sites primed for new development, including state and federal development incentives for sites such as Opportunity Zones, Urban Enterprise Zones, and Empowerment Zones, so interested developers can easily grasp the county's growth potential.

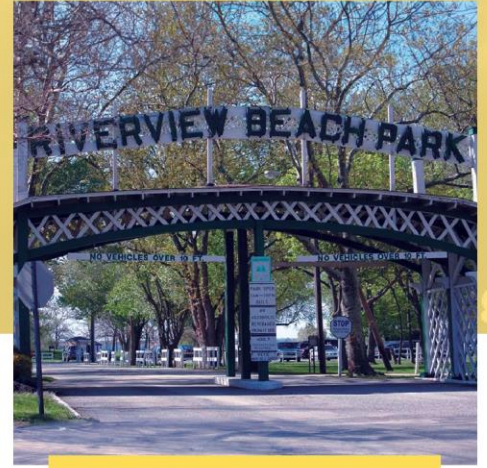
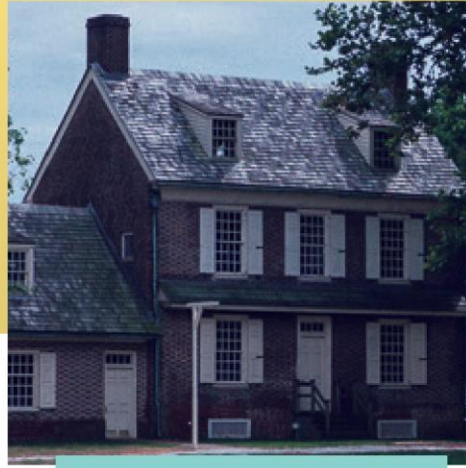
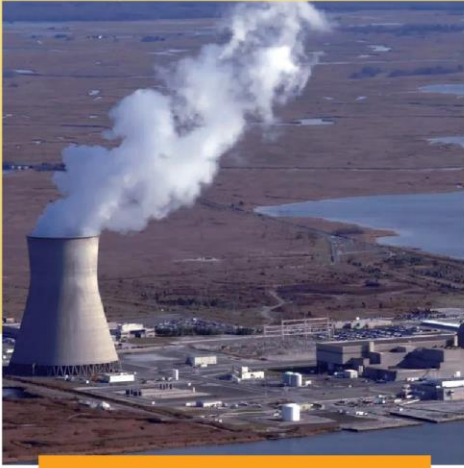
02

BROADBAND ACCESS: For Cumberland County to fully take advantage of its economic potential digital connectivity is crucial. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' newly formed Broadband Office should prioritize the county and identify solutions to expand broadband county-wide.

03

STATE INCENTIVES: Develop state incentives through the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) that target the unique construct of Cumberland County with a small population, large urban centers and vast agricultural land, which makes innovative development harder to attract.

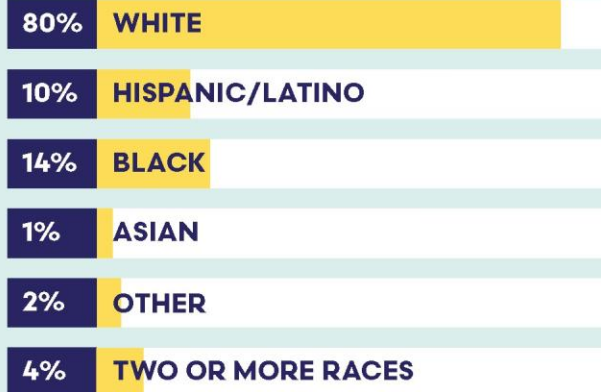
SALEM COUNTY



COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN OF POPULATION



FUN FACT

The county's name is derived from the Hebrew word "Shalom" meaning "peace" chosen by early Quaker settlers to mark the serenity of the area.

THE TOP THREE

INDUSTRIES

- 01 Agriculture
- 02 Energy (Nuclear)
- 03 Transportation and Logistics

EMPLOYERS

- 01 PSEG Nuclear, LLC
- 02 Amazon
- 03 Inspira Health

HIGHER EDUCATION



Salem Community College

USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



0.8%

ECONOMIC GROWTH & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

POSSIBILITIES



The **offshore wind industry** presents the best opportunity for economic development and job growth in decades with the establishment of the New Jersey Wind Port.



Vacant office buildings and **available land** adjacent to the New Jersey Turnpike and Interstate 295 provide excellent opportunities for manufacturing and logistics industries to develop/relocate along the New York to Washington D.C. corridor.



With Inspira Health's recent acquisition of Salem Medical Center comes possibilities for **expanded healthcare services** and, as a result, job growth in the healthcare industry.



Salem County sees potential for the **film industry** to grow in their area. The county recently partnered with the New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission (NJMPTVC) to become a county certified Film Ready destination.

HURDLES



Salem County is predicted to have the **largest population and labor force decreases** in the state through 2034.



Salem City and Penns Grove are both designated **"food deserts"** with little easy access to quality food. There are only four supermarkets in the entire county.



Lack of **public transit** options are a hurdle to revitalizing the county's economy and a main driver of high county unemployment rates.



The **agricultural nature** of the county, combine with its low population, provide a challenge to economic prosperity.

TOP THREE POLICY SUGGESTIONS

01

WIND ENERGY: Although the industry, and therefore the county, saw unexpected setbacks in 2023, 2024 is off to a more optimistic start with the announcement of two new projects. The current Administration remains committed to making South Jersey the hub for wind energy and Salem County the home for wind manufacturing in the Northeast.

02

FOOD DESERTS: The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) is attempting to address the food desert issue statewide. But given Salem County's limited public transit options to obtain healthy food policymakers should prioritize the county and work with the private sector to attract food retailers.

03

FILM INDUSTRY: New Jersey is the birthplace of film and thanks to strategic state incentives, the industry is seeing a rebirth across the state. Salem County is making their communities "film ready" and have been actively working with NJMPTVC to become a viable shooting location in the state.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

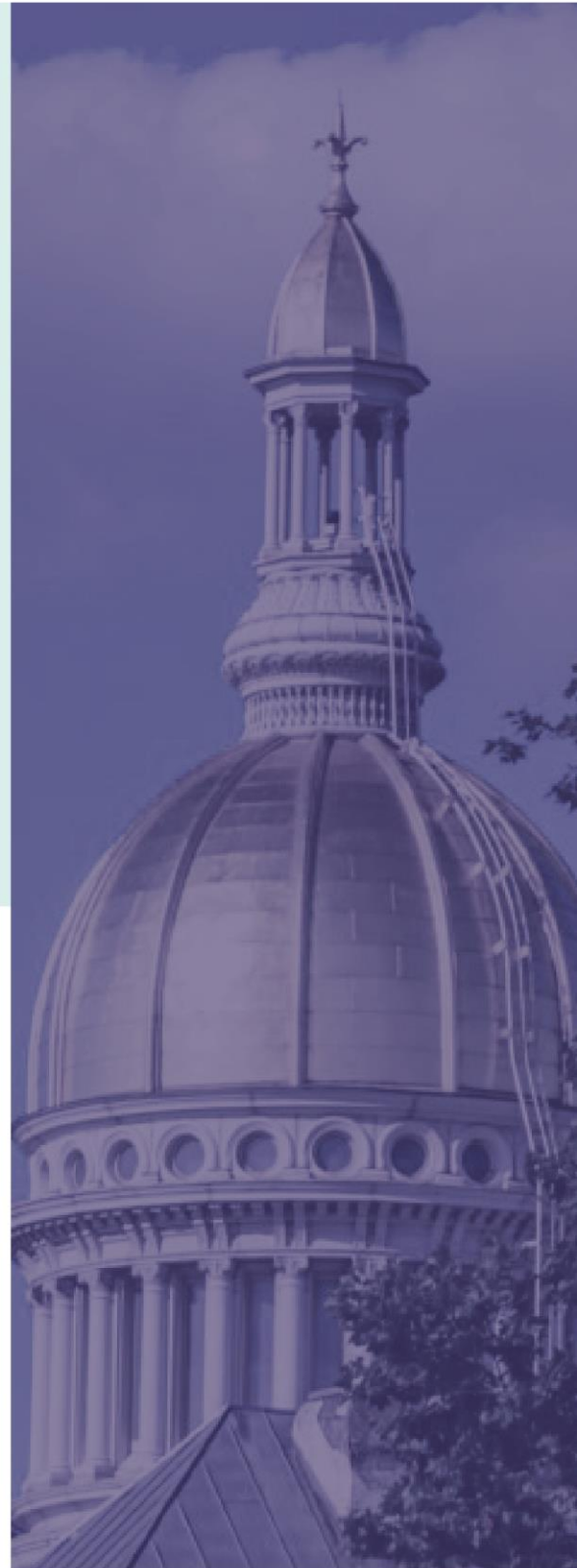
THE TOP FOUR SOUTH JERSEY ISSUES:

- 01** Lack of Public Transportation/Transportation Infrastructure
- 02** Broadband Accessibility
- 03** Equitable Incentives Tailored to South Jersey's Unique Needs & Underserved Areas
- 04** Shortage of Housing Options

“Success isn’t about the end result, it’s about what you learned along the way.”

– Vera Wang, American Fashion Designer

The preceding pages make one thing clear – although South Jersey is made up of seven differing counties with varying landscapes, needs, possibilities, and challenges there are just as many similarities as there are differences. The top four issues facing the region can be broken down as follows:



Lack of Public Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure

Much of South Jersey is a “transit desert,” with little passenger rail service south of the City of Camden and minimal bus service. The simple fact is that the further south you go, the worse public transportation options are. It is well-known that NJ TRANSIT (NJT) is operating at a billion-dollar deficit and that the state needs to think creatively about funding options for improvements to current infrastructure, while also realizing new transportation opportunities for South Jersey. However, it should be noted that the CCSNJ *does not support* reinstating the 2.5 percent surcharge to the Corporate Business Tax (CBT) or the newly proposed 15 percent fare hike to fund NJT – especially since it serves so little of the region. Notably, those that NJT does serve in South Jersey are in the region’s poorest communities and would disproportionately impact people of color, all the more reason for the CCSNJ’s opposition.

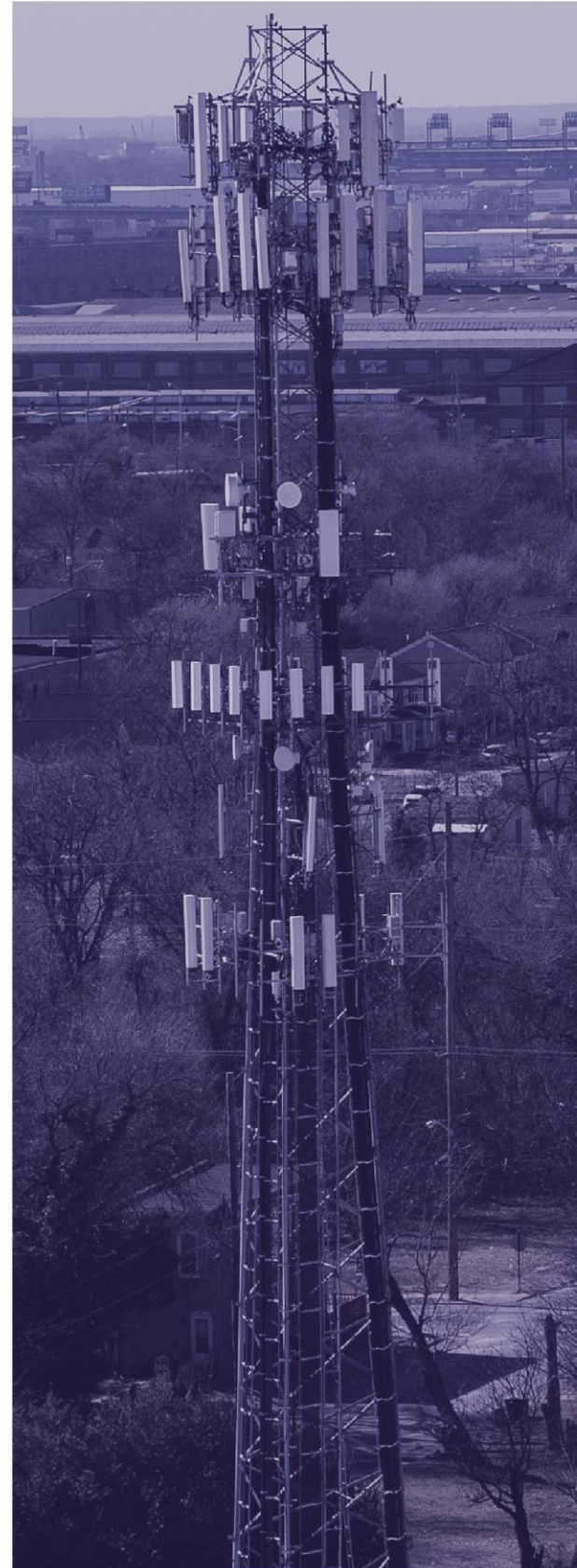
- ✓ Better **marketing** of the *Atlantic City Line (ACL)*, the *River Line* and the *PATCO Speedline*.
- ✓ Completion of the **Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL)**.
- ✓ Completion of NJT’s **South Jersey Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System**.
- ✓ More **bus lines** to “transit deserts” with new economic opportunities and jobs, such as the New Jersey Wind Port in Salem County.
- ✓ The **extension of Route 55** into Cape May County.



Broadband Accessibility

The inability to access high-speed internet in certain areas of South Jersey, specifically Cumberland and Salem counties, is a clear obstruction to economic growth and workforce development. Access aside, certain underserved areas of the seven most southern counties find themselves struggling to keep up with the necessary technologies to tap into broadband access, which trickles into all aspects of everyday life and many of the region's challenges – education, business operations, workforce growth, and unemployment rates, to name a few.

- ✓ NJBPU's newly established **Office of Broadband Connectivity** should prioritize South Jersey, studying the intricacies that have historically hindered broadband access in the region and providing innovative solutions.
- ✓ Establishment of more creative **public-private partnerships** to provide affordable internet to rural, unserved homes and businesses.
- ✓ Accessing more **federal and state funding** for broadband infrastructure and to invest in broadband technologies for underserved areas.



Equitable Incentives for South Jersey's Unique Characteristics & Underserved Areas

Economic incentives are a fundamental part of New Jersey's business retention and attraction strategy, but they are not often tailored to the unique needs of the region. Historically, this has led to most awards going to businesses in the northern and central parts of the state, a trend that should be more thoroughly examined. Additionally, according to NJ.com's 2023 article entitled, "The 35 Poorest Towns in New Jersey, ranked," 13 of the 35, or 37 percent, are located in the seven most southern counties of New Jersey. For South Jersey to grow, the state must take into consideration how to rebuild the poorest communities that often have the highest unemployment rates and disproportionately impact people of color.

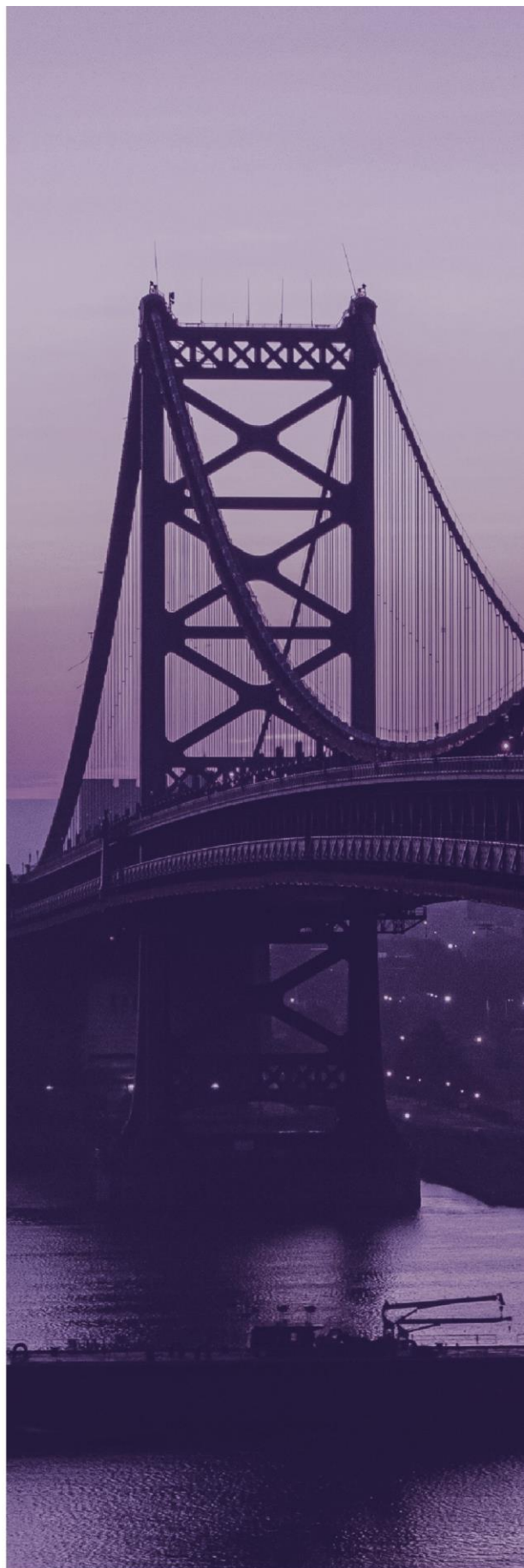
- ✓ **Better communication** about incentive programs available to attract businesses to urban areas and **more flexibility** in how these programs are designed with consideration given to each specific county's needs.
- ✓ Ensure incentive policies align with the **broader economic needs of South Jersey**, such as increased worker training programs, public transportation options, food access needs and housing opportunities.
- ✓ **Access to capital** remains a top issue for individuals with an entrepreneurial spirit, especially for people of color in urban areas. Greater diversity of investment vehicles and intermediary financial institutions can bridge the gap between money centers and entrepreneurs seeking capital.
- ✓ Consider incentive programs that focus on the **diversification of the region's economy**. Certain parts of the region are still reliant on one or two industries, and often those areas also have the highest unemployment rates.



Shortage of Housing Options

Since the pandemic, South Jersey saw an influx of individuals moving out of Philadelphia and into the Jersey suburbs, which put a strain on the region's already limited housing options. Additionally, housing prices skyrocketed across the country, from home ownership to leasing and renting properties. As a result, the homeless population has risen 17 percent in New Jersey – with some of the most significant increases seen in South Jersey.

- ✓ Provide incentives for developers to repurpose **vacant shopping malls and office spaces** into housing options for individuals of all income levels.
- ✓ Affordable housing funding needs to be directed towards the populations most in need, and those areas that have seen the greatest spike in **homelessness**.
- ✓ Identify housing opportunities near **new business development projects** to provide opportunities for employees to live in the communities they work.
- ✓ As the **higher education** community continues to thrive across the region, housing options should be prioritized for students, as well as new graduates hoping to work in South Jersey.



Conclusion

Although a misunderstood and sometimes overlooked region of the state, South Jersey's economic growth and workforce development possibilities are plentiful. In fact, it is one of the only areas of the state remaining with the space for major economic expansion. The CCSNJ is hopeful that this analysis of the seven-most southern counties of New Jersey can help statewide policymakers better understand the region's challenges and opportunities as they determine their legislative priorities for the next two years. As the new legislative session begins, now is the time to look towards maximizing South Jersey's strengths and enacting policies that will make the region, and therefore the entire state, a friendlier place to do business. The CCSNJ looks forward to being a partner in this process and working on both sides of the political aisle to enact real change for the residents and businesses of South Jersey.



CITATIONS

RESOURCES

- Burlington County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Annual Report – Program Year 22
- Choose New Jersey
- Complex Magazine
- Cumberland County Improvement Authority's Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Cumberland – Salem – Cape May County Workforce Development Plan, 2019 – 2023
- JobsEQ, 2016-2020
- Is South Jersey Getting its Fair Share of Public Goods?, *Rutgers-Camden Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Policy*
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- Salem County Economic Development Quarterly Newsletters, 2023
- Seeking Work in Southern Jersey, *Rutgers-Camden Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Policy*
- *Smart Brevity: The Power of Saying More with Less* by Jim VandeHei, Mike Allen, and Roy Schwartz
- South Jersey Workforce Development Regional Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, prepared by the South Jersey Workforce Collaborative
- Tax Foundation
- *The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition*, New Orleans, 1884-1885. p. 225.
- Transportation Accessibility in Southern New Jersey, *Rutgers-Camden Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Policy*
- USAFacts
- United States Census Bureau

PHOTOS

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- www.atlanticblueberry.com
- WWW.lucytheelephant.org

BURLINGTON COUNTY

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- www.johnsonsfarm.com
- www.co.burlington.nj.us
- www.columbusfarmersmarket.com
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- www.thelandistheater.com
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- www.rowan.edu
- www.thebroadwaytheatre.org
- www.rowan.edu/fossils
- *Gloucester County Courthouse in Woodbury, New Jersey* - Jerrye & Roy Klotz, MD

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