



Monroe Senior Center

Date: Monday, November 19, 2018, 11am – 2pm

Location: Monroe Senior Center, 12 Halsey Reed Rd, Monroe Township, NJ 08831

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Event Summary

This was the first Destination 2040 outreach event. The outreach booth was stationed in the lobby of the Monroe Senior Center. Rutgers POET engaged with approximately 75 people, based on the number of comments, however there were more people who engaged but either agreed with an already posted comment or couldn't think of a comment. Most respondents did not fill out a demographic card at this event. The senior center was chosen because Monroe has many retirement communities and has the oldest median age of all the municipalities in Middlesex County.

Survey Responses

Summary Respondents largely like aspects of the county related to these themes in the following order: (1) Public Services & Facilities; (2) Transportation; (3) Land Use & Development. Respondents' comments regarding changes they would make in the county mainly touched on: (1) Land Use & Development; (2) Transportation; (3) Public Services & Facilities.

Question #1 Responses *What do you like about living/working in Middlesex County?*

Public Services & Facilities (17 comments) The most common positive response from participants highlighted their appreciation for the senior center, and the many resources and activities hosted by the senior center and the library.

- Senior Center
 - Love the Senior Center – like a hotel!
 - Senior center is nice and rec center has activities like pickle ball

- Karen at the senior center is great. Innovative!
- I like the senior center
- Senior community is awesome
- Senior services in Monroe are great (3 comments)
- Monroe senior center is reliable and helps people with everything (2 comments)
- Senior care
- They care about retired people
- All the activities at the senior center and it's a great resource
- Library
 - Monroe library is wonderful – clubs, books, music, lessons, etc.
 - The library is excellent. Good communication.
- Government
 - Monroe has good police and mayor
 - Government is very efficient

Transportation (7 comments) Participants appreciated the accessibility to other areas and senior-centric transportation options.

- Proximity/Accessibility to other areas
 - Easy access to Princeton (2 comments)
 - Easy access to many airports
- Other
 - Good transportation for seniors (2 comments)
 - Not much traffic
 - Plenty of parking

Land Use & Development (5 comments) Participants liked the rural feel of the township.

- Rural feel
 - Rural is nice and open farmlands
 - Country-like
 - Ruralness in Monroe area
- Other
 - Nice area and lots to do
 - Everything needed is here in Monroe

Arts & Culture (4 comments) Participants liked the performances and art shows and that there was a lot to do.

- Art shows for all age groups
- Olde Town in Piscataway
- Performances
- The movie theater has a great price!

Miscellaneous (4 comments) Respondents liked the location and enjoyed living in Monroe.

- Proximity/Location
 - Great central location - access to Pennsylvania and New York City
 - Centrally located
- Other
 - Everything
 - I like living here.



Public Health

- Urgent care centers are great and close by (24 hours and 7 days/week)
- Abundant supply of ortho/cardio doctors!

Public Safety

- Peace of mind
- Monroe is very safe

Parks & Open Space

- Parks – Roosevelt and Johnson

Economic Opportunity

- Less expensive affordable place to live for seniors

Question #2 Responses *What would you change about Middlesex County?*

Land Use & Development (21 comments) Respondents overwhelmingly felt that there were not enough shopping opportunities in the township. Additionally, three other respondents wanted a walkable downtown area, and some participants thought there was too much development.

- Too much development
 - Too much growth and development (2 comments)
 - Too many new apartment buildings
- Not enough shopping
 - No Wegman's or Trader Joes, need more supermarkets (5 comments)

- Why are stores and restaurants not coming here?
- Need more and better restaurants (3 comments)
- Not enough shopping places – Route 33 would be great (3 comments)
- Need to go outside Monroe to shop (2 comments)
- Empty stores in new center
- Walkable downtown
 - Need more mixed-use development with housing and shopping and other uses together
 - Need a downtown, more livable community that is walkable (2 comments)

Transportation (17 comments) Respondents wanted more transportation options -specifically, public transit and active transit. They also noted that there were not enough street lights or street signs.

- Too much traffic (2 comments)
- Public Transit
 - More trains and better transportation
 - Public transportation is poor!
 - Middlesex County does not have enough transportation to various destinations.
 - Transportation is not accessible for home health aid.
- Bike and pedestrian access
 - Need to drive everywhere
 - Can't cycle here
 - Can't walk anywhere
- Street Design
 - No street signs for many places – can't find what street I'm on (2 comments)
 - Street signs should be lighted
 - No roads that accommodate the new buildings
 - Streets need paving
 - Need street lights (3 comments)

Public Services & Facilities (11 comments) Participants focused on schools being overcrowded and often tied that to the rapid development. They also felt that county services were too far away and that taxes were too high.

- Schools
 - Schools
 - Severe demand on school space
 - Need better coordination between school boards and town planners
 - Developers should build schools as part of new communities
 - Not enough schools and more kids
 - Too many schools (2 comments)
- Services
 - Restore outreach services for seniors
 - Services are all in New Brunswick or Woodbridge – too far (2 comments)
 - Lunch program at senior center

Economic Opportunity (7 comments) Participants feel that taxes and cost of living are too high.

- Taxes
 - Taxes are too high (2 comments)
 - Taxes are too high for seniors
 - New Jersey saving on taxes for veterans is much lower than NY
- Cost of living
 - Cost of living is too high (2 comments)
 - Cost of living is lower in Pennsylvania

Housing

- More senior and low-income housing in New Brunswick
- More homeless shelters

Arts & Culture

- Concerts and plays in the park – end up outside concerts

Parks & Open Space

- Too many cricket fields

Public Health

- No hospital close by in the county

Miscellaneous

- More balanced politics
- Change some of the politicians

Demographic Summary

The following demographic information is incomplete. Only six out of at least 75 participants filled out a demographic information card at this event. Based on the information that was collected, all participants were over 64 years old, males and females were equally represented, and the ethnic breakdown of participants was mostly White and Asian-American.



