



Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

Date: Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 11 am–2 pm

Location: Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, New Brunswick

Rutgers POET Staff: Trish Sanchez, Ted Metz, Donna Iken

Event Summary

The outreach table was stationed at the entrance to the cafeteria on the second floor of the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. The outreach table was set up during lunchtime in order to catch as participants as possible. Members of the Middlesex County Office of Planning assisted Rutgers staff to facilitate the outreach. Staff engaged with at least 155 participants based on the number of comments and feedback cards received.

Survey Responses

Summary The majority of respondents' comments about what they like in the county touched on the following themes, ranked by number of comments: (1) Transportation; (2) Arts & Culture; (3) Land Use & Development and Miscellaneous. Comments about changes that should be made in the county mainly focused on: (1) Transportation; (2) Economic Opportunity; (3) Public Services & Facilities.

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

Transportation (32 comments) Overall, respondents felt that they had a good commute and that there were many transportation options for them in the area, allowing for easy access to everything they need.

- Commuting
 - Close to work (9 comments)
 - Easy/good commute (3 comments)
 - Easy commute to New Brunswick from Hillsborough
- Access
 - Convenience/easy to get around (4 comments)

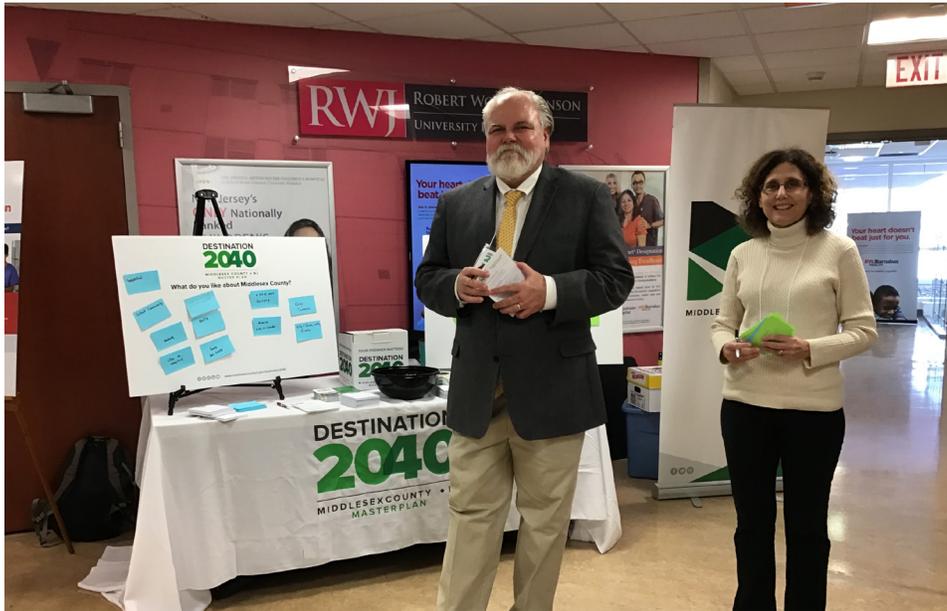
- Good transportation options/convenient to all forms of transportation (3 comments)
- Easy access to major roads and highways (2 comments)
- 30 minutes to the airport
- Public Transit
 - Train (2 comments)
 - Express trains to New York
 - Easy to get buses to city
 - Train station in New Brunswick is very close
- Tow path (part of East Coast Greenway) is great
- Blair Road
- New Brunswick traffic
- Route 18 is so much better
- Road resurfacing

Arts & Culture (29 comments) Many respondents stated that they enjoy the friendly people in their communities, the diversity, and the varied activities available in the county.

- Community/People
 - Friendly people (4 comments)
 - Great community (3 comments)
 - I like the tolerance level of majority of our people
 - Spotswood – small community
 - Grew up here, it's home, very happy here
 - Nice community living
 - Dynamic people
- Diversity
 - Diversity (8 comments)
 - Cultural diversity/melting pot (3 comments)
- Activities
 - I like that you guys have multiple things to do (2 comments)
 - Plenty of activities for families and community to participate in
 - Proximity of areas with things to do, ballpark, shore, theaters, restaurants, lots going on
 - Plays in the Park
- The culture

Land Use & Development (20 comments) Participants liked the variety of shopping and dining options and easy access to jobs and retail.

- Dining
 - Plenty of restaurants (4 comments)
 - Good bar/restaurant scene (3 comments)
 - Great lunch option in downtown New Brunswick
 - Nice restaurants to go to after work
 - Places to eat
- Shopping (5 comments)
- Everything is here that I need–work, shop (3 comments)
- Upcoming developments to housing, businesses, and transportation
- Good supermarkets



Miscellaneous (20 comments) Respondents liked the general proximity to other areas like cities, rural places, and the beach.

- Proximity/Location
 - Central location (6 comments)
 - Easy access to city (3 comments)
 - Close to both city and country (3 comments)
 - Close to beach (3 comments)
 - Close proximity to the city while still offering a suburban lifestyle (2 comments)
 - Close to Princeton
- Nothing (2 comments)
- Everything's good

Public Services & Facilities (19 comments) The most common response was appreciation for quality education, especially higher education. People also appreciated the social services available in their communities.

- Education
 - Schools (4 comments)
 - Rutgers (3 comments)
 - Middlesex County College (2 comments)
 - Strong academic institutions
 - Like being close to university
- Social services
 - Lots of resources for help/aid (2 comments)
 - Social services
 - Elijah's Promise
 - Veterans services
- Monroe Tennis Center
- Sports options
- Bulk trash

Public Health (10 comments) Participants liked the many high quality hospitals nearby.

- RWJ Hospital (4 comments)

- All the good hospitals around (4 comments)
- Great access to healthcare
- Doctors and Children's Hospital

Parks & Open Space (9 comments) Participants liked the parks and open space.

- Open space and parks (5 comments)
- Aesthetics/beautiful (2 comments)
- Rutgers Gardens
- Dog parks

Economic Opportunity (8 comments) Participants liked the job opportunities and many businesses in the area.

- Good/great jobs (2 comments)
- Economic opportunities
- Fast-paced working environment
- I enjoy my place of employment
- Area has numerous businesses
- Reasonable taxes
- Cost of living

Public Safety (7 comments) Respondents liked the quiet and safe conditions in parts of the county.

- Quiet
 - Quiet and clean in Old Bridge (2 comments)
 - Good quiet area
 - Quiet in East Brunswick
- Safety (2)
- North Brunswick has a great police force and lots of services

Environment

- Ecological prevention efforts
- Rutgers CSA, need more of that

Historic Preservation

- History

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

Transportation (103 comments) During this outreach event, the greatest number of comments collected on a single topic referred to traffic (about 60 comments), and nearly half of all collected comments focused on transportation. Other common concerns were parking, better public transit options, and poor roadway conditions.

- Traffic/Congestion on roads
 - Traffic on Route 18 (25 comments)
 - General traffic (18 comments)
 - Downtown New Brunswick traffic (8 comments)
 - Traffic on Route 1 (3 comments)

- Piscataway to Route 1 has a design defect
- Traffic from 287/Easton Avenue traffic (2 comments)
- Too many 18-wheelers on Route 130
- Traffic on Route 33 in Monroe
- Route 27 from New Brunswick to South Brunswick needs to be expanded from 2 lanes to at least one more lane. Bumper to bumper all the way home.
- Better and more parking near New Brunswick and the hospital (12 comments)
- Public Transit
 - Better/more transportation options (2 comments)
 - Less cars
 - NJ Transit bus is late or too early
 - More frequent train stops on NJ Transit
 - Local train in Middlesex County
 - More train service
 - Expand train service for commuters to East Brunswick
 - Broader access to public transportation! Better/more bus routes
 - Need more light rail to not have to transfer in Newark, no mass transit, only rely on one highway
- Roadway Conditions
 - Potholes and bumps (5 comments)
 - Roads need improvement (6 comments)
 - Paving in Edison
 - Work more closely with Monmouth County to improve roads
 - Clean streets like Somerset Street of debris behind and in front of Ronald McDonald of New Brunswick
- Bicycle and Pedestrian
 - Improve pedestrian bridge on Rt 27/Raritan
 - Bike lanes on Rt 27 and other places
 - Pedestrian crossing on Albany in afternoon
 - Enforcement of pedestrian traffic laws
- Widen/improve Route 18 (2 comments)
- Need speed bumps
- Stuck in one lane because no left or right turns

Economic Opportunity (21 comments) Respondents talked about high taxes and high cost of living.

- Taxes
 - Taxes are too high (14 comments)
 - We've lived in Middlesex County for over 40 years and raised our kids here. Now we are thinking about moving due to high taxes and congestion.
 - Property taxes are too high (2 comments)
- Cost of living
 - New Brunswick prices are too high
 - Too expensive
- Increase minimum wage
- Beat Silicon Valley
- Be more middle-class considerate due to salaries. Education: help for college students, help with their college loan debts. Cost is enormous. Loan forgiveness to be more. Open

to other careers. In finances and for medical students, etc. Homeowners' taxes need to change, car insurance needs to decrease

Public Services & Facilities (20 comments) Respondents would like to see better snow removal around the hospital, more recreation facilities, and improved education.

- Public Works
 - Improve and increase snow removal in New Brunswick, especially around the hospital (7 comments)
 - Clean up trash around town
 - Clean River Road/East Brunswick
- Recreation
 - More swim training centers, especially for kids (2 comments)
 - More events for people
 - More things for young adults to do
 - Lower cost summer camps
- Education
 - Improve standards of education
 - Schools
 - More programs in the school – focusing on sports
- I want to be sure that in Superior Court, the childcare room for domestic violence hearings is kept in the budget
- Improve emergency management
- Social assistance improvement, homeless assistance, more health fairs

Housing (8 comments) Respondents commented on the need to address homelessness and provide more affordable housing options.

- Homelessness
 - No open beds in homeless shelters in New Jersey (2 comments)
 - Homelessness on George Street
 - Invest in better shelters for homeless people
 - Homeless assistance
- Housing affordability
 - More affordable housing – development is moving people out
 - Need “real” affordable housing
- Too much gentrification, don't tear down homes to build parking lots

Miscellaneous (8 comments)

- Nothing (2 comments)
- Governmental changes, policies reforms
- Multiple use violations, ethnicity changing
- Frustrating to be near too many college students
- People's attitudes
- Reduce amount of municipalities
- New governor

Public Safety (7 comments) Respondents were mainly concerned about safety in New Brunswick.

- Safety in New Brunswick at night near the hospital (3 comments)
- Street lights because it is too dark (2 comments)

- Crime and safety in New Brunswick
- Put light on Somerset Street, by Ronald McDonald House

Parks & Open Space (6 comments) Respondents would like more parks and open space, especially for kids.

- More parks (4 comments)
- More green space and better parks
- Work on the local parks, offer more outdoor activities in the urban areas

Land Use & Development

- Develop Raritan Waterfront like how DC did Potomac
- More grocery stores near Centennial Avenue
- We could use a bar in South Brunswick

Environment

- Pollution (2 comments)
- Want to see good water supply

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Ninety-eight demographic cards were collected. Approximately two-thirds of the participants were female, as shown in Figure 1. Most participants were generally aged 25 to 64 years old, with a few respondents above 65 and below 25 years old (Figure 2). Almost half of respondents identified as white, 16 identified as Black, not Hispanic, 14 identified as Asian American, and 11 selected more than one race (Figure 3).

Figure 1

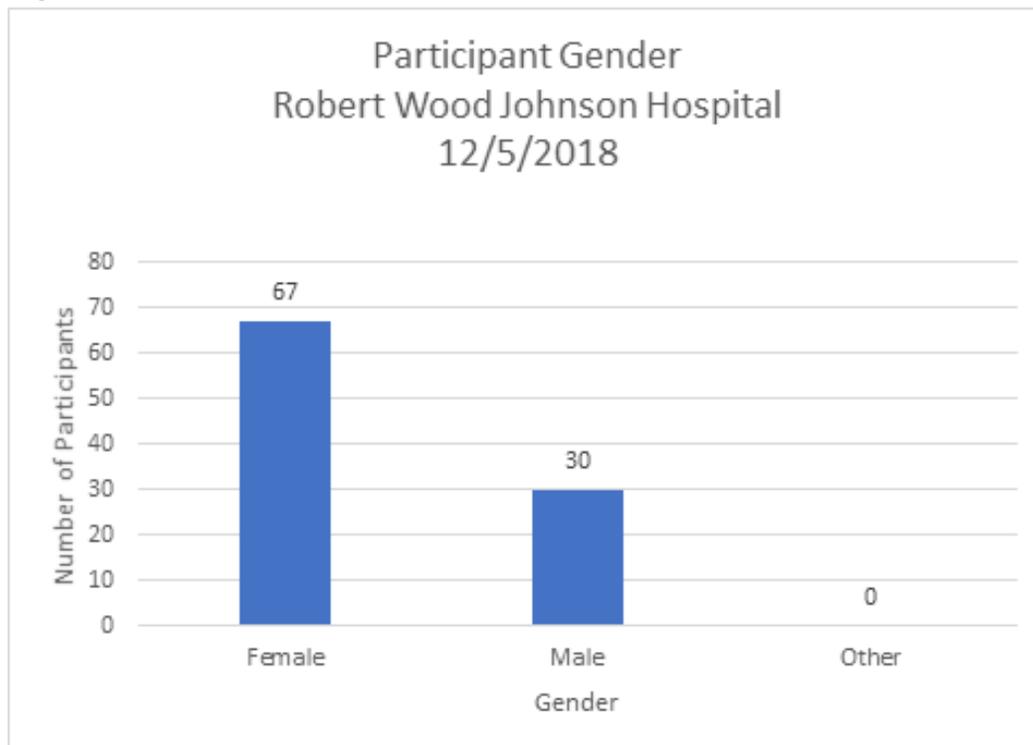


Figure 2

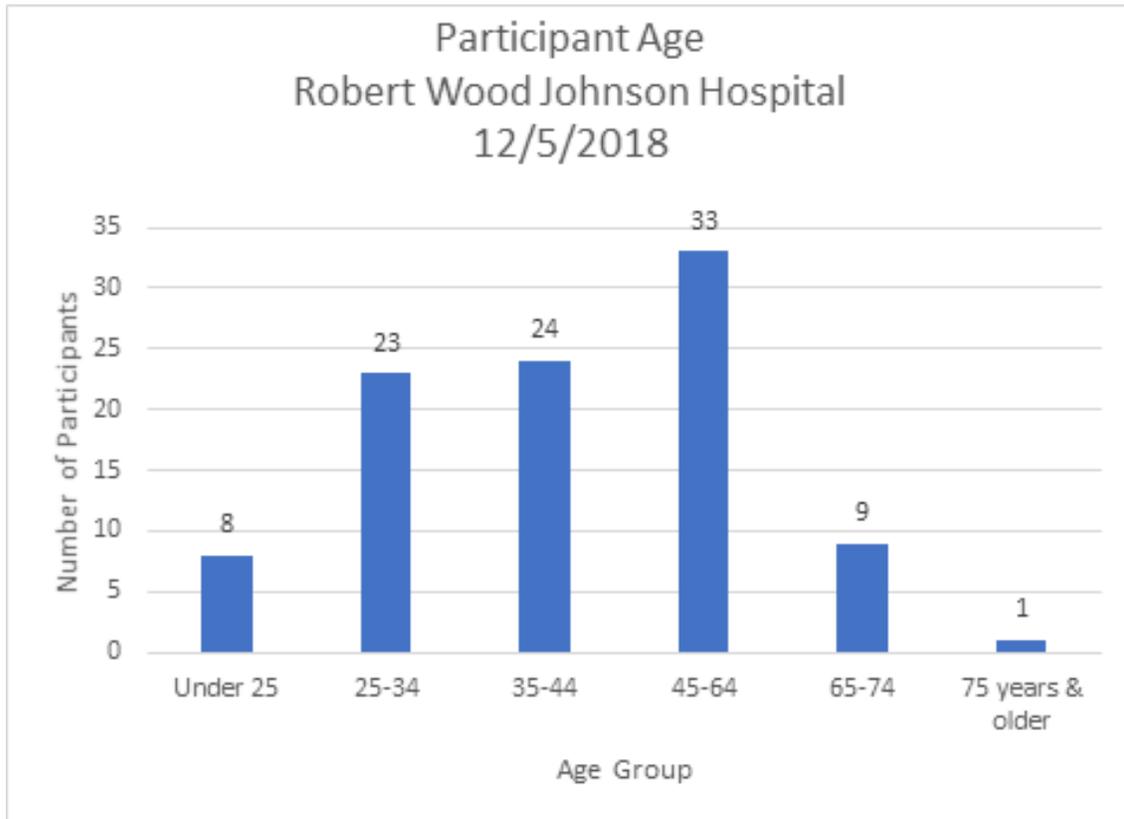


Figure 3

