



PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

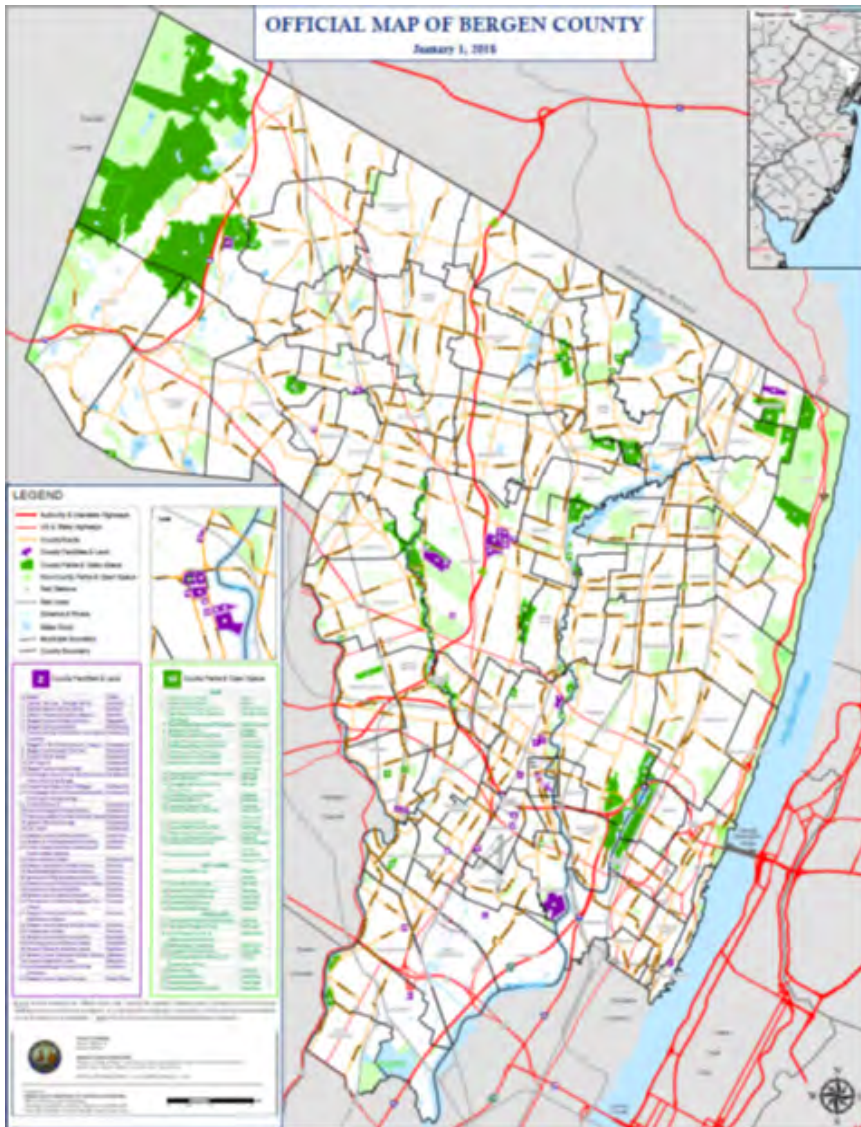
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Providing access to high quality programs, services, amenities, and facilities that address community needs is important to ensure that Bergen County maintains its high quality of life and remains a desirable place to live, work, play, and invest. While facilities and services are provided at all levels, from local up to federal levels, Bergen County plays a critical role in ensuring that specialty services and programs that would be cost-prohibitive to municipalities – and more efficient to provide at a regional scale -- are provided. Such facilities and services include public safety, health and human services, education, waste management, road maintenance, and parks and recreation.¹

This Element describes Bergen County's existing facilities and services, highlighting those owned, operated, and managed by the County of Bergen. This Element also reviews facilities and services managed on a regional or local level where the county provides a supportive role. Finally, this Element concludes with a set of Goals and Objectives.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Hackensack has served as the County Seat for Bergen County since 1710. Most county offices are located at the main administration building located at One Bergen County Plaza, with additional buildings located throughout the county. Day-to-day operations of the county government are managed by the Department of Administration and Finance, who ensures that the county has adequate funding to support these operations. The county manages 43 facilities, including the Administration Building, Courthouse and the new Justice Center located at Two Bergen County Plaza within the Bergen County Complex in **Hackensack**; the Bergen County Technical School campuses; the Jail Annex; Juvenile Detention Center; Animal Shelter and Adoption Center; Public Safety Operation Center/Law and Public Safety Institute; Housing, Health and Human Services Center; public works facilities; and, regional human service centers. This is in addition to over 9,000 acres of open space and parks, including 25 county parks, 6 county-owned golf courses, 10 county-owned historic sites, a nationally accredited zoo, 2 horseback riding centers, and an environmental center.² Bergen County's **Official County Map**, adopted February 21, 2018,³ identifies the facilities, land, open space, parks, and roads owned by the county, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:27-4.



SHARED SERVICES

Municipalities consistently face economic pressures to minimize tax increases while maintaining levels of service expected by residents and businesses. The pressure to cut the costs of government is driving towns to search for ways to share services. Bergen County has established a Division of Shared Services as part of its Public Works Department. As a result, the division has been able to partner with municipalities to offer additional services and equipment that may have been cost-prohibitive at the local level. The division offers an energy program for the procurement of electric and natural gas at reduced rates, and several municipalities now purchase gas and diesel fuel through a shared contract with the county. In addition, the Public Works Department provides municipalities with access to road equipment such as snow plows and street sweepers, as well as road salt and sign making services. The county's Department of Public Safety offers its municipalities 911 dispatch services and emergency alerts. There are also several purchasing co-ops that have been used to purchase or share supplies and equipment at reduced prices. Bergen County's municipalities have adopted inter-local agreements for a variety of different services between other municipalities, the county, and local school districts. Examples of inter-local agreements that have been adopted in Bergen County include registrar services, construction official inspector services, 911 emergency and phone services, use of police pistol ranges, shared management and maintenance of a computer network and fiber optic cable infrastructure, shared legal services, municipal court services, law enforcement services, child health services, recreational programs and facilities, leaf and brush removal, recycling collection, street sweeping, roadway brining (pre-snow), fleet maintenance, tax collection, and in the case of **Cliffside Park** and **Edgewater**, a shared Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Some of these shared services have been in place for several years. **River Vale** and **Montvale** have shared public works services through the Pascack Valley DPW since 2013, and the Pascack Joint Municipal Court, a cooperative effort between **Montvale**, **Park Ridge**, and **Woodcliff Lake** has been in place since 2011. Bergen County has at least 1 shared service agreement with each of its 70 municipalities. The county has also entered into shared service agreements with Passaic County to manage the Division of Consumer Affairs—Office of Consumer Protection, and to house Passaic County inmates at the Bergen County Jail. In 2018, the State of New Jersey, through the Department of Community Affairs (NJ DCA), launched a web-based Shared Services Portal, providing local governments and school districts with additional resources and technical assistance.



Snow plow. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

SCHOOLS

Schools are largely managed on the local level, both in Bergen County and throughout the state. It is worth noting, however, the outsized impact that schools have had on the historic development of Bergen County. While numerous descriptions of New Jersey's extensive number of municipalities have been published, a condensed summary is helpful to understanding the present-day political boundaries in New Jersey, and particularly Bergen County. In 1893, Bergen County contained 20 municipalities, 50 fewer than the present day.⁴ The following year, the New Jersey State Legislature passed the Local Public Schools Law which consolidated schools in each township into a single district and required each consolidated township district to assume the debts of the old districts. A loophole in the legislation exempted boroughs, towns, villages and cities from assuming the debts of the township school districts, as these municipalities would serve as their own school district. Around the same time, the State of New Jersey adopted legislation that made it much easier for municipal separation (i.e. de-annexation) from a parent municipality. As a result, 26 new boroughs in Bergen County were established in 1894 alone. An additional 7 boroughs were established before 1900, with even more through 1924 when Bergen County reached a total of 70 municipalities.

School districts continue to remain a local issue. As of 2021, Bergen County has 46 unified (combined primary and secondary) school districts that are comprised of the individual municipalities, and only two unified regional districts (Westwood Regional—**Washington Township** and **Westwood**, and **Hasbrouck Heights** Borough School District—**Hasbrouck Heights** and **Teterboro**).⁵ The South Bergen Jointure Commission is a regional public school district that provides specialized education and transportation services to participating local school districts, including Bogota, Carlstadt, Carlstadt-East Rutherford (Becton Regional High School District), East Rutherford, Garfield, Hasbrouck Heights, Little Ferry, Lodi, Lyndhurst, Moonachie, North Arlington, Rutherford, South Hackensack, Wallington, and Wood-Ridge. The remaining 20 municipalities have individual elementary school districts but are regionalized at the secondary level into six districts. It should be noted, however, that the presence of a district does not indicate whether residents of that municipality attend a school in that town, as some districts have sending/receiving agreements with neighboring municipalities. Only one district—**Rockleigh**—is recognized as “non-operating” at this time, as it contains no public primary or secondary school, opting instead to send its students to schools outside of the borough. The state also recognizes an additional 110 non-public schools, including religious schools, nursery and pre-schools, private latchkey programs, special services schools, and other private schools.

This is not to suggest that the county does not have a role in education. Each county contains a County Superintendent and supportive staff (including business official, education specialist, and child study supervisor) who are responsible for onsite evaluations of school districts, review and approval of district budgets and administrative contracts, health and safety inspections of school buildings, review and approval of district transportation contracts, reviews of special education programs, technical assistance to schools and parents, and issuing county substitute certificates. The County Office of Education is located in the Bergen County Administration building in **Hackensack**.

In addition to the County Superintendent, Bergen County also manages the Bergen County Technical Schools (BCTS), the Bergen County Academies, and the Bergen County Special Services School District. The Bergen County Technical School District provides full-time and part-time instruction to secondary students and adults. The district contains 3 campuses, located in **Hackensack**, **Paramus**, and **Teterboro**, and operates 3 programs on the campus of Bergen Community College. The district provides instruction in a wide variety of different programs, including arts, engineering, and health sciences. The Bergen County Academies, a subset of the Bergen County Technical Schools, is a highly selective county-wide magnet high school program, located on the **Hackensack** campus of Bergen County Technical Schools. The schools are rated among top high schools in the country. The Academies offer 7 different career-focused high school programs: Science and Technology, Business and Finance, Culinary Arts and Hospitality Administration, Engineering and Design Technology, Medical Science Technology, Technology and Computer Science, and Visual and Performing Arts (Music, Theater, and Visual). Additionally, the Bergen County Applied Technology High School--jointly run by Bergen County Technical Schools and Bergen Community College--has specialized programs in engineering technology, health professions, and cybersecurity, with a head-start goal for students to attain an Associate's Degree by graduation. The Bergen County Special Services School District provides education for students with disabilities (including programs structured around autism, multiple disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, life skills, and programs for the deaf and hard of hearing), from ages 3 through 21, as well as adult programs for individuals with developmental disabilities. Many of the programs offered by the Special Services School District are located at their facility and district office in **Paramus**, with additional campuses located throughout the county. These county programs are managed by the county through their Boards of Education, which include the County Superintendent and additional members recommended by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Board of Commissioners.

LIBRARIES

Libraries in Bergen County are managed on the local level in 62 of the 70 municipalities. These libraries, along with others in Hudson, Essex, and Passaic County, participate in the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), which serves as a consortium to manage and share information, resources, and interlibrary loan services. Eligibility for a BCCLS library account include those who reside, work, attend school or own property in a town served by a BCCLS library. The eight municipalities that do not have libraries in Bergen County include Alpine, Englewood Cliffs, Moonachie, Rockleigh, Saddle River,

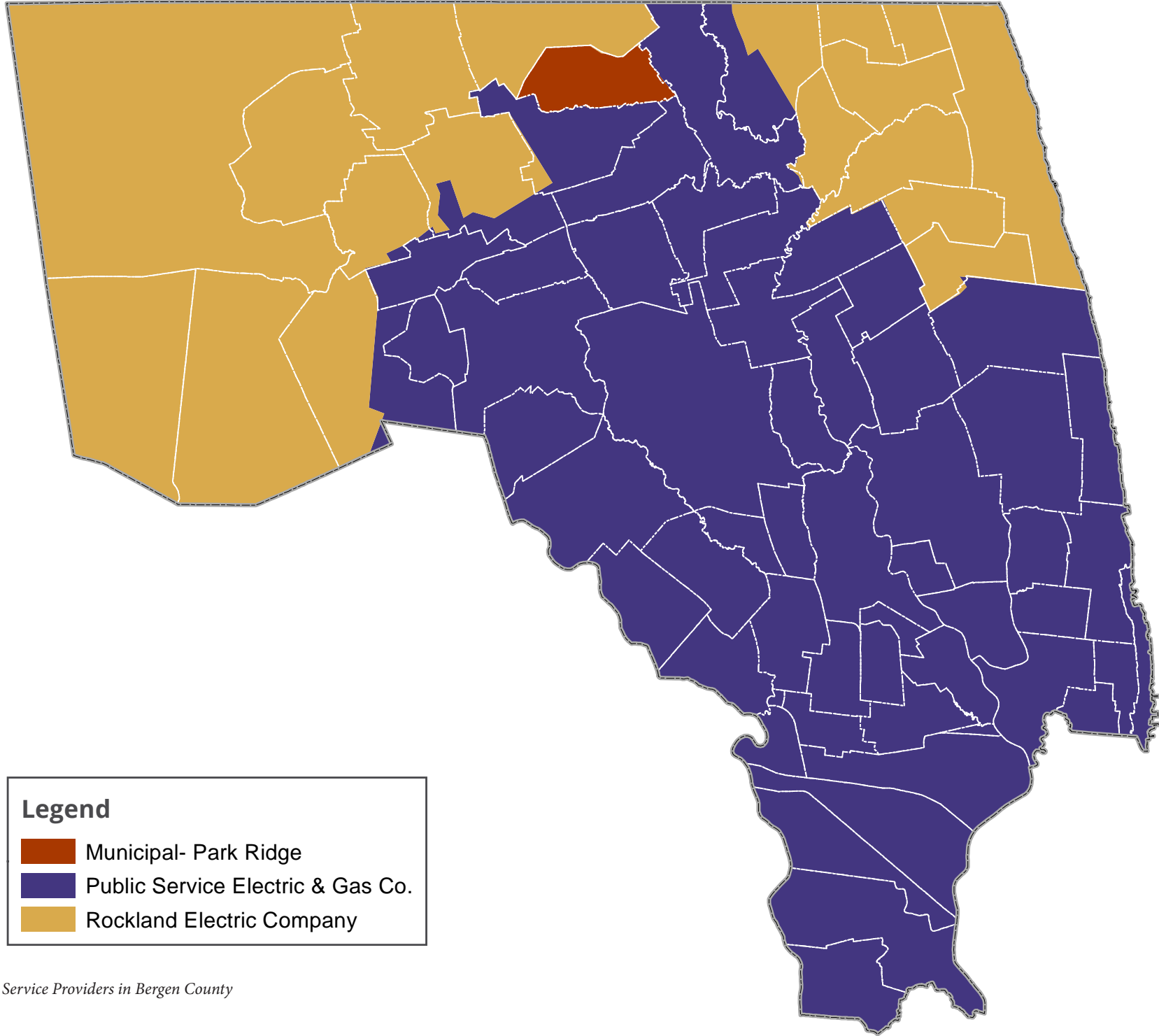
South Hackensack, Teterboro and Woodcliff Lake. Most of these municipalities have arrangements with neighboring public libraries to provide services for their residents, either free of charge or at a subsidized rate.






Edgewater Library. Source: Google StreetView



Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County



Legend

-  Municipal- Park Ridge
-  Public Service Electric & Gas Co.
-  Rockland Electric Company

Map: Electric Service Providers in Bergen County

Utility Providers in Bergen County

Southwest Bergen

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Carlstadt	BCUA**	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
East Rutherford	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Hasbrouck Heights	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Little Ferry	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Lyndhurst	PVSC	PVWC	PSE&G	PSE&G
Moonachie	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
North Arlington	PVSC	PVWC	PSE&G	PSE&G
Rutherford	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
South Hackensack	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Teterboro	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Wallington	PVSC	PVWC & Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Wood-Ridge	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G

Central Bergen

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Bogota	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Elmwood Park	PVSC	PVWC & Elmwood Park	PSE&G	PSE&G
Fair Lawn	PVSC	Fair Lawn (55%), PVWC (35%) and Veolia (10%)	PSE&G	PSE&G
Garfield	PVSC	PVWC & Garfield	PSE&G	PSE&G
Hackensack	BCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Lodi	PVSC	PVWC & Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Maywood	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
New Milford	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Oradell	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Paramus	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
River Edge	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Rochelle Park	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Saddle Brook	PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Teaneck	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G

Northern Valley

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Alpine	BCUA*	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Bergenfield	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Closter	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Cresskill	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Demarest	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Dumont	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Englewood	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Englewood Cliffs	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Harrington Park	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Haworth	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Northvale	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Norwood	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Old Tappan	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland & PSE&G
Rockleigh	Rockleigh & Orangetown	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Tenafly	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G

Pascack Valley

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Emerson	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Hillsdale	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Montvale	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Park Ridge	BCUA	Park Ridge	PSE&G	Park Ridge
River Vale	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Washington	BCUA & Ridgewood	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Westwood	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Woodcliff Lake	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland & PSE&G

BERGEN COUNTY SEWER AUTHORITIES

BCUA	Bergen County Utility Authority
PVSC	Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission
NBCUA	Northwest Bergen County Utility Authority
Ridgewood	Village of Ridgewood Division of Water Pollution Control
Oakland	Borough of Oakland Department of Water and Sewer
Rockleigh	The Borough of Rockleigh has a separate Sewer Authority which connected through the Orangetown, NY Sewerage Treatment Plant

BERGEN COUNTY WATER AUTHORITIES

Suez	Suez Water
PVWC	Passaic Valley Water Commission
Ridgewood	Village of Ridgewood Water

INDIVIDUAL MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEMS

Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Garfield, Ho-Ho-Kus, Mahwah, Oakland, Park Ridge, Ramsey and Waldwick

Sources: Water and Sewer Data prepared by Peter Kortright, PP, of Bergen County Planning. Electric and Gas service areas obtained from the New Jersey Office of GIS.

ENERGY

Northwest Bergen

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Allendale	NBCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Franklin Lakes	NBCUA & PVSC	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Glen Rock	PVSC	Ridgewood	PSE&G	PSE&G
Ho-Ho-Kus	NBCUA	Ho-Ho-Kus	PSE&G	PSE&G
Mahwah	NBCUA	Mahwah & Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland
Midland Park	NBCUA	Ridgewood	PSE&G	PSE&G
Oakland	Oakland	Oakland	PSE&G	Rockland
Ramsey	NBCUA	Ramsey	PSE&G	Rockland
Ridgewood	PVSC, NBCUA & Ridgewood	Ridgewood	PSE&G	PSE&G
Saddle River	NBCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	Rockland & PSE&G
Upper Saddle River	NBCUA	Veolia & Private Wells	PSE&G	Rockland
Waldwick	NBCUA	Waldwick	PSE&G	PSE&G
Wyckoff	NBCUA	Ridgewood	PSE&G	Rockland & PSE&G

Southeast Bergen

Municipality	Sewer	Water	Gas	Electric
Cliffside Park	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Edgewater	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Fairview	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Fort Lee	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Leonia	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Palisades Park	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Ridgefield	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G
Ridgefield Park	BCUA	Veolia	PSE&G	PSE&G

Notes

* The Borough of Alpine indicated that most of the Borough is serviced through septic systems. However, parts of the Borough are connected into the Boroughs of Cresskill and Closter, which is serviced directly by the BCUA.

** The Borough of Carlstadt has a separate Sewer Authority which specifically collects and handles industrial/commercial waste from Berry's Creek and conveys it BCUA.

Bergen County's relatively high level of urbanized development provides many consumers with direct access to utility service, and as the House Heating Fuel Table below indicates, the overwhelming majority (nearly 82.2 percent) of occupied housing units in the county utilize utility gas as a heating fuel, followed by electricity (11.0 percent). The remainder that use heating fuel (approximately 6.3 percent, or 21,414 households), utilize decentralized fuel sources, including fuel oil, kerosene, bottled gas, wood, coal/coke, solar energy, or other fuels. It is also estimated that 1,806 housing units in the county do not use fuel to heat their house, or do not have heating equipment; it is not clear from the Census if the lack of heating fuel is by choice, only noting that it refers to housing units that do not use any fuel or that do not have heating equipment.

For those utilizing centralized electric and gas systems, energy providers cover specific areas of the state as part of a service territory. While deregulation in the utility market allows consumers the choice of where to purchase electric and gas, distribution is still provided by the utility. In Bergen County, natural gas delivery service is provided entirely by PSE&G. Electric service delivery for the northeast and northwestern sections of the county is provided by Rockland Electric Company, except for Park Ridge whose own municipal electric department delivers electricity to approximately 3,700 customers. Electric service delivery for the remainder of the county is provided by PSE&G. See the table to the left for a list of utility providers by municipality.

House Heating Fuel By Occupied Housing Units

Type	Bergen County		New Jersey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Utility Gas	279,229	82.2%	2,426,524	75.1%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	5,190	1.5%	65,023	2.0%
Electricity	37,407	11.0%	421,548	13.0%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	14,689	4.3%	271,250	8.4%
Coal or coke	127	0.0%	1,244	0.0%
Wood	228	0.1%	12,570	0.4%
Solar energy	158	0.0%	3,997	0.1%
Other fuel	1,022	0.3%	13,395	0.4%
No fuel used	1,806	0.5%	16,323	0.5%
Total	339,856	100.0%	3,231,874	100.0%

Source: 2015-2019 ACS

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The linkages between the natural and built environment require the effective management of both to ensure the overall health and quality of life of the county, particularly as it relates to water resources. As such, the Environment and Natural Resources Element evaluates how these water resources are utilized and affected by the built environment; including surface waters, drinking water supplies and delivery systems, stormwater control, and wastewater management. Given the critical importance of water to the natural environment, built environment, and the economy, as well as the complexity of managing water resources in a highly-developed county, water resource management is included throughout this element and the Environment and Natural Resources Element, but also Land Use and Housing (as it applies to stormwater), Open Space, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation (recreational water access and storm resiliency), Economic Vitality (tourism and transit), Transportation and Mobility (transit and stormwater management), and Sustainability (natural resource protection and storm resilience).



PUBLIC WORKS

The county's Public Works Department is responsible for managing much of the county's infrastructure, including the design, construction, and maintenance of county-owned buildings, bridges, roads, traffic signals, drainage systems, solar panels, and facilities, as well as mechanical vehicular services and the management of shared services. As described in the Environment and Natural Resources Element, this includes over 450 miles of roads, over 9,000 acres of county-owned public lands, and 43 buildings with 2 complexes in **Hackensack** and **Paramus**. The department is also responsible for the county's paratransit program, the Bergen County Division of Community Transportation, reviewed in further detail in the Transportation and Mobility Element, which provides transportation for seniors and those with disabilities. The department maintains roads during inclement weather and is also responsible for mosquito control. Municipal roads and similar infrastructure are managed locally by municipal public works departments.

PLANNING AND ENGINEERING

The county's Department of Planning and Engineering comprises the Planning Division and Engineering Division, responsible for the planning and management of the county's transportation and drainage infrastructure. The Planning Division is composed of the Office of Development Review, Office of Regional Planning and Transportation, and the Office of Data Resources and Technology. The Planning Division also houses the County Planning Board and coordinates the Construction Board of Appeals (appeals to local enforcement decisions of the State Uniform Construction Code or the Uniform Fire Code). The Office of Development Review is responsible for reviewing site plan and subdivision reviews of all development applications submitted for County Planning Board approval. The Office of Regional Planning and Transportation manages planning studies for larger corridor and regional projects. The Office of Data Resources and Technology manages information resources and technology including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and U.S. Census Data for internal support to the department and other county departments, as well as externally for public access.

The Engineering Division is responsible for managing transportation infrastructure projects under County jurisdiction, from planning, construction, maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement of bridges, culverts, drainage systems, roadways, and signalized intersections. The division's responsibilities include management of County road drainage systems, the Overpeck Creek tide gates, roadway improvements, Sign Management System, guiderail, and inspection of site plan and subdivision improvements along County roads. In addition, the Engineering Division assists the Planning Division with reviewing development applications and contributing to regional planning and transportation projects.

OVERPECK CREEK TIDE GATES

The Overpeck Creek Tide Gates, constructed in 1955, control the water elevation of Overpeck Creek by limiting the effect of tidal influence on the Overpeck Lake, both of which are under tidal influences from the Hackensack River. The gates' operation is fully automated as a function of the tide and lake water elevations, opening to allow flow out of Overpeck Lake when the tide level in the Hackensack River is low and closing when the tide level is high, above the lake level.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bergen County's Division of Community Development, housed within the Department of Administration and Finance, provides funding through grant revenue received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to municipalities, eligible non-profits, government agencies, and residents to address different needs related to housing, economic development, and social services in predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The division is wholly funded through HUD funding, and as such, its offerings are based on the different grant programs in place. These programs include first-time homebuying assistance, assistance with major home repairs, construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing, and homeless prevention, and are reviewed in greater detail as part of the Land Use and Housing Element.



Bergen County Courthouse. Source: Bergen County Division of Planning

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Bergen County has several structures in place to ensure the safe and effective removal of solid waste in order to best serve its residents and protect the environment. Solid waste includes all human discarded objects and refuse, sewage and stormwater excluded. Each year, the amount of solid waste varies; however, in 2018 Bergen County generated 2,328,648 tons of solid waste. Over half of this (53 percent) was recycled, and the remainder disposed,⁶ most of which was sent to landfills out of state. The public utility Bergen County Utilities Authority (BCUA) provides solid waste management services for all 70 Bergen County municipalities. The Bergen County Board of Commissioners originally designated BCUA as the agency responsible for the implementation of the county's District Solid Waste Management Plan in 1983. BCUA last updated its District Solid Waste Plan in December 2006.

The BCUA is responsible for all solid waste planning and has special programs for the disposal of certain waste types. One of those programs is the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Management and Disposal Program, which is available to all Bergen County residents and some small businesses. There is no charge for Bergen County residents to dispose of household hazardous waste material through this program. BCUA provides 8 HHW events each year which provide a location for the disposal of hazardous waste in a safe and controlled environment. Household Hazardous Waste consists of materials that are ignitable (e.g., gasoline, paint, furniture polish), corrosive (e.g., acid found in certain batteries), reactive when exposed to another substance (e.g., chlorine bleach and ammonia), or toxic (e.g., pesticides, cleaners).⁷

Recycling in Bergen County is coordinated by the BCUA and implemented by individual municipalities. All 70 Bergen County municipalities offer curbside residential recycling programs. There are recycling depots in 51 municipalities which collect materials like glass and paper, and also collect non-traditional recyclables, like batteries, computers and other electronics.⁸ Municipalities are required by state law to have a recycling ordinance in place that specifies the materials that must be recycled from the residential, commercial, and institutional sectors. At minimum, Bergen County requires the residential sector to recycle newspapers, glass beverage containers, aluminum cans, ferrous (iron) scrap, leaves, white goods (i.e. household appliances), tin cans, grass, construction and demolition debris (including concrete, brick, tree parts, nonferrous/ferrous material, asphalt, corrugated cardboard), corrugated cardboard, mixed paper, and Types 1 and 2 plastic containers.

The minimum recycling requirements for commercial and institutional sectors include corrugated cardboard, high-grade office paper, glass beverage containers, ferrous scrap, white goods, aluminum cans, mixed paper, construction and demolition debris, and Types 1 and 2 plastic containers. Municipal ordinances may require the recycling of more materials than the county recycling plan requires. BCUA provides a recycling market directory that can help residents and businesses locate facilities to recycle all types of recyclable materials, from cardboard and magazines to electronic equipment, x-rays, and motor oil.

Except for the mandated residential requirement to recycle leaves, the county does not have a composting requirement. Instead, the BCUA incentivizes the use of composting through the sale of discounted composting bins. This program seeks to encourage residents to recycle yard waste (including grass clippings, leaves, and dead garden plants), and kitchen scraps (including fruit, vegetables, coffee grinds, and tea bags) into garden soil, while reducing the amount of waste required for offsite disposal.

In addition to each municipality's individual recycling program, the BCUA has implemented targeted recycling programs which maximize the recycling potential of materials, decrease waste generation, and ensure the proper management of the solid waste stream. One such program is the Computer and Electronics Recycling Depot, which collects computer and electronic equipment such as monitors, computer processing units, laptop computers, printers, keyboards, fax machines, mobile devices and hard drives for recycling. These materials are of concern because electronic equipment often contains toxic materials and heavy metals, which, if thrown in the trash, will end up in a landfill or incinerated, releasing toxic matter into the environment. Other programs include mobile paper shredding program, which encourages people to recycle unwanted personal data while reducing identity theft. Each year, BCUA offers mobile shredding events in participating municipalities for residents of the municipality, with an additional regional event held quarterly. The BCUA also offers a quarterly municipal tire recycling program, where residents can dispose of vehicular tires. The BCUA aims to reduce the environmental impact caused by improper disposal while at the same time increase recycling.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT CONT.

The State of New Jersey has implemented “Project Medicine Drop” (NJPMDD) for unneeded or expired medications. This program provides police departments with secured drop boxes where people can drop off pills, capsules, patches, inhalers and pet medications, 7 days a week. This initiative is intended to prevent the mishandling and abuse of drugs at home, particularly in light of the recent opioid epidemic, while also preventing disposal into the wastewater system where these compounds can re-enter waterways and the drinking water system. Participating hospitals in New Jersey offer programs to provide rigid containers for syringes, needles, and lancets used for medical care. Separate from the BCUA’s program, the county has a new, internal recycling program under the Recycling and Sustainability Division, located in Paramus. The division works to educate county staff and the greater community by promoting conscious environmental stewardship, waste reduction, recycling, and the positive impacts employees can make towards improving the environment. The division has already undertaken numerous initiatives, including, proper labeling of dumpster’s throughout Van Saun and Overpeck Parks, adding new dedicated recycling receptacles to facilitate single stream recycling throughout various county parks, and working with the BCUA to purchase trash tops for wire mesh baskets.

Further initiatives planned by the division include the purchase of electric vehicle charging stations, promotion of Styrofoam-free county facilities, and participating in the New Jersey Recycling Certification process.

In addition to the BCUA, it is also important to identify the role of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA) in the regulation of solid waste. The Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (the predecessor of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, and subsequently the NJSEA) was established in 1969 in part to address illegal dumping of solid waste in the area that would become the Meadowlands District. Since its inception, the agency has been responsible for the regulation of solid waste disposal for the Meadowlands District, including the closure of open dump sites, remediation of contamination, and the management of remaining landfill sites. While household waste is no longer accepted, the agency still accepts bulk waste, construction debris, dry industrial wastes, and vegetative wastes at its remaining landfill in Hudson County. In addition, the agency leases out its facilities for compacting and baling waste before transferring it out of state, as well as a vegetative waste transfer facility that is used for composting.

THE 3 R’S OF RECYCLING

The Recycling and Sustainability Division educates residents and county employees on best practices that they may individually take part in, including the “three R’s”—reduce, reuse, recycle.

REDUCE: Reducing the amount of waste that is generated has lasting effects on the community and the environment. Enhanced public awareness of the impacts to the environment generated by different purchasing decisions can help to curb household waste.

REUSE: Small lifestyle changes, such as opting to use reusable products like reusable water bottles and shopping bags, instead of their single-use equivalent, can significantly cut the quantity of waste that is generated.

RECYCLE: Learning what waste can and cannot be recycled combats the future production of waste by keeping recyclable materials in circulation, expanding the life cycle of products such as electronics, glass, cans, and cardboard.



Carousel. Source: Bergen County Division of Planning.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

This section is provided as a general summary of public safety and emergency management services in the county, as planning for these services are part of the county's Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazard Mitigation Plan and its Emergency Operations Plan, which was approved by FEMA on June 7, 2021. More information on the County's existing All Hazard Mitigation Plan, particularly as it applies to the mitigation of natural hazards, is reviewed as part of the Environment and Natural Resources Element of this Master plan.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical services (EMS) is locally managed in Bergen County, either through local fire departments, ambulance corps and rescue squads, or through inter local agreements with neighboring municipalities. In addition, EMS services through local hospitals have become increasingly more common in Bergen County as the requirements for EMS personnel continue to increase. The county's Emergency Medical Services Academy, part of the Bergen County Law & Public Safety Institute in **Mahwah** and the Bergen County EMS Training Center in **Paramus** are used for training EMS personnel. In 2023, Bergen County launched its own EMS unit to supplement EMS services throughout the county, providing mutual aid services when municipal EMS units require additional assistance.

Fire Prevention and Suppression

For the most part, fire departments are locally managed in Bergen County. The one exception, **Teterboro**, utilizes the Hasbrouck Heights Fire Department via an inter local agreement. Many departments continue to be volunteer-based. However, some have shifted toward a full-time paid department while others have adopted different hybrid models such as a combination of paid and volunteer firefighters, or a stipend-based compensation program for firefighters. Although management of departments is coordinated at the local level, the county's Fire Academy, part of the Bergen County Law & Public Safety Institute in **Mahwah**, is used by all local departments for firefighter training. In addition, the county's Fire Marshal is responsible for the State Fire Code enforcement of all county-owned buildings, facilities and parks.



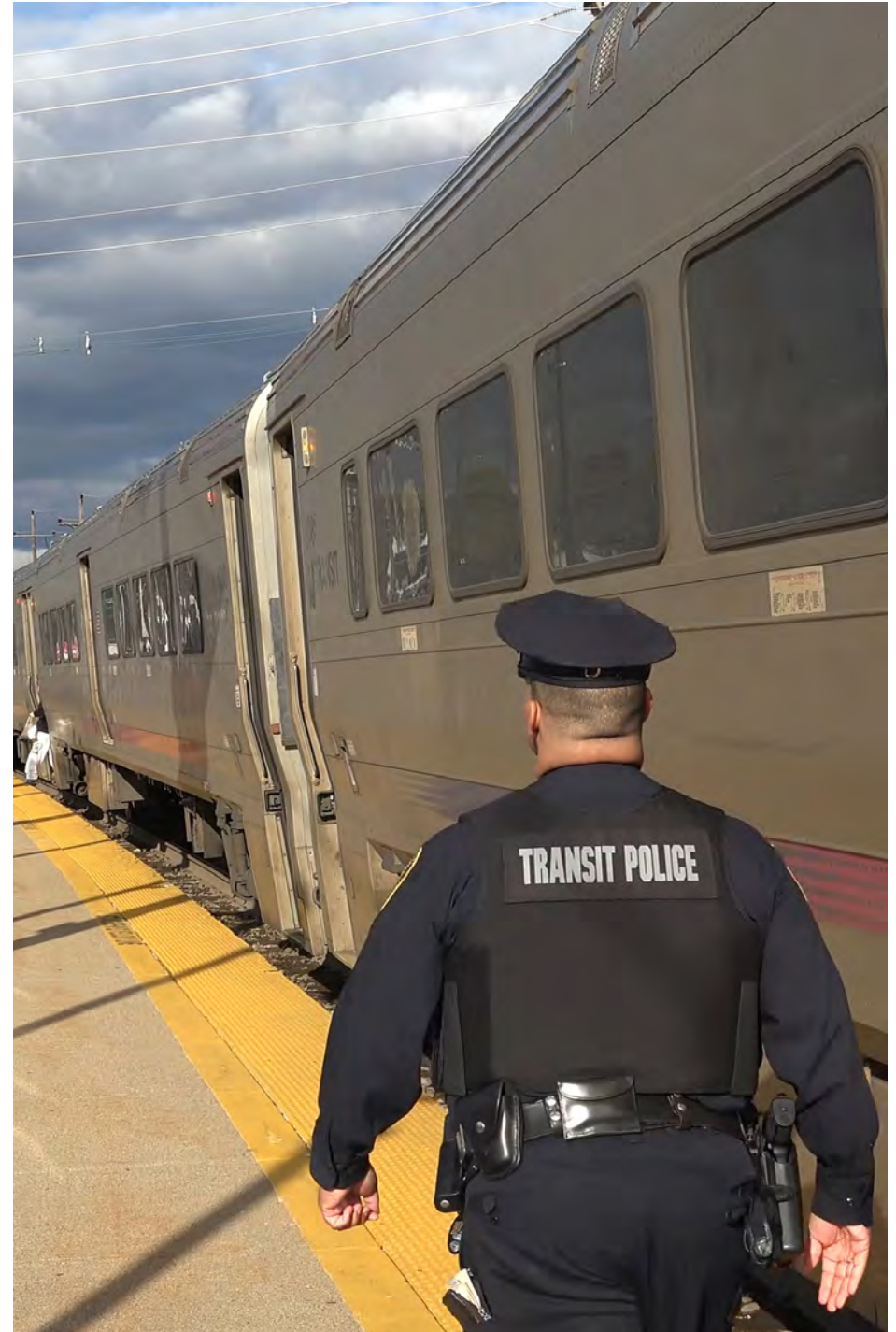
Haworth Police Vehicle. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Law Enforcement and Public Safety

Many law enforcement activities are managed on the local level through municipal police departments, similar to EMS and fire services, with training services offered through the county's Police Academy, also located at the Bergen County Law & Public Safety Institute in **Mahwah**. Of the 70 municipalities in Bergen County, 68 have municipal police departments, the other two have shared service agreements with neighboring municipalities. In **Rockleigh**, police services are provided by **Northvale**, and police services in **Teterboro** are provided by **Moonachie**. In addition, patrol of state highways and roads, as well as some DMV facilities in Bergen County is conducted by the County Sheriff's Office. County-level law enforcement and public safety activities include the Bergen County Department of Public Safety, the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office.

Department of Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is comprised of the Divisions of Consumer Affairs, Emergency Management, Communications, Fire Marshal, EMS, Medical Examiner, Safety and Security, Weights and Measures, and Public Safety Education at the Bergen County Law & Public Safety Institute. Since 2017, the Division of Consumer Affairs, Office of Consumer Protection has been shared between Bergen and Passaic County. This agency is responsible for enforcing the Consumer Fraud Act, responding to complaints about merchandise and services, as well as providing educational services for residents on fraud protection. Emergency Management serves as the lead agency for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The county's Communications Center provides 911 and dispatch operations for 22 municipalities, as well as serving as a secondary 911 routing center for the entire county. Safety and Security provides security guard protection throughout the county and its agencies. The Medical Examiner Office is responsible for investigating all deaths referred to the county by law enforcement or hospitals. The Fire Marshal is responsible for fire code compliance for all county agencies and events throughout the year. The Fire Marshal upgrades and replaces old fire alarms and sprinkler systems, evacuation plans and partners with the Bergen County Fire Academy to provide fire safety and fire warden classes to all county agencies and employees. The Weights and Measures Division conducts inspections of all commercial weighing, measuring, timing and counting devices used to sell commodities and services to consumers to ensure equity in the marketplace. As discussed, the Bergen County Law & Public Safety Institute encompasses the county's Police, Fire and EMS academies.



NJ Transit Police. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Bergen County Prosecutor's Office (BCPO)

The Office of the Bergen County Prosecutor is appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the state senate and serves as the county's chief law enforcement officer. The Prosecutor's Office is charged with the broad obligation to use all reasonable and lawful diligence for the detection, arrest, indictment, and conviction of offenders against the law. In addition, the Prosecutor's Office conducts proactive investigations and community outreach, as well as maintaining specialized offices to assist municipal departments. These services provided by the BCPO are located under 15 different units and squads, which handle a wide range of law enforcement activities, including: animal cruelty investigation and prosecution; researching and writing the briefs, motions, and petitions as part of its Appellate Section; Bureau of Information Technology, which shares information with other law enforcement agencies; prosecution of civil forfeitures; Cyber Crimes Unit which investigates internet and technology crimes, computer forensics, and education; prosecution of domestic violence crimes; prosecution of major theft and fraud offenses in Bergen County under its Financial Crimes Unit; intelligence and counterterrorism; prosecution of juvenile delinquency cases; major crimes investigations (homicide, cold case homicide, arson, and fatal accidents); investigation of gang-related crimes and drug distribution; Special Investigations (including illegal gambling, extortion, prostitution, organized crime, loansharking, robberies, and kidnapping); Special Victims Unit (sexual offenses and child abuse); Grand Jury Section; and, Trial Section.

Bergen County Sheriff's Office (BCSO)

The Office of the Sheriff is responsible for the Bureau of Criminal Investigations, Court Security, the Bergen County Jail, and the Detective Bureau. In 2015, the Bergen County Police Department was merged into the BCSO. The BCSO is comprised of 3 divisions: Law Enforcement (which includes some of the BCSO's specialized services such as homeland security and crime scene investigation, but also court security and sheriff's operations); Police Services (which includes the traffic and patrol units and specialized services, such as the county's bomb squad and the Water Search and Rescue unit (WSAR)); and Corrections (which includes corrections security and response, but also the drug rehabilitation center at the corrections facility). The office serves summons and complaints, provides security at the county's Justice Center, oversees the Bergen County Jail, assists municipal police departments, and provides patrol and protection of county roads, parks and critical infrastructure.





Bergen County Courthouse. Source: Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs

Bergen County Jail

The Bergen County Jail, containing approximately 1,150 beds, serves the community as a central reception and processing center for pre-trial adult detainees whose incarceration is necessary to ensure a court appearance. In addition, the facility also provides for the detention of both sentenced and unsentenced prisoners in minimum, medium, and maximum-security environments. The jail has programs for mental health and substance abuse treatment and has engaged in several new programs to assist inmates with the re-entry process, such as job placement for those in the county's drug rehabilitation center, and life skills-based training (including parenting, education, and employment). Recently, the County entered into a 10-year shared service agreement with Passaic County to provide care and custody at this facility for all Passaic County inmates as well. Minors awaiting court action are housed in the County's Juvenile Detention Center in Teterboro, which is managed by the County's Department of Human Services, under the Division of Family Guidance.

Additional Jurisdictions

Beyond county and municipal-level law enforcement, additional levels and jurisdictions of law enforcement agencies exist in Bergen County. This includes the New Jersey State Police, who provide support services beyond the capacity of local municipalities, highway and traffic enforcement of state and interstate highways, as well as crowd and traffic control at the Meadowlands Sports Complex. The Palisades Interstate Parkway Police, overseen by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, are responsible for law enforcement activities in the Palisades Interstate Park, including the Palisades Interstate Parkway and are currently being monitored by the Bergen County Prosecutors Office. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's Police Department (PAPD) is responsible for law enforcement activities around Port Authority facilities, which in Bergen County include the George Washington Bridge and Teterboro Airport. PAPD responsibilities include, patrol services, traffic, emergency management, aircraft rescue and firefighting, and commercial vehicle inspections. NJ Transit's Police Department is responsible for maintaining order and public safety throughout the NJ Transit system, which includes counterterrorism, crime and accident investigations, and crime suppression.

HEALTH SERVICES

Hospitals and Medical Centers

There are presently 9 hospitals in Bergen County and numerous additional medical offices, facilities, and centers. The county owns the hospital currently known as Bergen New Bridge Medical Center (formerly Bergen Regional Medical Center), but contracts with outside providers for its operation. Currently, the operation of Bergen New Bridge Medical Center is managed by Care Plus Bergen, a partnership of Care Plus NJ, Integrity House, and Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. Bergen New Bridge Medical Center is the largest hospital in the state with 1,070 beds.

These hospitals are listed in the table below.



Ribbon Cutting of the Bergen New Bridge Medical Center's Ambulatory Surgery Center in Paramus.
Source: Bergen County

Hospitals in Bergen County			
Name	Address	Municipality	Number of Beds
Bergen New Bridge Medical Center	230 East Ridgewood Avenue	Paramus	1,070
Hackensack Meridian Health Hackensack University Medical Center	30 Prospect Avenue	Hackensack	770
Valley Health System—The Valley Hospital	223 N. Van Dien Avenue	Ridgewood	451
Englewood Hospital and Medical Center	350 Engle Street	Englewood	352 Beds, 36 Bassinets
Holy Name Medical Center, Teaneck	718 Teaneck Road	Teaneck	361
Hackensack Meridian Health Pascack Valley Medical Center	250 Old Hook Road	Westwood	128
Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation—Kessler Saddle Brook	300 Market Street	Saddle Brook	112
Select Specialty Hospital—Northeast New Jersey	96 Parkway	Rochelle Park	62
Christian Health Care Center (Ramapo Ridge Psychiatric Hospital)	301 Sicomac Avenue	Wyckoff	58

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The county's Department of Health Services provides a wide range of programs and services dedicated to improving and maintaining the quality of health and protection of the environment in Bergen County through community outreach and service delivery initiatives.

Office of Alcohol and Drug Dependency

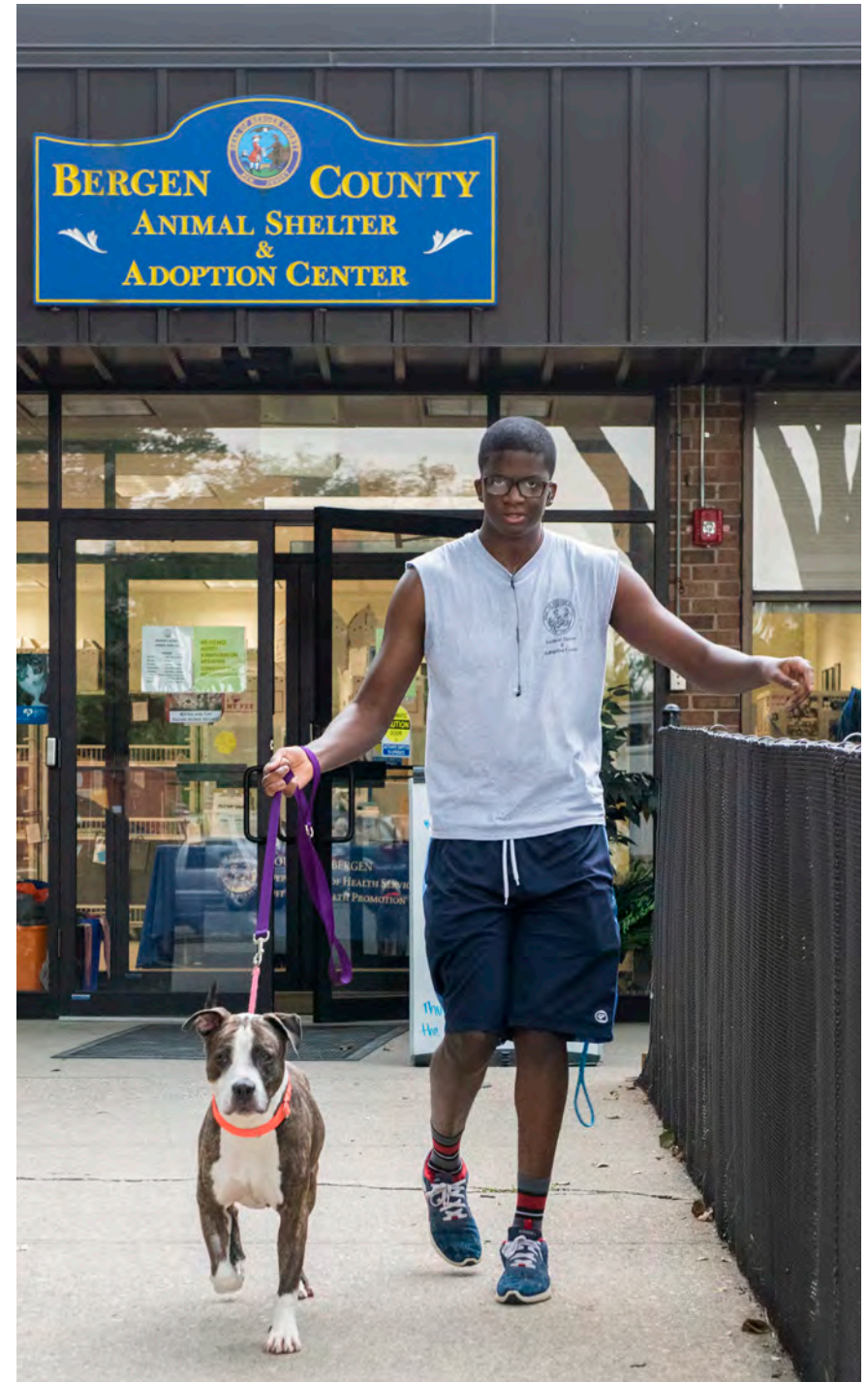
The Office of Alcohol and Drug Dependency's stated goal is to prevent and treat substance use and abuse disorders. The county matches funding from the New Jersey Department of Health to provide information and referral for assessment, outpatient services, intensive outpatient services, detoxification services, short term residential treatment, and halfway house services, with no cost for uninsured or underinsured residents. In addition, the Office provides funding and technical assistance to local Municipal Alliance Committees for substance abuse prevention initiatives that meet the individual needs of the respective communities.

Animal Shelter and Adoption Center

The county's Animal Shelter and Adoption Center provides animal control to 38 Bergen County municipalities.⁹ In the county's other 32 municipalities, animal control is managed on the local level. The Department also runs the County Animal Shelter, located in Teterboro, that houses and provides animal health services. The county's facility has a no-kill policy and provides vaccine clinics and other services to residents and municipalities.

Consumer Health Program

The Consumer Health Program is responsible for performing inspections of food establishments, training courses for food establishment staff, sanitary inspections, environmental health investigations, and public health enforcement. This program works with the county and 37 contracted municipalities to ensure compliance with state public health regulations. The program includes food inspections, testing, and training, sanitary inspections (bathing and spa facilities), and environmental health investigations for public nuisances, lead, and emergency incidents.



Bergen County Animal Shelter & Adoption Center. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Office of Environmental Health

The Office of Environmental Health enforces environmental and public health laws that protect natural resources and promote health and safety through 6 programs: the Environmental Protection Program, Consumer Health program, Clean Communities program, Childhood Lead program, Vector Borne Diseases program, and GIS program. The Office works on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to implement the County Environmental Health Act through programs including pollution control (air, water, drinking water, noise, solid waste), as well as pesticide compliance, diesel enforcement, and local hazardous waste materials emergency response. The Office of Environmental Health's Consumer Health program conducts inspections of public facilities (including retail food establishments, public recreational bathing, tanning, body art and youth camps) and conducts investigations into foodborne and communicable illnesses as well as animal bites. The Office also coordinates the county's Clean Communities program, a program funded by the NJDEP to reduce litter through education, enforcement and removal. The county's Childhood Lead program conducts investigations into children identified with elevated blood lead levels. A detailed environmental lead hazard assessment is conducted at the child's primary residence and, if necessary, abatement orders are issued the property owner in order to eliminate the source of lead poisoning. The Vector Borne Disease program monitors mosquito and tick activity throughout the county to better help control the spread of vector borne disease. This is done through both field collection activities and laboratory analysis of disease carrying insects. The office's GIS program works in conjunction with all the programs within the Office of Environmental Protection to collect and analyze field data, prepare spatial analysis reports, and establish geographical relationships related to environmental and public health issues. The county's Hazardous Materials ("Haz-Mat") unit is also located under the Office of Environmental Health, which serves as the emergency response unit for hazardous material incidents within the county.

Office of Health Promotion

The Office of Health Promotion develops and implements strategies to improve public health through wellness education. The office provides training programs for health professionals, as well as programs and events to educate the public. For municipalities that contract with the Bergen County Department of Health Services for shared services, the office also provides health education programs and presentations, informational emails, hosting display tables at local events, information distribution in response to public health emergencies, and informational visits to local offices to provide updates on available resources and programs.

Division of Mental Health Services

The Mental Health Division provides information and services to residents and ensures that residents have access to mental health care, regardless of one's ability to pay. In addition, Bergen County is a participating "Stigma-Free" community, a program aimed at reducing the stigmas associated with mental illness. All 70 municipalities in Bergen County have been established as "Stigma Free" communities.



Valley Hospital. Source: Colliers Engineering & Design

Office of Public Health Nursing

The Office of Public Health Nursing provides essential public health services as set forth in N.J.A.C.8:52-7.2 to help prevent illnesses and protect against the spread of disease, as well as promote the well-being of the individual and the community. The Office runs the Communicable Disease Control Program, a countywide protection service that works directly with the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), local health departments, hospitals, laboratories, and other public health partners to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases in Bergen County. It is responsible for the Reportable Disease Program, conducting investigation and disease control, community education on disease and disease transmission, conducts surveillance and response for disease outbreaks, and reporting of communicable diseases to the state. Public Health Nurses provide inter-local health services including health consultations, public school immunization surveys, lead case investigations, and supervision of school nursing in non-public schools. They investigate lead contamination cases when children show signs of elevated blood lead levels, visit sites, and educate parents and caregivers on reduction of lead levels and prevention of future exposure. They also provide case management for tuberculosis (TB) to ensure completion of treatment for latent TB infection (LTBI), confirmed or suspected TB cases, identify known HIV status, and elicit at risk contacts for potential screening of TB. Cancer Education and Early Detection (CEED) is a service that promotes education and awareness of breast, cervical, prostate and colorectal cancer screening guidelines, and the benefits of early detection throughout the county while providing screenings to eligible residents and providing case management to clients. Finally, health services extend to HIV testing and prevention counseling, specifically among target populations deemed high risk for the disease.

Public Health Emergency Response

The Bergen County Department of Health Services works closely with other government agencies to provide an effective response to future potential health threats from diseases, health threats from extreme weather, and man-made causes, both accident and intentional. The County's public health emergency response program is responsible for providing instruction to residents in the event of a public health emergency through the use of radio, television, telephone information lines, and the Bergen County Emergency Website, providing up to date information regarding personal protective measures.

Office of Strategic Public Health Planning and Workforce Development

The Office of Strategic Public Health Planning and Workforce Development is comprised of 3 programs: Strategic Planning, Community Health Improvement Partnership, and Workforce Development. The Community Health Improvement Partnership of Bergen County (CHIP) facilitates the County Health Needs Assessment with non-profit hospitals, addresses health priorities and implements health improvement strategies, sponsors educational programs for professionals and community members, and collaborates with partners to identify, publicize, and leverage resources. The Strategic Planning program is responsible for guiding the Department through the public health accreditation process and completing necessary steps and documentation, development of the Department's strategic plan, and assists with development of public health policies and plans. The Workforce Development Program provides educational programming for both Department staff and the community, and supports partnerships with students to provide learning opportunities in public health careers.



*Bergen County Courthouse Sculptures.
Source: Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs*

HUMAN SERVICES

The Bergen County Department of Human Services, established in 1987, provides a variety of services designed to improve and maintain the quality of life for all county residents. It offers services and programs for children, adolescents, families, seniors, veterans, disabled, homeless, and survivors of domestic violence, in addition to contracting with over 50 community-based agencies to provide specialized services for residents in need. In addition to its external outreach programs, the department's Human Service Institute works internally to provide professional development services for government employees and agency personnel. The department currently includes 8 advisory boards and commissions for their primary focus areas to ensure that they remain responsive to the needs of the community. The programs and services provided by the department routinely adapt to changing needs and new challenges, and as such, this section provides a general summary of these activities.

ALTERNATIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Alternatives to Domestic Violence (ADV), is a division of Human Services devoted to domestic violence intervention and prevention. ADV provides a comprehensive range of services to help victims, abusers, and families involved in domestic violence, including a 24-hour crisis hotline, crisis management, counseling, and legal advocacy and representation. The division also sponsors community education and workshops to raise awareness of the problem of domestic violence in our community with the goal of prevention through education. Services are provided either at no-cost, or on a sliding scale.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The Disability Services division assists Bergen County residents with disabilities to achieve their full potential, to realize their full involvement and inclusion in all aspects of everyday living, and to promote community-based living options. The division offers programs and services to assist persons with disabilities as well as their caregivers. These programs include employment assistance, independent living assistance, support groups, and nutritional assistance ("Meals on Wheels"). The division offers programs to assist caregivers, both through education as well as respite care. The division also offers information and publications on additional resources for persons with disabilities, as well as a speakers bureau that provides educational activities for employers and their employees.

FAMILY GUIDANCE

Bergen County's Division of Family Guidance provides clinical, residential, educational, correctional, case management and monitoring services to at-risk children, adolescents, and their families, particularly those who are otherwise unable to receive needed services. The Division of Family Guidance operates a variety of programs that include residential, outpatient mental health, educational, and prosocial services for at-risk youth. All services of Family Guidance, including court-ordered detention, the youth shelter, and the educational and mental health treatment programs represent a continuum of services allowing youth to move among different programs as necessary to address changing needs. In this way, Family Guidance can serve at-risk youth on many levels, creating a comprehensive and effective, yet efficient, safety net for some of our community's most vulnerable residents. The Division provides four broad areas of services, including delinquency programs, homelessness programs, educational programs, and outpatient services.

Delinquency Programs

Delinquency programs provide secure detention, community monitoring, evaluation, and treatment to meet the needs of court ordered youth and provide them with crucial rehabilitation services. This includes the Juvenile Detention Center, the Alternatives to Detention program, forensic unit, diversion programs, and transition programs.

Homelessness Programs

Homelessness programs provide services to address youth homelessness, from short-term emergency shelter to longer-term transitional living and long-term independent living.

Outpatient Services

Outpatient services provide mental health treatment, case management, and prosocial activities that address and prevent youth problems and delinquency.

Educational Programs

Educational programs provide clinical consultation and services in alternative school settings for students with special needs, including psychiatric, behavioral, and learning disabilities.



Bergen Community College. Source: Colliers Engineering & Design

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The department's Office for Children (OFC) mission is to strengthen and coordinate child care services for families and child care providers, focusing on the availability, affordability, and quality of early care and education. The office offers parents assistance on all aspects of child care, from choosing child care, referrals to providers, and providing child care subsidies. In addition, the office trains, registers, and monitors family child care, and provides professional development opportunities and technical assistance for the child care community.

The department's Special Child Health Services provides education to families and support services for children with delays or disabilities from birth through age 21. Programs offered through Special Child Health Services include Early Intervention Service Coordination for infants and toddlers to address developmental delays or problems and Case Management to assure the provision of coordinated comprehensive services for special needs children and their families. A representative from the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) of New Jersey works with Case Management for families and professionals interested in and involved with the healthy development and educational rights of children.

SENIOR SERVICES

The Division of Senior Services is the designated Area Agency on Aging, and as such, is the primary planning, coordinating, and funding agency for senior programs and services, advocating for the well-being and independence of Bergen County's older residents and their caregivers. The division also coordinates and advocates for services for older adults and individuals with disabilities over the age of 18 through its role as the county's designated Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC). The division aids residents through education and services (e.g., understanding insurance, reverse mortgage programs, tax relief, Meals on Wheels, senior activity centers, transportation, Wellness Check, and adult day care). The division delivers health promotions and wellness programs throughout Bergen County, and nutrition education and counseling are an important focus. As the primary funding agency for senior programs in Bergen County, the division also addresses service gaps that exist in the community. The division funds 45 programs in the community that provide a continuum of services promoting independence, dignity, and choice to adults 60 and over, including those that provide care management, assisted transportation, certified home health aides, adult day services to legal counseling and advocacy, educational programs, senior center activities, and caregiver programs. In addition, the division manages discount programs, such as SAVVERS, which provides discounts and services for seniors, veterans, volunteers, active military, emergency responders, and their families, and the Wellness Discount Program, which provides all residents access to discounted prescription drugs, hearing exams and hearing aids, vision care, dental care, diabetic supplies, and pet prescriptions.

BERGEN NEW JERSEY
County
Bergen County Executive
JAMES J. TEDESCO III
and the
BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Pediatric Flu Clinic
Thursday
March 1st, 2018
4pm-8pm

**FREE Flu Vaccines for Children
Ages 5 & up**

BERGEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
One Bergen County Plaza • Multi-Purpose Room, 1st Fl. • Hackensack, NJ 07601
Free parking is available in the piazza of One Bergen County Plaza.

Certain people should not get the flu shot. Do Not receive a flu shot if you have a fever or are moderately to severely ill, had a previous allergic reaction to the flu vaccine, or if you are allergic to eggs as per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

James J. Tedesco III
Bergen County Executive
Board of Chosen Freeholders
Thomas J. Sullivan, Chairman • Germaine M. Ortiz, Vice Chairwoman • Mary J. Amoroso, Chair Pro Tempore
David L. Ganz • Steven A. Tanelli • Joan M. Voss • Tracy Silva Zur

Flu Clinic Poster. Source: Bergen County

VETERANS SERVICES

The Division of Veterans Services provides resident veterans and their dependents with information and assistance in obtaining earned entitlements from federal, state, and local governments, and the private sector. The division provides information on assistance and other programs through a quarterly newsletter and direct client contact with residents, veterans' organizations and their auxiliaries. In addition, the division directs requests for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation, supplies information on pensions, home loans, burial and memorial benefits, education and training programs, identifies employment opportunities, provides transportation to VA health facilities, separation papers, and forms for military medals and records. The division's Tracers program works with homeless veterans to reach self-sufficiency, as well as providing transitional housing through the Alfred J. Thomas Home for Veterans.

HOUSING, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CENTER

The department's Housing, Health and Human Services Center serves people who are homeless or precariously housed, and others who require linkage to community services. The center provides temporary shelter space, containing 90 beds, with additional space for 15 individuals during the cold weather months (between December 15 to March 14). The temporary shelter provides 3 daily meals for those using the temporary shelter; any Bergen resident in need of a meal is welcome at lunch and dinner, including those who are homeless, precariously housed, or low-income working poor. Those using the center are also given assistance to seek permanent rental housing to avoid chronic homelessness; as part of this effort, people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless are offered assistance through the Next Step Initiative (NS), which provides life-improvement support, crisis intervention, and case management. The center also offers a wellness program which provides health education, medication management and review, health screenings, and immunizations to shelter guests. It has transfer agreements for acute care. Additional information on initiatives by the County of Bergen to provide housing and housing assistance are described in the Land Use and Housing Element of this Master Plan.

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

What is chronic homelessness? The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines homelessness as when a person sleeps in a place not meant for human habitation, or in a homeless emergency shelter. HUD defines chronic homelessness as either an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition (i.e. serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability) who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, or an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Protect the Public through Enforcement

What is it?

Bergen County has some of the highest living standards in the country. This quality of life is attributable, in part, to the level of protection from harm and equitable enforcement of the law that is provided daily by public safety organizations. Emergencies are often unpredictable, but proper preparation can position Bergen County public safety officials to respond efficiently and effectively.

What will it do?

This goal will help protect county infrastructure, as well as residents, visitors, and businesses from ever-changing threats and challenges.

Why should the county pursue it?

Safety and security are necessary to maintain the county's quality of life.



EMS Training. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Objective 1.1: Strictly enforce federal, state, and local statutes

Continuing the strict enforcement of laws will ensure that Bergen County will remain an attractive place to live, work, visit, and invest and ensuring a high quality of life and safety. Law enforcement officials in Bergen County are responsible for deterring criminal activity, investigating suspected criminal activity, and referring the results of investigations to the courts. Law enforcement and public safety agencies provide first response to emergencies and other threats to the public safety; protect public facilities, key resources, and critical infrastructure; maintain public order; and protect public officials. The Division of Weights and Measures ensures marketplace equity through inspections and testing of all weighing and measuring devices.

Objective 1.2: Increase and improve commercial vehicle inspections

Continuing to conduct frequent but random vehicle inspections and weight checks of commercial vehicles transporting freight through Bergen County protects residents and county infrastructure. Oversized vehicles can damage roads and bridges, and regular inspection of these vehicles is necessary to protect county infrastructure from excessive wear and tear.

Objective 1.3: Explore operational efficiencies to maintain and improve public safety services

As government at all levels continues to seek ways to reduce costs and minimize tax increases, local public safety directors may be interested in identifying alternative arrangements that ensure adequate levels of service and protection, including ways of joining forces to provide specialized services, sharing equipment across jurisdictions, and other shared service agreements.

Objective 1.4: Minimize public exposure to unsafe conditions

Preventing emergencies before they occur is the most effective way to minimize harm to the public. Bergen County's public safety and law enforcement agencies protect the public through security and patrol services for county facilities including parks, county agencies, historic sites, and county roads. As referenced in the prior section, public safety services on the county level include the Bergen County Department of Public Safety, including its Safety and Security division, whose guards provide daily patrol of parks, historical locations, and county facilities. It also includes such entities as the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, in addition to regional, state, and local entities. Public safety agencies can achieve increased disaster prevention through intelligence collection and other advanced analytical tools. This could include the use of crime analysis tools to identify areas in need of an increased police presence and working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to protect homes and businesses from major storm events. It is also important to be prepared with plans of evacuation and rescue if an emergency does occur. By intervening before an emergency strikes, not only will the direct harm from that incident be minimized, but public safety resources will be conserved so that they are ready to be deployed to other emergent situations.

Objective 1.5: Improve interagency coordination and coordination with other jurisdictions

Coordination with local, state and federal public safety agencies can expand capabilities for all parties while ensuring public safety. Proactive coordination with these different jurisdictions can help disrupt criminal activity and reduce violent crime and can facilitate the design and implementation of crime prevention programs which will analyze trends to predict where, when, and how crime might occur. In addition, many different county departments provide critical support in emergency preparation and response where coordination is critical, while also increasing efficiency and reducing redundancies. Inter-agency joint exercises can prepare staff for effective coordinated emergency response.



Snow Preparedness. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 2: Reduce and Prevent Hazardous Situations through Effective Programming and Personnel Development

What is it?

Bergen County's public safety workforce includes police officers, firefighters, detectives, prosecutors, and other professionals. These employees protect the county from harm. More broadly, the Bergen County Risk Management Division, which serves as a resource to the health and safety of county employees, is responsible for programming and education that seeks to improve employee safety and well-being, which, in turn, helps reduce the costs associated with accidents and hazardous situations. The Division conducts safety inspections of county facilities, departments and equipment, and establishes policies and procedures to minimize risk. Quality personnel are increasingly needed to work with community and government stakeholders to address quality-of-life issues, respond to non-emergency and emergency calls, and prevent crime. Proper recruitment and selection is critical to the effectiveness and optimal functioning of these agencies. In turn, these employees help citizens understand safety and security threats through multimedia marketing campaigns (such as newspaper or TV ads), free classes and workshops, visits to schools, safety fairs, internet resources, and many other methods.

What will it do?

This goal will explore the wealth and diversity of education methods that are essential to effective safety education and training, both internally for its workforce, and externally for the public.

Why should the county pursue it?

Ensuring the high quality of public safety employees will help protect residents and businesses against harm; an informed public can complement this effort through educated vigilance and effective preparation in responding to emergency situations.

Objective 2.1: Continue recruiting, retaining, and promoting a diverse workforce

A public safety workforce that reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of Bergen County can respond to the needs of various communities and help protect all from harm and threat. A diverse workforce can communicate more effectively with all county residents, and it is important for residents to know that the public safety community is familiar with their communities and sensitive to different cultural or religious traditions. Creating an atmosphere for residents that is free of fear will help safeguard the lives and property of our citizens.



Job Fair. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Objective 2.2: Strengthen training programs and improve coordination among agencies

Employee participation in leadership, counter-terrorism, and supervisory training courses is important to ensure that personnel are prepared to effectively manage difficult situations. Training multiple agencies together could increase awareness of other goals and procedures to coordinate their responses.

Professional development in the form of continuing education is imperative to strengthening any workforce. By engaging in training sessions, public safety officials will grow their knowledge and skills, thereby improving their ability to serve the public. Inter-division and interdisciplinary training will increase coordination across divisions to better prepare the county to protect and serve its residents.

Public safety officials participate in numerous national and international organizations which provide resources and hold training sessions and conferences. In order to continually learn from other experts in the field about the latest best practices, it is important to formalize these relationships and increase participation in the various forums they offer. In addition, public safety officials must seek participation in the development of national standards and guidelines, assist in the testing and evaluation of new equipment and technologies, and effectively exchange information.

Objective 2.3: Seek accreditation for public safety and other relevant agencies

Accreditation is a voluntary process which involves committing to a set of procedures to demonstrate that an agency desires to adhere to the highest levels of service and professional standards. Agencies can reduce exposure to liability from litigation by codifying procedures and employment practices that conform to recognized standards.

Additionally, accreditation can:

- Give county government officials confidence in ability to operate efficiently and meet community needs.
- Increase community confidence and create a forum in which the agencies and citizens work together to reinforce crime prevention and control emergent challenges.
- Confirm accountability, both within an agency and the community, through a continuum of standards that clearly define authority, performance, and responsibilities.
- Solidify interagency cooperation and coordination.
- Implement a preparedness program so agencies are ready to address natural or man-made critical incidents more efficiently.

A commitment to this process can also improve productivity and morale by establishing quantifiable standards of performance and nondiscriminatory personnel practices.

Objective 2.4: Educate the public about disaster preparedness and response

Outreach by Bergen County public safety agencies can provide the public with information that aids in their own emergency readiness. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has many educational resources available for families and businesses to prepare for all kinds of disaster events. FEMA also has information available about certain areas that are in the most danger of storm surges and flooding, which could help influence housing and business location decisions. Improving public readiness for potential emergencies and other disasters will help contribute to a calmer and more efficient response.

Objective 2.5: Expand education outreach to at-risk populations

Certain populations in the county require special consideration when it comes to public safety education. People with disabilities have specific needs that differ for every individual. Senior citizens are another group with different levels of ability. Both populations may live in designated places like retirement communities, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes, while others live independently or with some live-in caregiver assistance. Understanding where these populations reside, how to respond to specific needs, and how to communicate with these individuals is key to ensuring that all residents are protected.





Objective 2.6: Ensure that education is provided in multiple languages

Public safety education is only as effective as the number of people it can reach. Bergen County is home to large immigrant communities from all over the world. It is increasingly important that public safety outreach be available in other languages.

Objective 2.7: Promote safe and responsible practices to emerging technologies

Internet-based cyber threats are becoming increasingly prevalent, especially as technology becomes more advanced and internet access becomes increasingly universal. It is important for the public to be educated about and prepared for these potential threats, including computer viruses, ransomware, and identity theft. Cyber-bullying and best practices for in-person interactions (e.g., meeting someone at a safe location for an in-person transaction) are also emerging internet safety issues. In the case of the latter, some communities have created internet safe exchange zones, often located near a police station with video surveillance, where people can complete internet sales transactions safely in person.

Snow Preparedness. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 3: Promote Employee Health and Safety

What is it?

Public employees voluntarily place themselves at risk in order to serve the communities of Bergen County. Potential hazards vary based on the work being performed; understanding risks and how to minimize them is critical.

What will it do?

A culture of safety is essential to the safe operation of daily tasks by agency employees; employees must be aware of and trust the organization's safety values, expectations, and practices.

Why should the county pursue it?

The safety of employees is essential for the efficient delivery of public services.



Snowplow operations. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County



EMS Training. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Objective 3.1: Follow advancements in, and comply with, safety requirements

Public agencies must comply with state and county workforce safety requirements to ensure the safety of their employees. Educational programs on safety requirements and methods are offered through the state, private insurers, and others. Understanding the benefits of significant advancements in the safety and functionality of personal protective equipment (PPE) is critical to maintaining a safe workplace.

Objective 3.2: Encourage and support employee health and wellness

Wellness includes physical fitness, a healthy diet, good mental health, and other lifestyle choices that contribute to overall health. Promoting a culture of wellness and physical fitness in the workplace can help encourage healthy behaviors. Physically fit employees are less prone to injuries that would cause missed time from work, can perform their duties at a lower risk to their health, and result in a more productive and stable workforce.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 4: Facilitate Accessibility to Quality Services, Programs, and Living Environments

What is it?

Offer a full array of services to residents of all ages and abilities that enhance the quality of life in Bergen County.

What will it do?

Assisting the needs of residents through a comprehensive system of quality services to provide them with the opportunity to achieve self-sufficient, productive, and meaningful lives.

Why should the county pursue it?

While many data indicators show that Bergen County residents enjoy some of the highest standards of living in the country with a high median income and a highly-educated labor force, much less apparent are the challenges that confront low-income families and individuals, children and families at risk, people with disabilities, and adults over 60. Increasing living costs, including housing (both rentals and owner-occupied), coupled with increases in the costs of childcare, food, gas, transportation, and health care, force thousands of Bergen County families to make impossible choices among the most basic needs.

Bergen BITES BACK

**MOSQUITO SEASON IS NOT OVER
HELP US KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE**

TARGET MOSQUITO BREEDING SITES IN AND AROUND YOUR HOME

Prevent mosquito breeding sites by doing the following at least once a week:

- Empty, clean, turn over and/or dispose of containers that can hold water, such as tires, buckets and flower pots, both inside and outside of your home
- Clean drains and gutters
- Keep swimming pools/ponds adequately treated with recommended products to eliminate mosquito breeding sites

Common Backyard Mosquito Sources

MOSQUITO PROTECTION

Use screens on open windows and keep doors closed.

Wear long-sleeved bright colored clothing. Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear.

Use an EPA-registered insect repellent. Follow label instructions. Remember to apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Water + 7 Days = Mosquitoes
- Litter Free Property = Less Mosquitoes
- The **Bergen County Clean Communities Program** offers Mini-grants to non-profit groups in exchange for clean-ups of public property.
- There are over 60 species of mosquitoes in New Jersey

Different mosquitoes carry different viruses that spread diseases:

TYPE OF MOSQUITO	TYPE OF VIRUS	BITING HABITS
Aedes aegypti, Aedes albopictus, Culex species	Chikungunya, Dengue, Zika, West Nile	Mostly daytime but can also bite at night

IF YOU ARE BITTEN

If you think you've been bitten by a mosquito:

- Wash the bite with soap and water
- Put on calamine lotion to help stop the itching

If you get sick after being bitten by a mosquito and suspect a mosquito-borne disease call your doctor. Tell your doctor where you have traveled.

Mosquito Prevention Poster. Source: Bergen County

Objective 4.1: Provide quality access to educational services

Fostering cooperation on a regional scale in Bergen County provides residents access to with services and resources that may not be financially feasible at the local level. As described in the previous section, Bergen County provides quality educational services to students throughout the county as part of its Special Services School District and the Bergen County Technical Schools (including the Bergen County Academies), which are overseen by the County of Bergen and the County Superintendent. The programs offered by these schools provide a range of specialized educational services for students that may not necessarily be available to them at the local level. Similarly, Bergen County College is the largest county college in New Jersey, providing instruction in 17 different divisions. As described previously, the 77-member public library consortium known as Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS) provides its 600,000 registered cardholders in Bergen County, as well as certain municipalities in Essex (10 municipalities), Hudson (4 municipalities), and Passaic (1 municipality) counties with access to a greater scale of materials than could be provided at a single library. According to BCCLS, circulation in the system is over 12 million items annually.



Bergen County Academies. Source: Google StreetView

Objective 4.2: Promote and sustain healthy lifestyle choices

Promoting healthy and active lifestyles, including providing access to proper nutrition, not only improves quality of life, it reduces the long-term costs associated with managing chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, the monetary costs of which affect the residents themselves, but also businesses and taxpayers. This objective shares many similarities with other recommendations throughout this Master Plan. The Open Space, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Element recommend several approaches for improving access to recreational amenities; new parks are one component, but access to these parks is equally critical, particularly for those without access to an automobile. Safe, non-motorized access to recreation, pathways and other points of access both to and within the parks, are a necessity to some, and an amenity for all. The Land Use and Housing Element recommends development and redevelopment in traditional, compact design approaches which encourage pedestrian activity; larger lot-size requirements spread people and businesses apart and discourage traditional “Main Streets.” Without the foot traffic necessary to sustain these types of small-scale, pedestrian-oriented businesses, “big box” auto-oriented retail development may fill the void and restrict access for those who do not drive. Compact development affords the opportunity for residents to live within proximity to commercial centers, reducing the need for an automobile to accomplish everyday tasks. Commercial districts that include a variety of businesses and housing options help reduce the need for multiple automobile trips and offer a safe area for residents, particularly older adults, to stay active and remain socially connected. The Transportation and Mobility Element recommends the consideration of bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly enhancements as part of transportation projects, often codified along with a “Complete Streets” program.

The county’s recently adopted land use regulations for sustainable land developments and subdivisions include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian circulation along county rights-of-way, particularly when required by municipal plans. These county land use regulations also recommend the use of vegetative green infrastructure for all site plans subject to review by the County of Bergen. While the direct use of green infrastructure is as a stormwater management tool, it offers secondary benefits to the surrounding community, including the mitigation of urban heat islands and improved air quality.



Objective 4.3: Provide access to affordable, quality child care

Quality child care is critical to the well-being and development of children and youth. The increasing costs of child care can make access to quality services prohibitive for some families, leading to the use of unlicensed facilities or other less suitable arrangements. As of January 2019, only 113 school districts in New Jersey receive state funding to provide free full-day preschool programs for some (i.e. selection through a lottery) or all children in the district (for children ages 3 and 4); despite the limited number of schools, the number of schools to offer such programming in 2017 was 35. In addition, Governor Murphy has expressed interest to continue expanding access to full-day preschool. In Bergen County, 63 school districts offer some form of preschool programming, however, many require additional tuition. In 7 Bergen County school districts, including **Bergenfield, Bogota, Englewood, Garfield, Hackensack, Moonachie,** and **Teaneck** offer access to a free, full day preschool program. Access to affordable, quality child care and pre-school can provide children with initial fundamentals necessary for future learning and success. The peace of mind provided to parents and caregivers has the added benefit of improving their overall productivity, when they are assured that their child is receiving proper care.



Objective 4.4: Ensure that Bergen County is a safe and desirable place to age

The need to provide services to an aging population is not unique to Bergen County. The need for senior centers, adult day care centers, transportation, and medical care will continue to grow, especially as life expectancies continue to increase. Currently, the population cohort known as the Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) is aging into retirement; this large segment of the population will increasingly require different types of support to maintain healthy and productive lives. Ensuring that aging residents have access to these amenities is critical to retaining this cohort in Bergen County. Programs and services that help older people stay independent include: activities that prevent social isolation; home delivered meals; home modifications; healthy aging educations and support (brain health, stress in older adults, reducing fall hazards, elder abuse); caregiver support; inclusive communities for all, including LGBTQ older adults; mental health services for homebound and active older adults; enhancing and increasing access to nutritious meals that meet different dietary preferences; expansion of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) outreach; and supporting affordable housing/housing coordinator can help older people stay independent. Equally as important is staff and caregiver training, including mental health first aid and support for inclusive and diverse populations.

In rural and low-density suburban settings, identify programs and services that reduce the pressure on older adults to feel that they need to keep driving, such as convenient access to transportation services. In communities with, or considering, compact development, senior mobility is enhanced through reduced need for automobile use. In these settings, gridded street patterns also provide transportation options for those utilizing automobiles to avoid high-speed arterial roadways. All of these approaches allow residents to “age in place,” and help Bergen County serve and support residents of all ages.

Objective 4.5: Continue to provide adequate homelessness prevention services

Homelessness affects all types of people, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or educational background, in cities, suburbs, rural areas and exurban fringes. Ever-increasing costs of living and limited supplies of affordable housing can make it difficult for low and very low-income households to live in Bergen County. As described in the Land Use and Housing Element of this Master Plan, the county's comprehensive approach to homelessness prevention received national attention in 2017 when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recognized it as the first community in the nation to eliminate chronic homelessness, a year after it ended homelessness for veterans. Maintaining these programs is critical to ensure that the county can continue to protect its most vulnerable residents.



Objective 4.6: Support mental health and substance abuse programs

The social and emotional well-being of Bergen County's residents is an integral component of maintaining quality of life. Mental illness and substance abuse are often stigmatized, under-addressed problems that affect not only the individual, but families, friends, and the greater community. The county has taken numerous steps to address these challenges. Its continuum of care approach to homelessness includes programming for those suffering with mental health illnesses. The county's "Stigma-Free" initiative addresses this issue directly, through public education to reduce the stigma of mental illness, support for families and those affected, and providing access to resources. The county has been committed to the prevention and treatment of substance abuse disorders, providing funding, technical assistance, and services.

**BERGEN COUNTY
PROUD TO BE
STIGMA-FREE**

Objective 4.7: Encourage housing that appeals to a range of different needs and interests

As described in the Land Use and Housing Element, municipalities have the responsibility to comply with state requirements for affordable housing. Historically, this has been through the State's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH); however, since 2015 municipalities have had to individually navigate this process through the court system. In addition, Bergen County has committed to providing access to supportive (housing for people with mental health, emotional or behavioral problems), affordable, and barrier free (housing for those with special needs, including limited mobility) housing opportunities for residents with specific needs, including those at risk of homelessness, homeless teens, veterans, persons with disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals. Some of these needs may not require extensive intervention; rather, access to housing alternatives beyond the single-family detached home could provide necessary attractive options for residents with diverse needs and interests. These alternatives include multi-family housing, including townhomes, condominiums, duplexes and apartments, but also accessory apartments. A major benefit of a diverse housing stock is that it can also meet the needs of different economic cohorts, such as first time homebuyers, who may otherwise leave the county for other housing options, different household types, such as one-person households that may not want or need a single family detached house, multi-generational households where additional space or an accessory dwelling unit is needed, and those interested in aging-in-place without the interest or need for a large home.

Similar to other planning tools, there is no “one-size-fits-all” answer to providing a diverse housing stock. High-density, multi-family residential housing is not always an appropriate option, such as when it is located away from employment centers, retail and services, or transit. Likewise, large-lot detached single-family residential development may not work in areas where a community is interested in establishing a vibrant downtown, where a critical mass of “foot traffic” is required to attract, retain, and sustain restaurants and businesses. Residents and local elected officials often ask why they cannot seem to attract certain types of businesses, or a specific national retailer. As described in the Economic Vitality Element, there are numerous factors that businesses review as part of their locational decision-making process, including local zoning requirements, demographics, and proximity to complementary businesses (and, in the case of national chains, proximity to their other locations), but also the anticipated number of customers. Communities with certain base densities, particularly in areas that serve both daytime customers (such as employees, older residents, and visitors) and evening customers may

be more attractive to certain businesses than in communities containing low residential densities.

While the county does not have the authority to regulate the types of residential housing that are permitted, as this is part of a municipality's ability to zone for different types of land uses, it can facilitate, educate and inform municipalities on the direct and indirect impacts of certain local land use decisions, such as desirable residential densities for specific types of businesses, or potential impacts on local traffic.



359 Main Street. Source: Bergen County Division of Economic Development



Age-Friendly Livable Bergen County Initiative Presentation. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 5: Foster the Efficient Provision of Public Services

What is it?

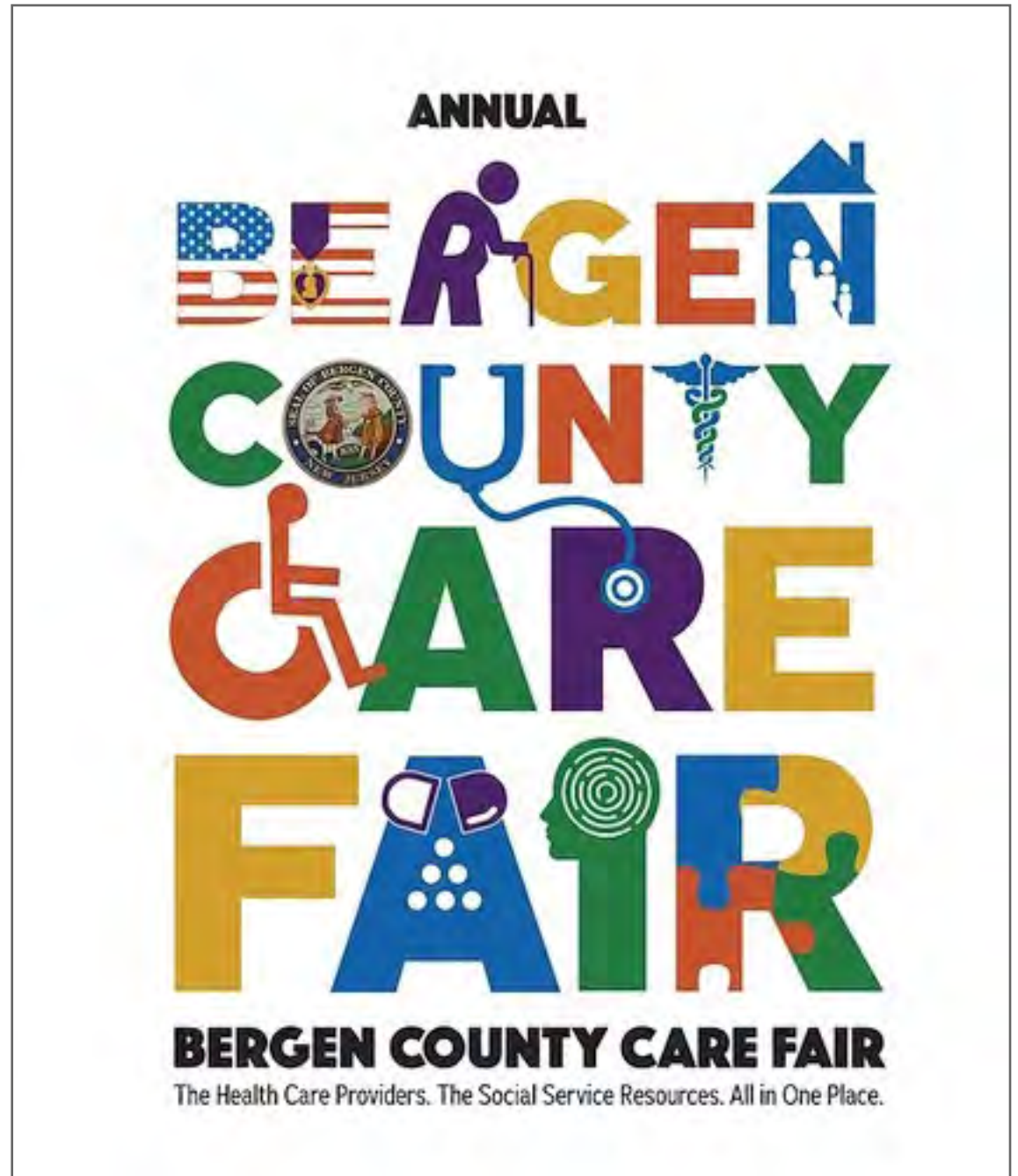
Bergen County's 70 municipalities and 76 school districts support the largest population of any county in New Jersey. Despite the large number of political subdivisions and government agencies in Bergen County, these are inextricably linked by shared assets, infrastructure, environmental conditions, and economics – especially given that this is spread over a relatively small and densely-developed land area. The potential for economies of scale and the efficient delivery of services that could provide savings in the cost of government therefore appears to be greater here than anywhere else in New Jersey.

What will it do?

Evaluating the management and provision of municipal and educational services in Bergen County's 70 municipalities may identify where economies of scale can be achieved through inter-local agreements for shared services.

Why should the county pursue it?

The cost of living, particularly the property tax burden, is consistently a high priority concern of residents and businesses.



County Care Fare Flyer. Source: Bergen County

Objective 5.1: Support municipal efforts to share services and facilities

Bergen County has demonstrated an interest in pursuing and promoting shared services. From the county's experience and other notable case studies of service sharing in New Jersey, sharing information across municipalities, school districts, and their residents, could help encourage shared services and consolidation. Similarly, shared facilities optimize the use of certain public facilities during periods of limited use, such as schools during evening hours or the summer months, allowing other activities and community programming to utilize the space, thereby reducing the need for additional infrastructure.

Objective 5.2: Multi-municipal planning and development review

Understanding the increased capacity of municipalities to come together and collectively meet the infrastructure and service needs of industries and developers could help to attract companies to Bergen County that would have otherwise located elsewhere. Joint approaches, from multi-municipal master plans to the review and approval phase of larger development projects with inter-municipal impacts and benefits, could all promote a streamlined, "one-stop-shopping" approach to the land development and approvals process.

Objective 5.3: Evaluate the feasibility of expanding the use of shared services

As mentioned in the previous section, Bergen County's interest in shared services has been most visibly demonstrated through the establishment of a division of Shared Services as part of the Department of Public Works. A Shared Services Strategic Plan could evaluate current county operations and identify potential efficiencies. The plan could also evaluate services on the municipal level to identify potential inter-municipal or county-municipal actions and partnerships.

MULTI-MUNICIPAL MASTER PLANS

As described in the Introduction section to this Master Plan, county planning is governed by the New Jersey County and Regional Planning Act, NJSA 40:27-1 et seq ("County Planning Act"). Municipalities, on the other hand, regulate land use pursuant to the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. seq., or "MLUL"). Under the MLUL, municipalities have the authority to establish planning and zoning boards, master plans, and zoning. The MLUL also provides for municipalities to establish joint boards with other municipalities (40:55D-77), with the same functions of planning and land use regulation. Despite the large number of municipalities in New Jersey (currently at 565 in 2019), few municipalities have taken advantage of this provision of the MLUL, although several recent examples exist. The Borough of Princeton and the Township of Princeton operated a Regional Planning Board, and prepared regional Master Plans prior to the consolidation of the two communities in 2013.

Objective 5.4: Streamline county services and identify efficiencies

Bergen County has consolidated many county offices and services within its County Complex facility in **Hackensack** and **Paramus**. Advancements in technology and the corresponding increases in technical literacy may offer some efficiencies for government operations, while increasing convenience to residents and businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic hastened this trend for many aspects of daily life, including business operations, particularly when in-person gathering was limited by regulation. Electronic submission of forms and applications, electronic archiving of – and access to – records, are examples where the county has already taken steps to implement this efficiency, which provide residents with the convenience of county services outside of normal office hours, often at their own fingertips. As more services can be provided remotely through mobile and web-based applications, such as telemedicine, the county may have less need for certain satellite facilities and offer additional opportunities for consolidation to reduce the number of facilities and office space required for operations.

Technology aside, there is also importance to co-locate related departments to avoid working in “silos.” One overarching intention of this Master Plan is to highlight how many of the goals and objectives in each topical element are shared across elements. For example, clustering development near transit may be a goal of Land Use and Housing because it promotes walkability and a variety of different housing types, but it is also a goal of Transportation and Mobility because it helps to improve the efficiency of the overall transportation network, and it is also a goal of Economic Vitality, because businesses are increasingly expressing interest in locating to these areas. Co-locating related departments increases the ability for interdepartmental communication, allowing agencies to work together to achieve common goals with greater efficiency and a diversity of expertise.





Donna Brennan

Salt Shed. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Objective 5.5: Increase the visibility and use of county services

Explore additional opportunities to provide services to municipalities, such as the provision of county services in lieu of a local program. As described in the existing conditions, Bergen County presently provides emergency dispatch and 911 services to nearly a third of its municipalities. The county's Division of Shared Services provides municipalities with access to shared equipment. These options may be attractive to municipalities interested in reducing costs while maintaining the levels of service expected by residents and businesses.

Objective 5.6: Consider additional regional shared service initiatives with neighboring counties

The county's recent initiative to provide consumer protection services to Passaic County began in 2017 as an effort to reduce costs through the efficient delivery of services. Based on the outcomes of this program, the county will be in a better position to identify additional partnerships with adjacent counties where shared services could achieve mutual benefits. Another example is the Central Counties Cooperative Caucus Initiative (CCCCI), which is a loose confederation consisting of Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset and Union Counties, which has resulted in the sharing of adult corrections, juvenile corrections, education, purchasing, information technology, public works, transportation, and medical examiner services.¹⁰



Community Garden. Source: Donna Brennan, Bergen County

Donna Brennan