



State of New Jersey

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
100 North Road (Route 513)
Chester, New Jersey 07930-2322
(908) 879-6737
(908) 879-4205 (fax)
www.nj.gov/njhighlands



PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

CARL J. RICHKO
Chair

LISA J. PLEVIN
Executive Director

Contact:

Carole Ann Dicton, Manager of Communications
(908) 879-6737 ext. 105 or caroleann.dicton@highlands.nj.gov

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Highlands Council Approves Projects that Advance Economic Sustainability Planning and Wastewater Planning

CHESTER, N.J. — At its most recent meeting, the Highlands Council approved funding to support three projects in Morris, Sussex and Passaic counties. The projects include a sewer study in Chester Borough and two economic sustainability planning efforts in Ringwood Borough and Hopatcong Borough.

“Two of the benefits of partnering with the Highlands Council is access to staff expertise and to grant funding,” explained Lisa Plevin, Highlands Council Executive Director. “Our professional planners and science team work closely with municipal officials to identify their top priorities and how we can help achieve them.”

Summaries of the three funded projects are below.

- **Chester Borough, Morris County – Sewer Study**

Not to exceed \$97,200

Chester Borough intends to conduct a comprehensive planning and engineering study that will result in an NJDEP-approved Water Quality Management Plan Amendment and the design of an expanded sewage collection and treatment system to serve existing and future wastewater needs. The resulting design and plan will be consistent with Chester Borough’s Highlands Center designation.

- **Ringwood Borough, Passaic County – Economic Sustainability Planning**

Not to exceed \$50,000

Ringwood Borough is seeking to develop a municipal trail system for bicycle and pedestrian accessibility intended to provide linkages between commercial corridors, tourism sites, and

public facilities. The project will require the assistance of a planning/engineering firm with GIS capabilities to assess and map existing trail segments, identify gaps and potential new linkages. The municipality plans to support the trail system with the assistance of a resident and business partnership committee to remediate and maintain the trails.

- **Hopatcong Borough, Sussex County – Economic Corridor Planning**

Not to exceed \$32,700

The Borough of Hopatcong plans to conduct a redevelopment study for several areas in the community that the Borough wishes to designate as Areas in Need of Redevelopment. All areas targeted for study fall within the Borough’s designated Highlands Center. For this reason, the study will begin with a Highlands Resource Analysis to first determine the allowable extent of disturbance for each redevelopment area.

All grants are contingent upon funding availability and approved scopes of work. The Highlands Council Plan Conformance grant program is reimbursement-based and only payable after final project deliverables are reviewed and approved by Highlands Council staff.

“The Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) is a very thoughtful and comprehensive document,” said Carl Richko, Highlands Council Chairman. “Conformance with the RMP often helps municipalities and counties advance efforts already underway, or projects that have been identified but previously lacked funding or other resources. When we can help Highlands communities address their needs, the whole region benefits.”

Actions taken by the Council at this meeting will take effect following the Governor’s review and consideration of the meeting minutes, up to 10 business days from receipt of the minutes. Materials related to this meeting including resolutions, presentations, audio and minutes will be posted at: www.nj.gov/njhighlands/about/calend/index.html (click on December 3 meeting).

The Highlands Council is a regional planning agency, established in 2004 with the passage of the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and charged with implementation of the Act. More information is available at www.nj.gov/njhighlands.

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