



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Commissioners, Elected Officials And Economic Development And Tourism Director Host Roundtable Discussion About Tourism Initiatives With Senator Booker

Members of the Hunterdon County Commissioner Board met with local elected officials and Economic Development and Tourism Director, Marc Saluk, for a roundtable discussion regarding tourism and its benefits to the local economy with Senator Cory Booker. The forum also highlighted the County's Explore Hunterdon initiative and showcased local tourism grants that the Commissioner Board has awarded using funds received from the American Rescue Plan.

Hunterdon County Commissioner Director John E. Lanza said, "Hunterdon County's Economic Development and Tourism plan is a multi-year strategy, that aims to promote economic prosperity for our County while also creating a sustainable way to promote and protect our local environment and historic structures."

Mr. Lanza went on to note that this is a bipartisan issue for the County and municipalities to work together on. For example, Mr. Lanza noted, "\$490,000 has been allocated to Economic Recovery and Tourism so far this year. That is a significant investment and \$250,000 of that funding was direct American Rescue Plan Funds."

Commissioner Board Deputy Director Zachary T. Rich said, "As part of the County's dedication to Tourism, the Commissioner Board instituted a Tourism Grant Program in which all twenty-six municipalities were eligible to apply. The 'Rediscover Hunterdon' Program has granted seventeen towns up to \$5,000 and has been very successful."

As Lanza pointed out during the roundtable discussion, Hunterdon County has dedicated an initial quarter of a million dollars received from its American Rescue Plan allocation to accelerate tourism in the county.

This funding has supported the 'Explore Hunterdon' initiative which is aimed at drawing visitors from all over the state to come to Hunterdon County and experience the County's vineyards, breweries, farms, historic downtowns and Main Streets, and restaurants.



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Marc Saluk said, “We really appreciate the Senator taking the time to learn about the Explore Hunterdon initiative and collaborate with local officials about tourism and its impact on local economies.”

“As Hunterdon County looks to find sustainable avenues for economic development, tourism tops the list of viable options. Hunterdon County offers the perfect platform to share quintessential agritourism and heritage-tourism options,” Paul Muir, Mayor of Bethlehem Township said.

Director Lanza informed Senator Booker that at the January 18th Commissioner Board meeting, he sought to elevate Economic Development to the department level, so that the county would be able to give tourism the attention it deserves and make recovery from the pandemic a priority.

“As I stated previously, the focus on economic development and tourism will help to keep Hunterdon County one of the best places to live. The visit from the Senator today, with local officials who are speaking to the successes in their municipalities so far, is proof that the plan is already working,” Director Lanza said.

Deputy Director Rich added, “Everyone here wants to have the best restaurants, the best parks, that’s what we’re all trying to do, and visitors coming across route 78 from other parts of the state, come here to have that ‘best’ experience, with their families here in Hunterdon, and we want to make that happen.”

To see a full list of American Fund Resources and the Local Fiscal Recovery Action Plan for Hunterdon County, [click here](#).