



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon County Division of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Launches Web Mapping App *Hunterdon Harvest* Endorsed By The Hunterdon County Commissioner Board

Hunterdon County GIS Coordinator Patricia Leidner recently presented several updates from the GIS Division, including the collaborative development of *Hunterdon Harvest*, and several other newly created or updated web mapping applications to the Commissioner Board.

The Division of GIS, established in 1998, creates and maintains the spatial data and web mapping applications according to the needs of the County, Departments and Municipal partners. The data created by the Division of GIS is shared with the public, local municipalities, and the state in support of County functions and future planning.

Deputy Director Zachary T. Rich, Planning Board liaison, said, "An increasing number of people continue to look to their smart devices to find information ranging from places to visit, dine, and shop and Hunterdon County's GIS Division is taking the lead on helping to connect local residents with numerous resources throughout Hunterdon County.

Electronic access to the Parcels Data, Medicine Drop Box Locations, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resources, Local Agricultural Businesses and Sites of Historic Interest around the County are helpful to many different segments of the population and have the potential to improve the quality of life here in the County."

Ms. Leidner explained to the Board that several of the apps were created to be device responsive, tailoring the layout to best fit the device being used to access the app, providing the user with the best possible experience and ease of navigation.

"The County Tax Administrator and Local Tax Assessors in the past have asked GIS to create maps in response to tax appeals and municipal tax assessment activities. The newly updated Parcel Viewer App provides functionality that allows the public and local municipalities to view data, create and print their own maps marked up with drawing and measurement tools. It frees up our time and puts resources in the hands of the people who need it. This is not a device responsive app since the functionality is too complex for phone access."

The newest app, *HuntHistory.Org*, is a crowd sourcing type app that was created to provide more detailed descriptions of significant places and people in Hunterdon's History. A total of ten categories encompasses the variety of activities and locations of historic note. This project has just begun. A few American Revolution sites are done. The Cultural and Heritage Commission hopes to mark every revolutionary era site before the 250th anniversary of the Declaration. Local historians are invited to contribute detailed histories to this project. For more information email cultural@co.hunterdon.nj.us and help put local history on the map.



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Hunterdon Harvest, a collaboration between the Planning Division, Economic Development Department, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Hunterdon County, municipal partners and local farmers was created to provide a resource for local agricultural businesses, large or small, to promote what they have to offer, create partnerships and attract new customers. Participation is free, but limited to, Agricultural Businesses or Community Farmers' Markets located and selling in Hunterdon County. A portion of what you sell or offer must be grown or raised in Hunterdon County on your property.

The Division of GIS is seeking to better promote the existence and purpose of this app, to increase participation by the local Agricultural Community and let the public know what they have to offer. Based on participant survey responses, we could easily create "trails" to follow along with the current 579 Trail and Beer Trail themes, such as Pick Your Own, Fall Activities, Apple Picking, Vineyards or Christmas Tree Farms to name just a few, supporting the County's Tourism Initiatives.

"*Hunterdon Harvest* is an exciting app that invites the public to come and discover all that our agricultural community has to offer," Zach noted.

The Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) initiative, intended to replace current services over time, will be a more GIS centric system. The GIS Division will play a critical role in the maintenance of the data for this system moving forward.

"As the need for spatial data increases, the Division of GIS will be essential to support the County's goals and to provide resources to county residents," Ms. Leidner added.

"GIS has been a vital asset for the community. During Hurricane Ida, the Division quickly provided a damage reporting app which allowed a timely disaster declaration for the County. During Covid, GIS set up a dashboard with case information and statistics and an Election District Locator app for the Board of Elections, and the list goes on to include food pantry locations, housing resources and the newest Hunterdon History app which provides locations and information for local history to come alive.

Hunterdon County is known as the safest and healthiest community, across the nation and in the state. GIS providing these additional resources is an affirmation of that reputation and the Board thanks the Division's staff for their efforts in creating apps that greatly improve residents and visitors' quality of life," Rich concluded.

For more information about all the apps and services available from the County GIS Division, visit the County's website at co.hunterdon.nj.us.