



21st Century Redevelopment Grant



Introduction

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority 21st Century Redevelopment Grant was awarded to the City of Millville, New Jersey to create a plan to activate vacant business and residential spaces in Center City, Millville. Holly City Development Corporation (HCDC) led background data collection in Summer and Fall 2022 that included focus groups (50 participants), surveys (243 community members and 41 business owners), in-depth interviews (10 business owners), and an aesthetic inventory of the strengths and challenges of buildings along High Street, the main thoroughfare in Center City. These data were then used as context by an activity planning committee consisting of City officials, nonprofit leaders, business owners, community members, and County stakeholders to develop goals and activities to increase the number of people who shop, eat in, and enjoy Center City Millville.



Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities Strengths:

- Arts and Entertainment
- Central Location to Cities and Shore
- Strong, Positive Local Support

Opportunities

- Diversified Dining Options
- High-Quality, Signature Events
- Marketing and Advertising
- Riverfront Development
- Business Renovation and Improvement

Challenges and Barriers

- Human Services
- Community Policing Initiatives
- Aesthetic Improvements
- Government Services

21st Century Redevelopment Grant

New Jersey Economic Development Authority Research Findings

Activity Planning

A facilitated activity planning session was held in late November 2022 to identify goals and activities based on strengths, challenges, barriers, and opportunities identified in the data. The resulting goal areas and activities are outlined below:



Asset Activation

Retain and develop existing businesses; attract new businesses and residents.

Public Services

- Increase communication, visibility, and frequency of policing in Center City.
- Support the unhoused population through housing, addiction, mental health, and economic support.
- Develop a clear, user-friendly guide to opening and growing a business in Millville.
- Improve visible public (tree maintenance, lighting, sidewalks) and private (paint, signage, hours) spaces.
- Develop and grow public-private partnerships.

Marketing

- Develop and market a consistent City identity to attract people to Millville.
- Identify and advertise high-quality, Millville signature events.

Business Development

- Link prospective and current business owners to resources and courses.
- Develop K-12 and higher education partnerships in the arts and workforce development.
- Activate local food service assets to train employees and grow Millville dining.

Next Steps: Role Clarification and Planning

There is a strong desire in Millville for action. HCDC will collaborate with local nonprofits, government, business groups, community members, and county representatives to plan roles and responsibilities for this plan to establish Millville as a thriving small-town Arts and Entertainment Center along scenic Maurice River.

**For more information, contact
Samantha Cruz at (856) 825-7000, ext. 7394**

