

# New Jersey Shared Services Association (NJSSA)

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# NJSSA Mission

The New Jersey Shared Services Association (NJSSA) is a non-profit association that proactively promotes increased efficiency in the delivery of services, while reducing the costs of local government. NJSSA members focus in the areas of advocacy, policy development, and education; while offering non-partisan advisory services to all local public entities and selected non-profit associations.

# NJSSA Goals

- The overall goal of the NJSSA is to establish substantial and long-term shared service agreements throughout NJ counties and municipalities to help reduce the cost of local government to the taxpayers and improve the availability and efficiency of government services.
- The NJSSA members work to identify areas where county and local government can work collaboratively to combine resources for more efficient service delivery while at the same time helping to lower capital and operating costs for participating government entities, resulting in relief to local taxpayers.

# NJSSA Background

- In 2007, Middlesex County Freeholder H. James Polos, recognized statewide as long time advocate for shared services, brought together the county shared services coordinators in New Jersey with the purpose of establishing a statewide professional association. The vision was to create an opportunity for improved communication among the coordinators, sharing of information, professional development and advocacy for shared services.
- Established in 2008, the New Jersey Shared Services Association (NJSSA) is a non-profit 501(c)3 association that proactively promotes increased efficiency in the delivery of services, while reducing the costs of local government. NJSSA members focus in the areas of advocacy, policy development, and education; while offering non-partisan advisory services to all local public entities and selected non-profit associations.

# NJSSA Areas of Focus

- Legislative Initiatives
- Best Practices
- Education and Outreach

# Legislative Initiatives

- NJSSA and NJAC jointly sent recommendations to DCA Commissioner Doria proposing changes to grant fund uses to focus more on “rubber meets the road” implementation and start-up costs, including up to \$200,000 in capital expenditures per application.
- NJSSA has been actively campaigning for the removal of statutory barriers to shared services with both the Majority and Minority leadership of the State Senate and Assembly.

# Best Practices Initiatives

- Develop comprehensive inventory and database of Shared Services throughout NJ
- Provide leadership & mentoring to local government entities on shared service initiatives (sharing success stories, information & resources)
- To set realistic short & long-term goals to identify, study and implement more efficient and cost effective local government services
- Establish working relationships with state and local agencies that can support or benefit from NJSSA

# Examples of Shared Services Currently Being Provided

- Information Technology (IT)
- Centralized Police Dispatch, 911 Emergency Communications
- Consolidation of Public Work Facilities & Departments
- Animal Control / Animal Shelters
- Mosquito Control & Gypsy Moth Spraying
- County Records Management /Retention for Municipalities
- Transportation Resources for the Disadvantaged and Elderly
- Countywide Fleet Maintenance & Purchasing
- Regional Vehicle Wash Facilities
- Parks and Recreation Facilities / Staff and Maintenance
- Police Protection Mergers
- Countywide Tax Assessments and Revaluations
- Countywide Stormwater Maintenance and Compliance
- County Health Department / Regionalized Health Services
- County Library System
- County Sponsored Municipal Job Fairs
- Shared School District Superintendents and Personnel
- Customized Training Programs
- County Recycling Programs
- County Landfill
- Police and Fire Training Academies
- Regional Planning and Economic Development
- GIS (Geographical Information Systems)



# Education & Outreach Initiatives

- Event planning to include topical forums that address current and key issues in shared services
- Developed website that includes database of all documented shared activities, studies and documents
- Responsible for overall marketing and information dissemination about NJ Shared Services

# COUNT Grant Program

- The grants offer State financial assistance to help county governments and non-profit regional organizations study, develop, and implement new shared and regional services, or to facilitate new shared programs among the county's towns and school districts.
- The grants provide \$100,000 assistance annually for up to a maximum of three years.
- NJSSA has 18 active counties: Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Salem, Somerset, Sussex and Union

# SHARE Grant Program

## ■ Implementation Assistance Grants

- Implementation grants assist local units with the start-up, transition, and implementation costs associated with new or expanded shared services or the consolidation of local units.
- Grants of up to \$200,000 for implementation assistance are available.
  - No local match is required.
- Grants for capital equipment purchases and facility improvements necessary to establish the shared service, are limited to the lesser of \$40,000, or the five percent capital cash down payment required under the Local Bond Law.

# SHARE Grant Program

## ■ Feasibility Study Grants

- Feasibility Study Grants assist local units with planning and developing shared services.
  - Feasibility studies often make sense for larger projects or those with complicated personnel, legal or logistic issues.
  - Priority will be given to public safety projects.
  
- Grants up to \$20,000 with a required cash match of 10 percent of the requested grant amount.
  - Municipalities with population under 10,000 exempt from 10 percent match

# Middlesex County Shared Services Department Overview

- Middlesex County received a three year \$300,000 COUNT Grant from the NJ Department of Community Affairs
- On May 3rd, 2007, the Department of Shared Services was established by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders
- The role of the new department is to act as a facilitator where two or more local units have an interest in a Shared Services initiative
- Established the New Jersey Statewide Shared Services Association (NJSSSA) in March 2007. Presently, 18 counties are active participants. The Association's primary goal is to lobby and educate.

# Middlesex County

## Shared Services Portal

- Middlesex County is using existing State resources to establish an Internet portal that all municipalities, agencies, authorities and school districts throughout the County can use to:
  - Purchase supplies
  - Share the cost, maintenance and use of large equipment
  - Combine professional services
- The graphic rich, easy-to-use Middlesex County Shared Services Portal will allow users to sign in on a secure site to communicate with one another their interests and needs for Shared Services initiatives of all types.

# Central Counties Cooperative Caucus Initiative

- Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset and Union Counties
- County-to-County Shared Services Initiatives
- Areas of Focus: Adult Corrections, Juvenile Corrections, Education, Purchasing, Information Technology, Public Works, Transportation, Medical Examiner
- Success Story – Middlesex County Juvenile Corrections Facility

# Moving Forward

## Some Shared Services Success Stories

[www.njsharedservices.org](http://www.njsharedservices.org)





# Atlantic County

- The Annexation of Corbin City by Upper Township which is located in Cape May County
- The Centralization of 911 Services
- The Centralization of Fleet Management
- The Centralization of Property Revaluation and Tax Collection System
- Municipal Court Mergers

# Burlington County

- Centralized Health Department, Recycling Collection, County Landfill, Library System, Emergency Management & Communications, County Animal Shelter, Regional Planning & Economic Development
- Vehicle wash available to government entities at no cost
- Active Shared Services Forum
- Free grant writing service to municipalities
- Rancocas Creek Clean Up
- COAH Plan preparation
- Storm Water Management Plan preparation
- MACS
- Numerous feasibility studies under way
- County wide cooperative purchasing

# Camden County

- Continuous outreach and discussions with local government entities to help investigate, identify and facilitate sharing opportunities
- Active Shared Services Forum

# Essex County

- Municipal Liaison Program – whereby a department manager from the county is assigned to serve as a go between to a municipality. All 22 municipalities in Essex County have an assigned liaison who attends public meetings and interacts with regularly with municipal officials and department heads.

# Gloucester County

- Gloucester County Education Services – Since 2001 GCSSD and the GCIT have been sharing, equipment facilities and other staff. The sharing of administration has saved Gloucester County taxpayers \$1million annually.
- In 2008 Educational & Disability Services were merged in order to provide a more seamless approach to regional planning, shared services and campus planning. The merger encompasses all educational services within the county as well as the county's office of Disability Services.

# Morris County

- 2 new shared services integrating municipal and county resources for rapid response to health crisis/communicable disease and lead hazard assessment are awaiting formal announcement
- A feasibility study for regional animal control and sheltering for 39 municipalities has recently been completed
- 2 municipal court consolidations are in the works – one involves five communities
- Regional initiatives addressing construction department inspectors and municipal dial-a-ride services are being evaluated
- A municipal consolidation between Chester Borough and Chester Township is under evaluation

# Ocean County

- Ocean County has initiated a Bid Portal which is available 24/7. The portal posts all bids and awards. Ocean County has a Co-op which allows all municipalities and school boards in the county to view and utilize the specifications, resolutions and contracts

# Somerset County

- Somerville Borough has partnered with Bridgewater, Raritan, Branchburg and Manville for maintenance and annual upkeep of a skate park
- Bedminster Township and BOE have come to a Shared Services agreement that has the Township Director of Public Works overseeing maintenance of both the Township and BOE



# Sussex County

## Existing Shared Services

- All Health Services save for one municipality
- Winter road maintenance services
- Fueling Agreements
- Planning
- Animal Control
- Library Services
- EAP Sharing
- Cooperative Purchasing
- Joint Court Services
- Senior Programs
- Gypsy Moth Spraying
- Law Enforcement psychological testing
- Training
- Equipment Use
- Traffic Light Maintenance
- GIS Services
- RX Insurance
- Recycling
- Tax Assessing
- Meals on Wheels
- Much more in place and even more in the planning stages.

# Three Things to Remember

- For Every Action There is an Equal and Opposite Reaction – Sir Isaac Newton’s Third Law of Motion
- The Law of Unintended Consequences – Adam Smith (Wealth of Nations)
- Change is more readily accepted when it is Incremental – Charles E. Lindbloom (Politics, Economics and Welfare)

# Q & A

[www.njsharedservices.org](http://www.njsharedservices.org)

