



Courtenay D. Mercer, PP, AICP Principal

Courtenay Mercer is a land use planner with substantial public sector and non-profit experience that enable her to provide assistance to diverse and complex planning projects, and to work with all types of communities. Her project experience ranges from rural conservation planning to urban redevelopment.

As the former Director of Planning at the NJ Office of Smart Growth and NJ Director of the Regional Plan Association, Mercer has been at the forefront of policy and planning initiatives of state and regional significance. She has overseen myriad projects, including transit oriented development (TOD), complete streets, rural and historic preservation, as well as local and regional comprehensive long range planning. One of Courtenay's core assets is her ability to coordinate diverse stakeholders and garner inter-governmental coordination for complex planning projects.

In addition to public and private sector planning work, Courtenay is involved with many civic and volunteer efforts, including public community boards and non-profit organizations. Mercer is a sought after speaker and thought leader in redevelopment, downtown revitalization, bike/ped safety, state and regional planning policy, and equitable community engagement approaches.

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Vision Zero/SS4A Action Plans, Various Locations, NJ

Coordinating community and stakeholder engagement, including strategic efforts to engage equity priority populations for safe streets plans in Essex, Hudson, and Union Counties and Jersey City. Activities include coordinating and facilitating advisory committee and stakeholder focus groups meetings, a survey and mapping tool, in-person pop-up outreach events, public meetings, communications and promotional materials, and translation, as well as technical advisory for Action Plan strategy development.

Bus Network Redesign, Hudson County, NJ

Coordinating public and stakeholder engagement, over three phases to gather input to inform key project deliverables, including facilitation of a Stakeholder Advisory Committee, website content, multilingual surveys and an interactive mapping tool, substantial in-person pop-up outreach, community meetings, and communications and promotional materials. as well as targeted outreach coordination with organizations representing vulnerable populations.

Bike Plan, Newark, NJ

Coordinated community and stakeholder engagement, including strategic efforts to engage equity priority communities. Outreach activities included coordinating and facilitating a Steering Advisory Committee, website, multilingual survey and mapping tool, social media, and targeted outreach coordination with organizations representing vulnerable populations. MPA also coordinated several in-person pop-up outreach events.

Complete Streets Plan, Harrison, NJ

Coordinated community and stakeholder engagement, including strategic efforts to engage priority-equity communities. Services included coordinating and facilitating a Technical Advisory Committee, multilingual survey and mapping tool, social media, and pop-up outreach events with tactical urbanism demonstration project installations.

Long Range Transportation Plan, Northern NJ

After coordinating community and stakeholder engagement for the Plan adopted in 2021, Mercer is providing similar services for the 2025 Plan; including facilitation of a board retreat and technical advisory committee meetings, a multilingual online survey (with targeted paper survey distribution), a robust social media campaign, an educational symposium series, pop-up outreach events, a virtual public meeting, and coordination with organizations representing vulnerable populations.

EDUCATION

Masters of City and Regional Planning, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy, Rutgers University, New Brunswick
BA, Political Science, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

ACCREDITATIONS, AFFILIATIONS & AWARDS

NJ Professional Planner

American Institute of Certified Planners

American Planning Association (APA)

Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy, Young Alumni Award

2020 Mid-Atlantic Regional Emmy Awards Nominee

RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

Board of Directors, Downtown NJ (2014-2017), Treasurer (2025 - present)

Board of Directors, American Planning Association (2014-2021), Treasurer (2019-2021), Secretary (2018)

Chair, APA National Planning Conference Committee (2022-2023); Co-Chair, APA National Planning Conference Local Host Committee, (2016-2017)

Secretary-Treasurer, APA Chapter President's Council (2011-2014)

President, New Jersey Chapter of the APA (2007-2010, Treasurer 2004-2005)

Co-Chair, TNJ Competitive Task Force (2020-2022), TNJ Efficient Task Force, (2016-2020)

Founding Board Member, Treasurer, Safe Streets Jersey City (2017-2018)

Member, NJ TDR Task Force (2009-2013)

Member, NJ Preservation Conference Planning Committee (2009-2012, 2017)

Member, NJ State Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee (2009-2010)

Trustee, The Fellowship for Metlar-Bodine House Museum (2001-2013, Treasurer 2002-2004)

Designee, State Agriculture Development Committee (2005-2007)

Designee, State TDR Bank Board (2005-2007)

Member, Highlands TDR Technical Advisory Committee (2005-2007)

Resource Team, RPA's NJ Mayors' Institute on Community Design (2006, 2007, & 2015)

Appointed, Middlesex Borough Planning Board (2008-2009), Zoning Board (2005-2006), and Redevelopment Committee Chair (2008-2009)

Designee, Highlands Task Force (2003)

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Guest Lecturer on Planning & Career Topics, Rutgers University, TCNJ, Rowan University, Rider University, Ongoing

Let's Talk! Transportation and TPA Tuesdays Webinar Series, Coordinator, 2020 -2021 and 2025

TOD in Your Downtown Forum Series, Co-Coordinator, 2019-Present

Downtown Management Forum Series, Coordinator, 2019-2024

We're on a Road to Zero, Come on Inside, NJ TransAction Conference, 2025

Building Trust in Communities by Implementing Meaningful Engagement Strategies, NJ Bike & Walk Summit, 2025

Don't Wait, Demonstrate! NJ Bike & Walk Summit, 2024

Challenges and Opportunities with Complete Streets Implementation, NJ TransAction Conference, 2024

Attract & Retain Retail in Your Downtown, NJLM Conference, 2023

Parklet Best Practices, TNJ Institute, 2023

Reinventing the ROW, NJLM Conference, 2022

Economic Development and Redevelopment: Techniques, Tools, Programs, Funding and PILOTS, NJ Conference of Mayors, 2022

Transit Friendly Planning: A Guide for New Jersey Communities Webinar, 2022

COVID Lessons Learned: From Pilot to Permanent, NJ Bike & Walk Summit, 2021

Downtown Reinvention as a Road to Recovery, NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference, Jan 2021

Realizing Opportunity Through Transportation, NJTPA Symposium, Jan 2021

Downtown Recovery After Economic Upheaval, NJLM Conference, 2020

Two Homes, One Roof: Making New Jersey More Welcoming with ADUs, APA-NJ Forum, Dec 2020

You're Engaged! Getting the Public Involved in Transportation Planning, NJ TransAction Conference, 2020

Adapting to Change, NJTPA Symposium, Oct 2020

Ethics for Planners, APA NY Metro Chapter Conference, 2020

Micromobility in Your Community, Together North Jersey Workshop, 2020

Historic Preservation Planning, NJLM Conference, 2019; NJ Planning Conference 2020

Making TOD Real – Planning & Building Transit-Oriented Development in NJ, TOD in Your Downtown Forum, 2019

The Virtues of Vice?, NJ Redevelopment Forum, 2019

Economic Development & Historic Preservation - Perfect Together, NJ Planning Conference, 2019

Leading Their Communities: Exploring Women's Impact in Entrepreneurial Roles, The Bloustein Memorial Lecture Series, 2018

Complete Streets 101, Safe Streets Jersey City Workshop, 2017

Interconnecting Local Cities and Suburbs, Paterson Metropolitan Region Research Center Conference, 2016

Economic Impact of New Jersey's Transportation Future, New Start NJ Forum, 2016

Improving NJ's Infrastructure, New Leadership Council of NJ Policy Summit, 2016

Improving Transportation Across the Hudson, Saint Peter's University Forum, 2015

Fragile Success: Taking Stock of the NY Metro Region, Community Development Conference, 2015

Strategies for Implementing Regional Plans, National Planning Conference, 2015

ARTICLES & PRINT RESOURCES

DNJ Newsletter; Contributing Editor, 2018-2024

NJ Transit Friendly Development Newsletter, Editorial Board Member, 2007, 2014-Present

Transit Friendly Planning: A Guide for NJ Communities, Contributing Editor, 2021

NJ's Restaurants and Downtowns Need Liquor License Reform Now, NJ Spotlight, Nov 6, 2020 (ghost-writer)

Reinventing Your Downtown After Economic Upheaval, NJLM Magazine, Summer 2020

It's Time to Invest in New Jersey's Past, NJ Spotlight, Feb 24, 2020

The Complete Guide to Planning in New Jersey - Fourth Edition, Contributor, 2018; *Third Edition*, Editorial Board, Organizing Committee & Contributor, 2010

Our Region's Success is Fragile, NJLM Magazine, February 2015

NJ in Transition: What Does it Mean for Planning?, The Jersey Planner, Jan 2010

NJ's Response to Global Warming, The Jersey Planner, Jan 2009

Courts Fluster Non-Contiguous Cluster, The Jersey Planner, March 2008

No More Garden State?, The Jersey Planner, May 2008

How About Some Real Economic Stimulus?, The Jersey Planner, July 2008

Transportation Plan, Essex County, NJ

Managed the community and stakeholder engagement process, including strategic efforts to engage priority-equity communities. Services included coordinating and facilitating a Stakeholder Advisory Committee, focus groups, and public open houses, as well as a multilingual survey and mapping tool, social media, and targeted outreach coordination with organizations representing vulnerable populations. Also coordinated several pop-up outreach events, including two with tactical urbanism demonstration project installations.

Rt 9 Corridor TOD Plan, Middlesex & Monmouth Counties, NJ

Coordinating stakeholder outreach efforts, including Municipal Advisory Committees, a State and Regional Advisory Committee, focus groups, a survey, virtual open houses, and translation services. Also provided technical support identifying existing and anticipated state and regional plans, projects, initiatives along the corridor, as well as programs and incentives that could enhance TOD efforts.

Culture & Heritage Long Range Plan, Somerset County, NJ

Managed the development of a long range plan to ensure arts, cultural heritage, and history are a driving force in planning and development toward a healthy and economically vibrant Somerset County. Services included a community engagement program with targeted outreach to under-represented communities using a mix of virtual and in-person events to engage with a wide variety of voices safely. Using the information gathered from outreach and research, the Plan identified assets, opportunities, and areas for improvement, and included a series of strategy recommendations and actions.

Transit Access Study, Pompton Lakes, NJ

Provided coordination support to the project Steering Committee, and created a Transit Survey and Origination/Destination Profile to inform the planning of future transit facilities, bus routes, and services.

Complete Streets Plan, Sussex County, NJ

Managed outreach and education coordination for a comprehensive Complete Streets Study and Plan for the County of Sussex, including public relations, community engagement, stakeholder identification and coordination, and Steering Committee management.

Complete Streets Circulation Plan, Woolwich, NJ

Managed the production of a Circulation Plan for Woolwich Township that included a refined vision and action-oriented strategies for multi-modal mobility and complete streets to serve the community and broader region. The project included baseline analysis, urban design, as well as stakeholder coordination and public outreach.

Freight Infrastructure and Land-Use Analysis, Morris County, NJ

Provided comprehensive economic and land use analysis of the current distribution and warehousing industry in Morris County, in support of developing an optimal multi-modal freight plan.

Downtown New Jersey, Statewide, NJ

Consulting Executive Director of statewide non-profit education and advocacy organization dedicated to the revitalization of New Jersey's downtowns. Mercer coordinates large and small-scale educational and networking events with district managers, public officials, re/development professionals, and community volunteers. Mercer provides technical assistance, and writes topical articles and curates a quarterly newsletter and social media. Services also include volunteer coordination, event planning, fundraising, public relations, digital media, marketing, and administration.