



# Mercer County: Better Together

## 18-Month Countywide Planning Process

(September 2016 – February 2018)

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### **Phase 1 “Lay the Groundwork” (September 2016 - January 2017)**

- Project Coordinator hired to lead effort
- Countywide planning teams organized
- Initiative publicized
- Community Network Analysis held
- Community forums organized
- Community survey developed
- 501c3 application process underway

### **Phase 2 “Explore Your Community” (February – July 2017)**

- Community forum held in each of Mercer County’s 11 population centers
- Community follow-ups conducted to reach populations not represented at forums
- All 11 population centers represented on Steering Committee
- Challenge Grant met
- Resident feedback gathered & processed

### **Phase 3 “Make Decisions” (August - October 2017)**

- Through *Heart & Soul* process, countywide and community statements created using resident feedback
- Countywide summit held to gather feedback on countywide statements, educate residents on the assets of each population center and celebrate progress in the countywide planning process
- Finalized countywide statements serve as roadmap for remainder of planning process
- Community statements & resource toolkit developed, delivered to communities
- *Change Over Time & Action Planning Sessions* held to help build strategic plan

### **Phase 4 “Take Action” (November 2017 – February 2018)**

- Countywide Action Plans developed around identified priority needs
  - Looser-Flake Charitable Foundation asked MCBT Steering Committee to endorse a series of early investment opportunities which surfaced through planning process
  - MCBT began transition into community & economic development organization; a central organization identified to accomplish priority work throughout Mercer County
  - Board of Directors developed
  - Financial commitments cultivated for future sustainability
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