

# 2025 NEW JERSEY SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

## SUSTAINABILITY SESSIONS: 10:00 – 11:10am

### ADDRESSING FOOD SECURITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL SJ, SJS

Food insecurity is an ongoing issue that affects nearly one million New Jerseyans. This session will explore ways in which municipalities and schools are stepping up to tackle the issue. Municipal and school leaders will share best practices and lessons learned from real-world food access initiatives across the state.

**Heather Thompson**, Executive Director, Table to Table; **Kelly Ammiano**, Teacher, Menlo Park Terrace School #19, Woodbridge; **Lauren Skowronski**, Assistant Director, Sustainable Jersey; **Lynne Platt**, Chair, Highland Park Community Food Pantry; **Peter Barcellona**, Chair, We Feed-Woodbridge; **Rebecca Hersh**, Executive Director, Main Street Highland Park; **Rosemarie Suarez**, Sustainability Coordinator, Town of West New York

[CEUs available: CRP, 1.0 Classroom; CMFO/CCFO, 1.0 Office Management and Ancillary Subjects; CTC, 1.0 General/Secondary; CPWM, 1.0 Management; RMC, 1.0 Professional Development; QPA, 1.0 Office Admin./General Duties]

### EXPANDING RECYCLING: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND WASTE REDUCTION STRATEGIES SJ, SJS

With traditional recycling markets facing ongoing challenges, valuable resources continue to be lost to landfills due to the absence of mandated recycling requirements. This session will showcase innovative municipal and school recycling programs that are successfully diverting materials from the waste stream. Additionally, it will explore practical and effective waste reduction strategies that can be implemented to maximize resource recovery. Attendees will gain insights into creative solutions and community-driven initiatives that are making a measurable impact in advancing sustainability.

**Amy O'Donnell**, Member, Delran Township Green Team; **Carolyn Barna**, Recycling Coordinator, Department of Public Works, Monroe Township; **Samantha McGraw**, Senior Department Administrator, Sustainable Jersey

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### LEAD THE CHARGE ON COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION! SJ

In this session, speakers will showcase the various pathways that municipalities can take when thinking about taking the charge in transforming community transportation. Exploring e-mobility options, enhancing last-mile travel solutions, and fostering sustainable transportation practices; attendees will gain valuable ideas on building more connected, inclusive, and sustainable transportation systems, paving the way for cleaner, greener communities.

**Cathleen Lewis**, E-Mobility Program Manager, Division of Clean Energy, NJ Board of Public Utilities; **Laura Fenster Rothschild**, Managing Director, Johnson Center for Learning & Impact; **Lisa Lee**, Director, Sustainability Programs, EZ Ride; **Peg Hanna**, Director, Climate Change Mitigation & Monitoring, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

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### UPDATES FROM STATE AGENCIES SJ, SJS

New Jersey State Agency leaders will share their latest sustainability initiatives that impact municipalities and schools. Attendees will hear directly from decision-makers about emerging and ongoing approaches that state agencies are taking to promote sustainability, reduce our carbon footprint, conserve natural resources, and advance social equity. Panelists will discuss key programs, initiatives, and resources they have developed and implemented. Ask questions and gain valuable insights into the programs and resources available to support your sustainability efforts.

**Dan Fatton**, Director, Clean Energy Partnerships, New Jersey Economic Development Authority; **Frank Neary**, Director of Safety & Transportation Data, New Jersey Department of Transportation; **Jonathan Gordon**, Deputy Director of Clean Energy Equity, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities; **Jorden Schiff**, Ed.D, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Teaching and Learning Services, New Jersey Department of Education; **Kati Angarone**, Chief Strategy Officer, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; **Randall Solomon**, Executive Director, Sustainable Jersey

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# SUSTAINABILITY SESSIONS: 11:30 – 12:30pm

## ENERGY PROJECTS FOR YOUR BUILDINGS AND FLEETS SJ, SJS

Join us to explore energy projects for schools and municipalities that can help save money and reduce emissions. Learn how to leverage state, utility, and federal funding to maximize project savings. This session will cover key incentive programs, including building electrification, new construction, and fleet electrification funding. Additionally, get an overview of the Sustainable Jersey online Purchasing Center.

**Casey Fitzgerald**, Program Manager, Utility Advantage; **John Blair**, Energy Specialist, Jackson Township School District; **Nancy Quirk**, Senior Energy Program Manager; Sustainable Jersey; **Rachel Ehrlich**, Councilperson, Madison Borough; **Theo Banks**, Clean Energy Champion, New Jersey Clean Energy Program/TRC

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## HOPE FUELS OUR FUTURE: CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES IN TURBULENT TIMES SJS

Hope and imagination are powerful drivers of change. This session will examine how Hope Theory can be used to inspire learning and community engagement for a just climate future. Participants will discuss strategies for fostering optimism, resilience, and collective action in the face of environmental challenges.

**Sarah Sterling-Laldee**, Senior Advisor on Climate Change Education, New Jersey Department of Education

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## CONNECTING STATE LEGISLATION AND LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT SJ

Action at the state level is one of many spokes on the sustainability wheel. Key Legislators and advocates will share updates on related issues moving through the Legislature, some of which will advance your own local projects.

**Senator Bob Smith**, Legislative District 17; **New Jersey Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**, Legislative District 19; **Ed Potosnak**, Executive Director, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters; **Randall Solomon**, Executive Director, Sustainable Jersey

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## SUSTAINABLE JERSEY BOOTCAMP SJ, SJS

Are you new to the Sustainable Jersey program? Is your community applying for a Sustainable Jersey grant for the first time? Is your green team revitalizing after a few years off? If the answer is yes to any of those questions, please join Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Jersey for Schools staff for this session to learn about strategies, tips, and resources to help you make the most of what the program has to offer. There will be ample time to answer questions and opportunities for participants to share their experiences. Together, we will help you get your green team in shape for future certification and grant applications!

**JoAnna Contarino**, Program Coordinator; Sustainable Jersey; **Maureen Jones**, Program Coordinator, Sustainable Jersey; **Kaitlyn Vollmer**, Grants Program Manager, Sustainable Jersey

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## RESOURCES FOR QUICK BUILD PLACEMAKING & COMPLETE STREETS PROJECTS: DROP-IN COACHING SESSION SJ

Looking to install a temporary demonstration project in your town (e.g. pedestrian plaza, pop-up bike lane, parklet, corner bump-outs)? Drop in to learn about sample materials available to “check out” from the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority’s Demonstration Project Library and the forthcoming Demo Library hosted by the Cross-County Connection Transportation Management Association for municipalities in the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization region. Experts in creating and installing “try it before you buy it” projects will be available to answer your questions, provide guidance, advice and describe how to earn Sustainable Jersey points.

**James Sinclair**, Senior Research Specialist, Rutgers Voorhees Transportation Center; **Jasmine Lawrence**, Principal Planner, New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority; **Lisa Lee**, Director, Sustainability Programs, EZ Ride; **Patrick Farley**, Program Director, Cross County Connection Transportation Management Association

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# SUSTAINABILITY SESSIONS: 1:45 – 2:45pm

## AMPLIFYING YOUR IMPACT: MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR GREEN TEAMS SJ, SJS

This session is designed to help green teams elevate their community presence. Hear from those who have successfully leveraged social media through engaging videos and compelling content to amplify their efforts. Whether you're looking to attract volunteers, raise awareness for a cause, or grow your audience, this session will provide practical tips and creative strategies to boost your green team's visibility.

**Deb Hammond**, Chair, Delran Township Green Team; **Elana Berk**, Communications & Outreach Manager, Sustainable Princeton; **Lisa Nicolaison**, Project Manager, Sustainable Princeton

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**BEYOND CITY HALL: ENERGY ACTIONS TO TRANSFORM YOUR COMMUNITY** SJ

Join us for actionable insights and fresh ideas to help your town lead the way in energy transformation. This session will feature new incentives from New Jersey's utilities to help municipalities support energy-reducing measures in the residential and business communities. Overviews of new programs including NJBPU's Community Solar Auto-Enrollment Program, and NJEDA's Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program will be featured.

**Jessica Hood**, Program Support Manager, Energy Efficiency Growth & Strategy, PSEG; **Max Frank**, Senior Project Officer of Clean Energy, New Jersey Economic Development Authority; **Pat Miller**, Co-Founder, NJ Electrification Coaching Network; **Sawyer Morgan**, Research Scientist, Division of Clean Energy, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

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**IS YOUR COMMUNITY CLIMATE READY? INTRODUCING THE NEW GOLD STAR!** SJ

Take climate adaptation to the next level with the Gold Star in Climate Readiness. This new gold star standard gives municipalities the freedom to choose impactful actions while embracing a holistic approach to tackling climate change head-on. The impacts of climate change necessitate a forward-looking, comprehensive approach across municipal efforts. The suite of certification actions contributing to the Gold Star in Climate Readiness span the Built, Natural, Social, Economic, and Governance Systems that support the municipality. This session will introduce the new gold star standard and provide examples of climate adaptation actions happening in communities around the state.

**Christopher Obropta**, Extension Specialist, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program; **Stephen Elliott**, Director of Watershed Programs, Pinelands Preservation Alliance; **Tanya Rohrbach**, Program Manager for Policy and Planning, Sustainable Jersey; **Thomas Flynn**, Environmental Specialist/Floodplain Administrator/OEM Recovery Support, Township of Woodbridge; **William Love Jr.**, New Jersey Forest Fire Service, Assistant Division Forest Fire Warden

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**SITE PLAN REVIEWS: A KEY TOOL FOR PROTECTING YOUR COMMUNITY'S ENVIRONMENT** SJ

When new developments or redevelopments are proposed in your community, how can you ensure that environmental concerns—such as stormwater management, tree preservation, and climate resilience—are properly addressed? This session will demystify the site plan review process and highlight its critical role in safeguarding local environmental health. The session will provide an overview of how site plan reviews work, key environmental factors to watch for, and practical ways you can get involved to advocate for sustainable, climate-conscious development.

**Jennifer Coffey**, Executive Director, ANJEC; **Renee Haider**, Deputy Director, Sustainable Jersey

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**TREE TALK! PLANTING, MAINTAINING AND FUNDING: DROP-IN COACHING SESSION** SJ, SJS

Is your school district or municipality looking for resources to support enhancing and maintaining your community tree canopy? Perhaps your district or school is applying for a Trees for Schools planting grant and/or the new Tree-Planting action? Or your municipality might be in the throes of updating its Community Forestry Management Plan or Tree Protection Ordinance. Drop-in to talk trees and get your questions answered!

**Melanie McDermott, Ph.D.**, Senior Researcher, Sustainable Jersey

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**SUSTAINABILITY SESSIONS: 3:00 – 4:00pm**

**MAKE COMPLETE AND GREEN STREETS WORK FOR YOU** SJ, SJS

We know Complete and Green Streets as a policy framework and approach sets the stage for safer, healthier and more equitable walking, biking and rolling in New Jersey. Hear about the resources New Jersey communities are using to advance Complete and Green Streets and earn Sustainable Jersey points. Learn how Safe Systems, Vision Zero, Safe Routes and other emerging trends fit with and complement Complete and Green Streets.

**Anne Heasly**, Senior Program Manager, Policy & Planning, Sustainable Jersey; **Gregory Woltman**, Research Project Coordinator, Rutgers Voorhees Transportation Center; **Nancy Facey-Blackwood**, Council, Borough of Red Bank; **Peter Bilton**, Sustainable Transportation Planning Manager, New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority; **Sean Meehan**, Research Project Manager, Rutgers Voorhees Transportation Center

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NAVIGATING SUSTAINABILITY HEADWINDS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SJ, SJS

Discover how to talk about sustainable solutions with people across the political spectrum, tackle misinformation, and share compelling stories about why sustainability matters to your community.

*Dr. Emily Schoerning, Founder & CEO, American Resiliency; Joshua Low, Strategy Lead, Yale Climate Communications Center; Randall Solomon, Executive Director, Sustainable Jersey*

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STRENGTHENING LOCAL ECONOMIES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES SJ

Municipalities play a vital role in fostering strong local economies while advancing sustainability. Across New Jersey, businesses are voluntarily adopting sustainable practices—reducing energy use, minimizing waste, sourcing greener materials, and supporting their communities. A Green Business Recognition Program provides public acknowledgment for companies leading the way, while also inspiring further action. In this session, hear from municipalities that have successfully launched programs to support local businesses in adopting sustainable practices, including initiatives linked to the NJ Sustainable Business Registry Program. Learn how these efforts not only benefit the environment but also drive long-term economic competitiveness and resilience.

*Cathy Shaw, Chair, Bordentown Green Team; Denise Capparelli, Special Projects Coordinator, Wyckoff Township; John Evangelista, Executive Director, Groundwork Elizabeth; Nancy Quirk, Senior Energy Program Manager, Sustainable Jersey; Gina Gambacorto, Bureau of Sustainability, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*

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STOP THE TOSS: PREVENTING LITTER IN OUR COMMUNITIES SJ, SJS

Litter remains a persistent environmental and community challenge, but education and compliance efforts can help change behaviors and create cleaner, healthier spaces. This session will discuss the new Sustainable Jersey Litter Prevention Education & Compliance action, explore effective litter prevention strategies and compliance measures, resources, and community engagement initiatives that encourage responsible waste disposal.

*Amy Cook Menzel, Member, Hammonton Green Committee; Rebecca Turygan, Environmental Affairs Coordinator, Atlantic County Utilities Authority; Samantha McGraw, Sr. Department Administrator, Sustainable Jersey*

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HELP YOUR RESIDENTS & BUSINESSES SAVE ENERGY AND MONEY: DROP-IN COACHING SESSION SJ, SJS

Drop in to learn about the amazing resources and staff support available in the SJ-PSE&G Energy Efficiency Partnership Program. Hear how communities across the state are making use of this valuable program. \*Eligible municipalities are served by PSE&G for electricity and gas.

*Jane Schneider, Energy Program Consultant, Sustainable Jersey; Leanne McGowan, Energy Program Manager, Sustainable Jersey*

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SJS = session has schools related content | SJ = content relates to municipal certification program

\*Additional CEUs: NJACCHO has approved 5 public health CE credits for attendance of the entire event