

PROJECT SUMMARY

# Thomas A. Edison Park Destination Athletic Complex

A Community, Innovation, and Opportunity Strategic  
Investment Plan Project



# Community Purpose

From 2018 to 2020, Middlesex County undertook a substantial public outreach campaign to inform the [\*Destination 2040 Strategic Plan\*](#) and specifically the [\*Open Space and Recreation Plan \(OSRP\)\*](#), engaging with 1,882 residents through a series of over a dozen meetings and an extensive online survey. This endeavor, spearheaded by the Public Outreach and Engagement Team (POET), a group within the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, featured the innovative “Set the Table!” initiative, blending civic dinner parties with collaborative forums, along with more traditional public input collected both online and in-person, to capture a diverse array of community input.



# Community Purpose

In response to the insights gleaned from these discussions, the specific project needs for Thomas A. Edison Park have been identified, ensuring that each initiative is closely aligned with both the OSRP's objectives and the expressed wishes of the county's residents. The identified project needs for the park are as follows:

- Fulfilling Deed Requirements and Strategic Goals
- Addressing Insufficient Capacity for Activities
- Lack of Diverse Sporting Options
- Improving Deteriorating Park Infrastructure
- Address Climate Resilience and Sustainability

These needs form the cornerstone of the proposed developments at Thomas A. Edison Park, ensuring that it will **not only meet current community standards but also adapt to future recreational requirements.**

**Thomas A. Edison Park is and will continue to be a public park facility, created for the enjoyment of County residents and visitors.**

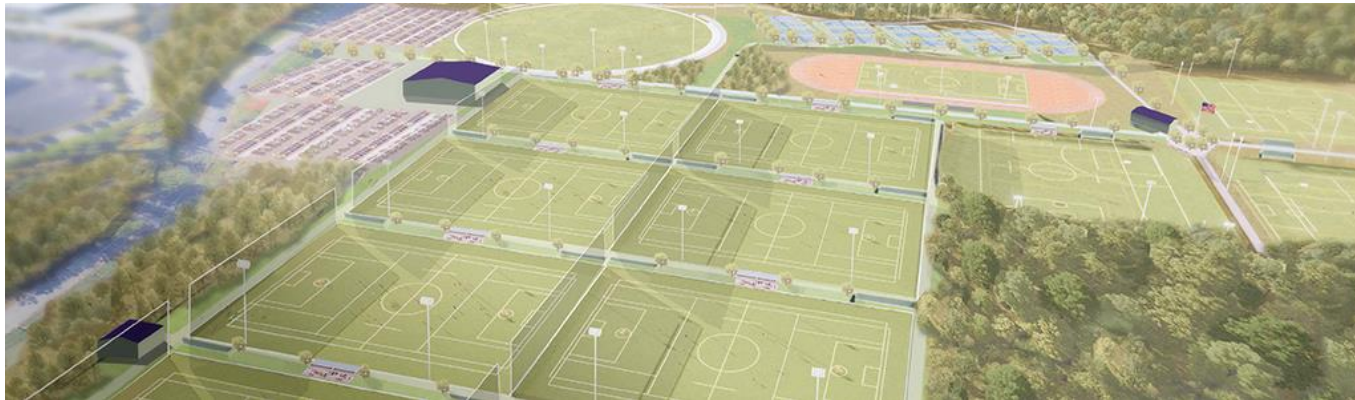


# Upgrades by the Numbers

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Thomas A. Edison<br/>Park Enhancements</b>   |  | <b>MIDDLESEX<br/>COUNTY • NJ</b>  |  |
| <i>A first-of-its-kind in the County</i>  |  | <b>Park Benches<br/>&amp; Grassy Areas</b><br><i>For Enjoyment of<br/>Nature &amp; Outdoors</i> |  |
|    | <b>500-foot</b><br>Diameter Natural Turf<br>Cricket Field for Play   |              |  |
| <b>1 Fieldhouse and<br/>New Comfort Stations</b>  |  <b>Concessions<br/>Restrooms<br/>Storage</b> |              | <b>14</b> Multi-Sport<br>Fields with<br>Artificial Turf<br><i>For Sports Leagues &amp; Pick-Up Play:<br/>Lacrosse, Soccer, Rugby &amp; Baseball</i>                                      |
| <b>Pedestrian &amp;<br/>Bicycle Paths</b><br>To Connect<br>Middlesex<br>College Campus<br>Raritan Center<br>Wetland Areas |    |             | <b>Upgrades</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☆ New Playground</li><li>☆ A Track with Grandstands</li><li>☆ Performance Lighting</li><li>☆ Available Parking Increased</li></ul> |
|   |  | <b>16</b> Hard<br>Surface<br><b>Tennis<br/>Courts</b>   |  |



# The Community Demand is Burgeoning



## More Opportunities for Family Fun

By going **from 9 fields today to 14 fields** at Thomas A. Edison Park, residents and visitors will get **MORE** recreational and athletic space and increased capacity for various sports like rugby, lacrosse, soccer, baseball, and softball.

Today, high demand results in field overuse and lack of available fields for pick-up play.

**14 fields will allow us to build capacity for local sports leagues and pick-up play!**



# A Growing Sport gets a New Home



## **A first-of-its-kind, best in class recreational Cricket Field for tournaments and pick-up play!**

- 500' diameter natural grass cricket pitch
- Berm Seating
- Sports lighting for night use
- Clay pitch
- Adjacent to Fieldhouse Concessions
- Playground adjacent
- Natural shade from trees around pitch
- Irrigation System



# Families and Students Save Time & Money



## **Budget Friendly Recreation and Less Travel**

Parents, students, coaches will no longer have to travel out-of-state for athletic tournaments, saving valuable time and money.

Due to scarcity of high-capacity athletic spaces, Middlesex County residents must travel far and spend hundreds of dollars to participate in tournaments. The new expansion of fields will meet current and future demands keeping families here, where they should be!



# Impact to Natural Landscape is Minimal



## Thomas A. Edison Park is nestled in an urbanized area

Of the **180-acre** property that Thomas A. Edison Park sits on, of which 77 acres is developed with fields and paths and maintained as an active park, **ONLY 11 additional acres** will be converted to active parkland to enhance outdoor recreation and athletics for the regional community to enjoy.





# Wildlife and Nature Is Protected and Fostered



## Natural offerings will be bolstered

Only 4.5 net acres out of 55 total acres of wooded vegetation and trees will be removed to facilitate these park enhancements.

To augment the remaining 50 acres of forested area, additional native vegetation, newly planted trees, and benches will be added along pathways through and around the park and woods, providing beautiful and safe areas for walking and bird watching. **New trails will connect to the College, Raritan Center, and the park's undeveloped southern portion.**

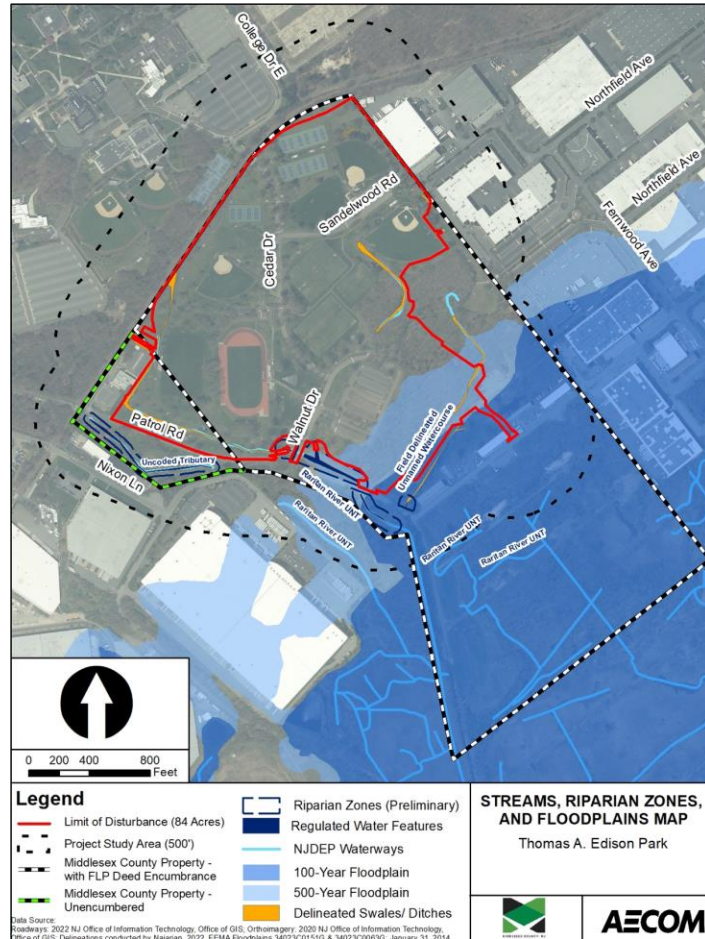
Additionally, the community can witness the growth of **a newly added three-acre successional meadow**, which will become part of the forest, offering a new nature experience.



# New Water Management Mitigates Flooding

## Modern water management system improves community

This area by the Raritan River is historically known as a flood zone. With this project, a brand new, modern water management system will not only mitigate flooding in Thomas A. Edison park but minimize impacts to the surrounding areas, benefitting all local residents and businesses.



# Local and Regional Economy will Boom



## **Businesses will flourish as the new athletic fields attracts new revenue**

Not only will the County benefit but local businesses from restaurants, retail stores, to hotels or motels will attract new customers, driving new revenue.

Ultimately, the new County destination will stimulate the local and regional economy.

