



NEWS TO SHAPE Morristown's Future

Morristown is known for its historic attractions, racial diversity and strong sense of community. Yet Morristown is changing, and as it changes, it's important to reflect on how these transitions affect all of its residents.

We invite you to join **NEWS VOICES: NEW JERSEY** as we explore ways to engage communities like Morristown in local journalism. We're building sustained collaborations between newsrooms and residents to fold community knowledge into the process of newsgathering.

Go to **NEWSVOICES.ORG** to learn more.



Strengthening Community in a Changing Morristown

People who live in Morristown love its small-town feel and rich history and take pride in its diversity. But rapid development has many residents concerned that Morristown risks losing its sense of community and that those who are already struggling to get by will be priced out. Local journalists can play a crucial role in raising awareness about people living on the margins and in asking questions about how development is affecting the community as a whole.

More than a third of Morristown residents are Hispanic or Latino, one-third are foreign-born, and approximately 14 percent are African American, making the town more diverse than New Jersey as a whole and significantly more than the surrounding areas. Tensions that flared in past years between Latino newcomers and the rest of the community have calmed, but Latinos in Morristown remain geographically and culturally separated and lack political representation in local government.

One of the most significant challenges facing Morristown is the lack of affordable housing. Only 39 percent of the city's housing units are owner-occupied, and the median rent of nearly \$1,500 per month is 25 percent higher than the state average. The absence of affordable housing leaves people financially vulnerable. Two-thirds of the guests at Morristown's Community Soup Kitchen have housing but can't afford food.

Civic engagement is part of Morristown's culture, and people here are participating in an important discussion about how the community is changing. But to grapple with what's at stake, the community needs to hear from those who are struggling. By reaching out to those sources, reporters can bring their voices into the conversation.



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Morristown's Local News Landscape

Morristown has a large number of media outlets for a town of three square miles and 18,000 residents

A relatively affluent community, Morristown has more news sources and news stories per capita produced within its limits than Newark, a city 15 times its size but with a significantly lower median income. Many of these local outlets provide consistent coverage of events and inform readers about local government and local arts and culture.

Morristown Green is an independent news outlet that provides hyperlocal news coverage. Founder and editor Kevin Coughlin is a longtime Morristown resident, a former reporter for *The Star-Ledger* and a strong presence in the community.

The Daily Record, a Gannett-owned newspaper, provides news coverage of Morris County and has historical ties to Morristown. *The Star-Ledger* also serves the larger Morris County area and provides news from across the state.

Yet the downturn in print journalism has reduced the number of local reporters doing enterprise and accountability journalism in the past eight years, especially at papers like *The Star-Ledger* and *Daily Record* that have historically provided that coverage.

Morristown's Spanish-speaking population has few sources to turn to for local news. *Reporte Hispano*, a weekly that serves New Jersey and parts of New York, is one of the few Spanish-language news outlets in New Jersey that provides any coverage of Morris County.

Town council meetings are broadcast at 8 p.m. on Friday evenings on two local cable channels, Cablevision Channel 21 and Verizon Channel 24, and are archived online. Local government information and alerts are available through the digital Nixle.



Original photo by Flickr user Doug Kerr

Local News Sources in Morristown



PRINT AND ONLINE

Morristown Green / morristowngreen.com

MorristownGreen.com focuses on local news, events and happenings in Morristown and is a venture of Kevco Media LLC.

Daily Record / dailyrecord.com

The Daily Record is based in Parsippany and is one of seven Gannett-owned daily papers in New Jersey. Covers Morris County.

The Star-Ledger / nj.com/starledger

NJ Advance daily newspaper based in Woodbridge. Covers Morris County.

NJ Advance Media / NJ.com

The publisher of *The Star-Ledger* and several other newspapers across the state. NJ Advance's website, NJ.com, covers Morris County.

Reporte Hispano / ReporteHispano.com

Spanish-language weekly newspaper based in Princeton. Covers Morris County.

Morris News Bee / newjerseyhills.com/morris_news_bee/

A print and digital outlet of the New Jersey Hills Media Group, whose Recorder Community Newspapers cover more than 50 towns in Northern-Central Jersey.

TAPinto Morristown / tapinto.net/towns/morristown

Hyperlocal online news site about Morristown; part of a New Jersey-based network of 60 independent sites.

Patch / patch.com/new-jersey/morristown

Covers local news, weather and events.

The Broadcaster / mhsbroadcaster.org

Morristown High School's digital newspaper; produced by students and staff.

NJ Spotlight / njspotlight.com

A statewide independent news outlet that delivers news and analysis about politics and public policy in New Jersey.

Nixle / nixle.com/city/nj/morristown

An app/digital platform for Morristown-specific government alerts.

RADIO

WJSV 90.5 FM / Morris School District

A student-run radio station that broadcasts an eclectic variety of music. Owned and operated by the Morris School District Board of Education.

WKXW 101.5 FM / New Jersey 101.5

This statewide news and talk-radio station, owned by the Townsquare Media Group, provides occasional coverage of Morristown.

WOBM 1160 & 1310 AM / News Talk Radio

Airs syndicated conservative talk-radio programs, local news programs and sports coverage. It's licensed to the Townsquare Media Group. Provides occasional coverage of Morristown.

WMTR 1250 AM / Oldies and Talk Radio

An oldies music station featuring occasional news and weather updates.

Did we miss anything? Email Mike at newsvoices@freepress.net with info on any other local news outlets.

TELEVISION

NJTV / njtvonline.org

New Jersey's public television network launched in 2011 following the state's decision to shutter NJN and move the public broadcasting network under the management of New York's WNET. Since then, NJTV has built its news programming on the air and online.

News 12 New Jersey / newjersey.news12.com

An affiliate of Cablevision's 24-hour cable news.

FiOS 1 New Jersey / fios1news.com/newjersey

An affiliate of Verizon's 24-hour cable news.



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Morristown by the Numbers

19,085 population

8,172 households

3 square miles

14 percent Black or African American

34.1 percent Hispanic or Latino

46.5 percent White

4.3 percent Asian

<1 percent Native American

40.6 percent speak a language other than English at home

39.3 percent home ownership

86.4 percent high school graduate or higher

\$75,696 median household income

12.1 percent below the poverty level

Source: U.S. Census Bureau