



## The Mercer Alliance @ 20 Years

As a past supporter of the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness, we're excited to update you on our priorities. Now entering our third decade, the Mercer Alliance is taking stock of its accomplishments as an innovative change agent and advocacy organization, and how to position the organization for continued impact.

The Mercer Alliance is not a housing or service provider. Rather, since our founding in 2004, the Mercer Alliance has convened diverse stakeholders in Mercer County to develop a shared comprehensive system for ending homelessness. By facilitating cross-sector collaboration, we've changed policy and practice to prevent homelessness, house those who are unhoused as quickly as possible, and provide people with the necessary supports to maintain housing.

Because the conditions causing homelessness are dynamic—from changes in the housing market and workforce, to public health crises—ending homelessness requires consistent adaptation to address problems as, and ideally before, they arise.

[More on Mercer Alliance Milestones](#)

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## Our Next Priority Project

With the support of a planning grant from the Princeton Area Community Foundation Bunbury Fund, the Mercer Alliance board engaged a consultant to help us prioritize a new project among a dozen potential initiatives, primarily related to the lack of affordable housing for very low-income households—now an acute problem across Mercer County, exacerbated by the pandemic.

Our decision came down to which project would lead to the *quantifiable* prevention or reduction of homelessness in Mercer County, while enabling us to elevate those directly impacted by the problems of homelessness and affordable housing through initiative design and implementation.

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### ***Supporting the Preservation of Kingsbury Towers Home to 1,000 Trenton residents***

Kingsbury Towers is a 364-unit affordable housing development, which is

home to 1,000 Trenton residents, including families, seniors, and veterans. This is roughly 1% of the City's population. Now 50 years old, Kingsbury Towers must undergo an extensive rehabilitation to ensure safe, healthy living conditions. The alternative is to sell the property. This would be catastrophic for residents, many of whom would become homeless, as Mercer County faces an acute shortage of housing affordable to very low-income households. Kingsbury itself has a waiting list of 700.

To prevent this outcome, the Mercer Alliance has committed to building public awareness and mobilizing support for Kingsbury's rehabilitation, elevating the voices of Kingsbury residents in the process. With the support of the Mercer Alliance, and the Kingsbury board, a veteran tenant organizer with the HUD tenants coalition will facilitate development of a Kingsbury tenants association, to provide input into the rehab project, and build the capacity of Kingsbury residents to advocate for their community in the near and long term.

[More on the Kingsbury Campaign](#)



**Pastor Rupert Hall**, *Chair of the Kingsbury Towers Board of Directors*,  
with **Frank Cirillo**, *Executive Director of the Mercer Alliance*

**At the corner of Cooper and Market streets, building a safe, thriving community at Kingsbury could anchor Trenton's continued downtown revitalization.**

### *What's Next*

Kingsbury Company is a 501c3 nonprofit, with a board of directors composed of representatives from the City's houses of worship, including Shiloh Baptist, Turning Point, Greater St. Matthew Baptist, Sacred Heart, as well as representatives from the AFL-CIO, Knights of Columbus, and the City of Trenton.

The campaign to rehab Kingsbury should be one element of a broader

agenda to end homelessness in Mercer County, which unites diverse stakeholders around immediate needs—like preserving Kingsbury—and longer-term strategies, including the development of scattered site affordable housing throughout Mercer County.

In the coming months, we'll update you on the Kingsbury campaign, opportunities to support Kingsbury residents, and the state of homelessness and housing affordability in our community.

## Stay in Touch

To get in touch with the Mercer Alliance, contact executive director Frank Cirillo at [fcirillo@merceralliance.org](mailto:fcirillo@merceralliance.org). To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please use the link below.



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