



April 16, 2020

To our Friends and Supporters:

This time in history is teaching us a valuable lesson about our connectedness.

We are learning how connected each of us is to one another, whether it's each person that acts as a link in the supply chain that keeps us fed or how vulnerable we are when we simply are too close to each other.

We are also learning how connected we are to our places; from our homes to our neighborhoods; from our yards and open spaces to the buildings that give our sidewalks and streets shape and meaning.

And we see how connected our places are to each other. The more we walk and bike, the more we follow the news happening across our state, the more neighborhood and political boundaries melt away. We watch COVID-19 move from community to community, from place to place, with ease and impertinence. And we see how connected our communities really are.

More than anything, this connectedness shows how intertwined the myriad of issues are that help create strong, healthy and resilient communities for everyone. It's not enough to have great communities and places if there are people who can't afford or access them. It's not good enough to have places where people can't be healthy or they fear the next storm or flood.

Despite physical distancing, the gravity of this time is connecting us as individuals and organizations like few other times in history. Clothing companies are manufacturing masks and gowns, retired nurses are driving cross country to volunteer. As people and businesses are pivoting and changing for the collective good, communities and places are too.

This newsletter and upcoming editions will feature the lessons we are learning about place and communities and how these lessons might serve us as we move from crisis to recovery. We've created a new section on our website entirely dedicated to these COVID-19 lessons and how they can guide us to a stronger future for New Jersey. We look forward to sharing this journey with you, so please share your thoughts and ideas with us as well. Join us by using #NJFutureStrong on social media or by emailing me at pkasabach@njfuture.org.

In connection,

Peter Kasabach
Executive Director