

# HARRISON TOWNSHIP

This year's rank: **2**

Last year's rank: **8**

**S**ay the name "Mullica Hill" and you might think of a strip of dusty antiques shops. But Harrison Township, which encompasses Mullica Hill along with several other neighborhoods and some broad stretches of farmland, has far more to offer. This Gloucester County township won't be flying under the radar for long though, what with a string of sweeping developments, a new plan to upgrade and update its historic corridor and a strong residential base. "Fifteen years ago, this township was mainly farmland, and in the last 15 years we've had an explosion of growth," says Mayor Louis Manzo. "There's a real family feel here. Most of the people who moved here in the last 15 years moved here to get out of the city and the more congested areas like Cherry Hill and Voorhees."

**Notable developments:** South Jersey Healthcare's Tomlin Station Park medical center on Route 322, and the Tomlin Station Commerce Center next door, are both set to open this year. But the largest initiative is the Richwood Village development of a 350-acre plot of farmland along Route 322. "The idea here is to plan it right from ground zero, and over the next 15 years there will be the emergence of a town," Manzo explains. The Madison Marquette/Canuse Communities project will include 1,200 to 1,500 residential rooftops, including single-family and multi-family structures, as well as up to one million square feet of commercial space. Plans include big-box and small retail and offices—and, potentially, a school and a movie theater—in short, a new, mixed-use downtown.



MULLICA HILL FARMS  
ON CLEMS RUN ROAD



A PATRON SAMPLES WINE AT  
HERITAGE VINEYARDS IN RICHWOOD

#### Downtown reimagined:

The recession hit Mullica Hill's antiques retailers fairly hard. Manzo says, but it gave the township an opportunity to rethink this historic district. They invested in beautification efforts like decorative streetlights and benches, but also rezoned the northern end of Main Street to invite more professional offices, like doctors and lawyers. Further south, the township is hoping to fill vacancies with a cluster of B.Y.O.B. restaurants, to create a more vibrant retail and dining corridor. And, yet another development is set to back up onto Main Street, with new walking paths to make this a true pedestrian destination.

**Best perk:** "We have one of the best wineries in the entire state of New Jersey, which not too many people know," Manzo says. Heritage Vineyards has been racking up wine awards, while the wine festival, which they launched last summer, has already become one of the biggest in the state.