

NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

May 23, 2025

Congressman Chris Smith
2373 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: FY2026 Community Project Funding

Dear Congressman Smith,

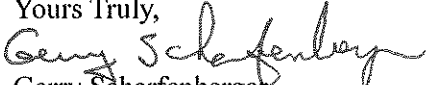
It is with pleasure and confidence that I offer this letter of support to fund the dredging of Shadow Lake in Middletown Township. The dredging of this lake will accomplish a several goals including the restoration of the natural ecosystem of the lake, the nearby Navesink River and Stevenson Park. These are important resources and will greatly benefit the residents of Monmouth County.

Shadow Lake is an 80-acre body of water created in the early 20th century on land owned by Occidental Petroleum CEO Armand Hammer. It was intended to be a natural resource to provide open space and recreational opportunities such as boating, swimming, and fishing. Its central location in the township has made it a focal point for community events for over 100 years. Once stocked annually with fish by the NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife siltation of the lake caused the program to be unsustainable.

The lake has become severely silted over the past 30 years, allowing the bloom of invasive plant life that impedes all recreational activities and threatens wildlife due to the depletion of oxygen levels in the water. Surface vegetation can be seen in areas once several feet deep. The domino effect of siltation has resulted in reduced stormwater retention capacity, which in turn has caused the dam to overtop and threaten downstream roads, bridges, residences and the Navesink River's delicate ecosystem.

Removing the silt and invasive vegetation from Shadow Lake will not only restore the lost environmental benefits of this fragile ecosystem, but it will also allow the conservation of this valuable open space and permit Middletown Township to provide natural resources and recreational opportunities for boating and fishing to residents of Monmouth County, opportunities that will end soon if no action is taken. Dredging and restoration of Shadow Lake will provide not only environmental benefits, but clear and immediate economic benefits as well.

I wholeheartedly support the funding needed for the dredging of Shadow Lake.

Yours Truly,

Gerry Scharfenberger
Assemblyman, Legislative District 13

TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLETOWN

Town Hall, One Kings Highway
Middletown, NJ 07748-2594

ANTHONY S. PERRY
Mayor

RICK W. HIBELL
Deputy Mayor

RYAN M. CLARKE
Committee Member

KIMBERLY KRATZ
Committee Member

KEVIN M SETTEMBRINO, AIA
Committee Member



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ANTHONY P. MERCANTANTE, P.P., AICP
Township Administrator

HEIDI R. PIELUC, RMC/MMC, CPM
Township Clerk and Registrar

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May 21, 2025

Congressman Chris Smith
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: FY2026 Community Project Funding

Dear Congressman Smith:

I am writing to express my support for funding the dredging of Shadow Lake in Middletown Township. The dredging of this lake will restore the natural ecosystem of the lake, the nearby Navesink River and Stevenson Park, and greatly benefit the residents of Monmouth County.

Shadow Lake is an 80-acre body of water created in the early 20th century as a natural resource to provide open space and recreational opportunities such as boating, swimming, and fishing. It has been an immensely popular park facility for over 100 years, benefiting the local economy as an attraction for community events. The lake was annually stocked with fish by the NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife for many years, however stocking of fish ceased several years ago when the siltation of the lake reached a point where it was no longer viable.

The lake has become severely silted over the past 30 years, allowing the bloom of invasive plant life that impedes all recreational activities and threatens wildlife due to the depletion of oxygen levels in the water. Further, the siltation of the lake has reduced the stormwater retention capacity, which has caused the dam to overtop and threaten downstream roads, bridges, residences and the Navesink River's delicate ecosystem.

The removal of the silt and invasive vegetation from Shadow Lake will not only restore the lost environmental benefits of this fragile ecosystem, but it will also allow the conservation of this valuable open space and permit Middletown Township to provide natural resources and recreational opportunities of boating and fishing to residents of Monmouth County, opportunities that will end soon if no action is taken. Dredging and restoration of Shadow Lake will provide not only environmental benefits, but clear and immediate economic benefits as well.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you need more information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tony Perry
Mayor