



**New Jersey Future
2009 New Jersey Gubernatorial Candidate
Smart Growth Questionnaire**

Christopher Christie, Republican

New Jersey is the most developed state in the nation. As such, residents care intensely about how we use our remaining land, especially as we work to create jobs and bolster the state's economy.

1) How will your administration promote economic development while preserving and protecting those things that are important to New Jerseyans: the natural environment, open spaces and healthy communities?

There is no more important issue facing our state today than creating quality-paying, sustainable jobs. For that reason, I have included a job development aspect into each of my major policy statements. For example, programs designed to revitalize our cities must focus on improvements to our failing urban schools, meaningful reductions in crime and violence and in the redevelopment of our housing and business infrastructure. We must bring residents and businesses with good jobs back to our cities if we are going to reverse decades of neglect.

All of these efforts are possible if we refocus our efforts away from suburban sprawl that continues to erode our open space and farmlands, while costing billions for new roads and transportation systems. We will focus all of the existing incentive programs back to our cities; remove the regulatory constraints that have blocked previous efforts to rebuild while we improve on the old infrastructure and economic base. These efforts will enable us to preserve our rural legacy while restoring our economy and putting our residents back to work.

Similarly, it is not enough to say that we wish to obtain more of our energy from renewable sources; we must also commit ourselves to leading the nation in the manufacture and sale of components of this new technology. New Jersey has the opportunity to become the supplier of offshore wind turbines and equipment as well as solar systems for the nation. By tapping into our natural resources, we have an opportunity to create quality-paying, sustainable jobs.

2) What plans, if any, do you have to encourage redevelopment of previously developed sites and communities?

Focusing on the historic preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures is part of my effort to rebuild New Jersey's cities. It is absolutely critical that we recognize the value of the existing and historic infrastructure that already exists within our urban centers and focus our efforts on restoring these communities. As part of my plan to bring back New Jersey's cities, we will provide incentives for developers to restore existing buildings while at the same time providing immediate incentives for families to move back to our urban centers. We need to focus on improving the existing infrastructure of our cities with the intent of making them an attractive place for people to live.

Clearly, one of the most critical failures of the past several years is the inability of the Corzine administration to coordinate and focus the efforts of multiple departments. The lack of consistency between agencies has led to programs working at cross-purposes while failing to achieve their missions. For example, COAH has forced sprawl, while at the same time, the DEP is attempting to preserve open

space, while the State Plan has been cast aside. The lack of coordination and communication from one agency to the next is counterproductive, inefficient and shows a lack of leadership. We must have leadership from the top that brings organization and structure to this process.

The State Planning Act creates a framework and structure for making land-use decisions. The State Development and Redevelopment Plan, adopted pursuant to the Act and with considerable public input, lays out a shared vision of how and where New Jersey should direct and shape future development. This does not prevent state agencies, however, from issuing different, and sometimes contradictory, mandates for land uses.

3) *What steps will your administration take to ensure that state agencies coordinate their efforts and work cooperatively toward achievement of the goals and objectives of the State Plan?*

The Corzine administration has been particularly ineffective in managing and coordinating the various components of land use management. For example, the COAH plan, the water quality plan, the traffic management plans, Energy Master Plan and the State Plan itself have all been developed and managed in silos without regard to their role or impact upon each other. This failure has become so severe that significant policies such as the affordable housing regulations and the water and sewer service area plans have been developed without regard to each other or to any semblance of any overall state plan.

My administration will not tolerate this type of approach, with departments acting individually and at cross-purposes. We must take a holistic view of this issue and ensure that we speak with one voice. Commissioners selected to manage departments in my administration will understand that they are part of a team and that we are all working collectively towards a single purpose to improve our state.

The State Plan includes a map that designates areas where New Jerseyans think it makes sense to preserve open space and farmland, and where they think it makes sense to locate new homes, shops and places of employment, but the map isn't always followed.

4) *What should the state government do to assist towns in carrying out the vision reflected in the state planning areas of the map?*

The Office of State Planning needs to be restored to a leadership role so it is able to support the county planning agencies and enhance the efforts of municipal leaders. The cross-acceptance process needs to be restored so that all levels of our government are working together rather than working at odds with each other. The loss of meaningful planning support from the state has resulted in ill-conceived plans at all levels of government. Under my leadership, the Office of State Planning will be an advocate for meaningful planning in all offices across the state.

New Jersey has one of the best public transportation systems in the country, and residents are taking advantage of it in record numbers. In addition, the areas around transit stations are among the state's strongest potential real estate markets.

5) *What steps will your administration take to improve transit service and expand other transportation options that will allow New Jersey residents to reduce the time they spend driving in single-occupancy vehicles?*

New Jersey will decrease its dependence on automobiles only if we provide a meaningful alternative. I have outlined in my urban policy a series of improvements to our infrastructure that will reduce the number of new lane miles that we are building in favor of expanded mass transit systems. We need to work with municipalities to manage growth planning in coordination with counties and cities. I believe we must work to first identify population growth areas and actually plan how infrastructure improvement

will be made in relation to other municipalities, transportation hubs and open space needs. We have to promote efficient development patterns if we are going to minimize the impact of development in environmentally sensitive areas and provide meaningful and cost-effective infrastructure updates. Allowing municipalities to develop their master plans and zoning ordinances to include open space, room for schools and parks as well as the necessary roadways must be considered as part of a modern land use law.

6) *How will your administration help towns and developers take advantage of the economic development opportunities offered by these prime locations?*

We must also put in place policies that actually encourage urban living, as opposed to urban sprawl. Workforce housing should be focused around our urban centers and adjacent communities, as well as transportation hubs within reasonable distance. Right now, it's just easier for people to leave our cities and head for the suburbs, putting a great strain on suburban and rural infrastructure and resulting pollution that comes with it. My "Bringing Back Our Cities" plan focuses on revitalizing our urban areas so they are places people want to live and work. These incentives include tax advantages that reduce the cost of developing new housing and new commercial or industrial properties while also encouraging homeowners to purchase the housing and businesses to relocate into these communities. With outstanding infrastructure and a restored base of residents, these businesses will find ample sources of skilled workers and customers. Our state plan will encourage this urban revitalization rather than forcing further dislocation and erosion of these vital communities.