



**The New and Improved Cluster Development Tool:
*Helping Towns Direct Growth Where it Makes the Most Sense,
 While Preserving Open Space, Farmland and Historic Sites,
 At a Lower Cost to Taxpayers***

NEW ENHANCED TOOLS HELP TOWNS, PROPERTY OWNERS, DEVELOPERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT:

Municipal authorization of clustering allows developers and landowners to work together to preserve land and build strong neighborhoods. Instead of spreading development evenly across a site or sites, developers may build it at a higher density on a portion of the site or sites and preserve the remaining land for parks, open space, historic preservation or flood control. Landowners gain another way to use their development rights, developers can win community support for more marketable projects, and residents gain more parks and open lands. Clustering can be used in cities, suburbs and rural areas.

NONCONTIGUOUS CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT:

Noncontiguous clustering gives towns more flexibility to encourage growth where it makes the most sense, while preserving land with private dollars. Setting up a noncontiguous cluster program requires only a modest investment in amending the master plan and development ordinances. Noncontiguous clustering is voluntary meaning that landowners and developers may choose whether to utilize the noncontiguous cluster option or develop under conventional zoning. (See reverse for more information)

RESOURCES FOR MUNICIPALITIES:

The following resources are designed to help towns get started:

- **New Jersey Future’s Noncontiguous Clustering Page**
<http://www.njfuture.org/cluster>
 - Powerpoint presentations with notes: *Noncontiguous Clustering: New Jersey’s New Planning Tool*, and *Noncontiguous Clustering, A Technical Guide*, New Jersey Future, 2013
 - *Preserving Land Through Compact Growth: Case Studies of Noncontiguous Clustering in New Jersey*, New Jersey Future, 2012
 - *The Nuts and Bolts of Noncontiguous Clustering*, (webinar presentations), New Jersey Future, 2012
 - The Cluster Development Act, P.L.2013, c.106
- **New Jersey Department of Agriculture**
Agricultural Smart Growth Plan for New Jersey, 2006 <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/pdf/smartgrowthplan.pdf>
- **Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission**
Municipal Implementation Tool #23: Land Preservation Through Noncontiguous Parcel Clustering in New Jersey, 2012 http://www.dvrpc.org/asp/pubs/publicationabstract.asp?pub_id=MIT023



Growth areas are built more densely.

Clustering results in a development project that preserves open space, farmland or historic sites and creates a growth area that is developed more intensely.



Remaining areas are preserved.

For more information, please contact New Jersey Future or any of its technical partners:



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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

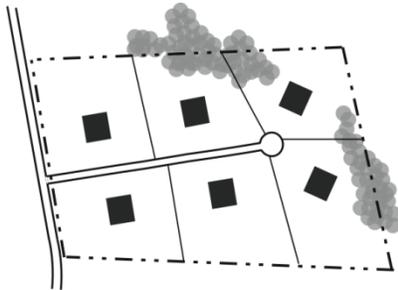
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BACKGROUND: HOW CLUSTERING WORKS

Under the Municipal Land Use Law, municipalities have many options to plan for and regulate development. Shown below are several of the common planning approaches used for residential development in rural and suburban areas. Note that these concepts can also be applied in urban settings.

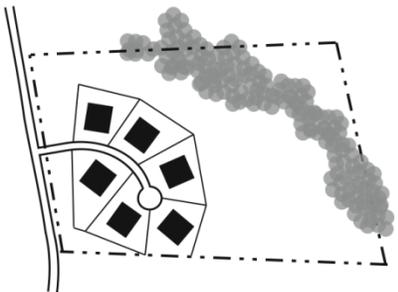
Conventional Development



Development is allowed across the site, provided lot sizes meet or exceed a minimum size.

This approach is sometimes called “large lot zoning.” Municipalities increase lot sizes in the hopes of reducing the impact on things like water resources and the number of school-age children, but the development footprint remains the same and no land is preserved.

Contiguous Cluster

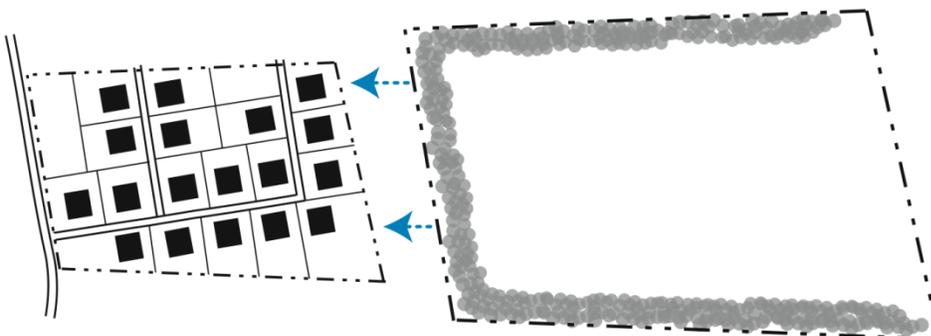


Development is concentrated on a portion of the site, and the rest is preserved as open space or farmland.

Contiguous clustering can be done on a single site or on a set of adjacent sites. Land is preserved without relying on public purchase.

Noncontiguous Cluster

Two or more non-adjacent parcels are treated as a single site for the purpose of clustering. The growth area is developed more densely, and the preservation area(s) are preserved as open space or farmland without relying on public funds.



Growth Area

Preservation Area

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Municipality designates sending (protection) and receiving (development) districts. Developers may purchase the development rights from a sending district to develop at a higher density in a receiving district. TDR Programs are subject to additional state oversight and requirements than other planning tools, but provide greater control over development.

Other examples can be found on New Jersey Future’s [website](#) in [Preserving Land through Compact Growth: Case Studies of Noncontiguous Clustering in New Jersey](#).