



YEAR IN REVIEW 2016

LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT

As demand for walkable communities increases, local officials and leaders struggle with marshalling the support necessary to transform their downtowns into more vibrant places. New Jersey Future provides leadership and support to drive resources and technical assistance toward our cities and town centers.

Revitalizing a rural downtown. New Jersey Future partnered with Counselors of Real Estate (CRE) and the Township of Oxford to help Oxford revitalize its downtown. New Jersey Future researched and profiled the township's land, physical features, zoning, demographics, and housing stock, compiling this information into a briefing book and then facilitated the community engagement and planning process. CRE conducted a five-day site visit to the town, touring properties, interviewing stakeholders, and concluding with a public meeting. A final report synthesized this information and provided the town with development strategies, including marketing ideas to promote business retention and economic activity.

URBAN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The state's population continues to grow and market demand is driving more people into our urban centers, but our urban water infrastructure is failing and out of compliance with federal standards. New Jersey Future is working with a wide collaborative of stakeholders to address this problem holistically and advance best practices.

Establishing Jersey Water Works. In 2015, New Jersey Future worked with a host of stakeholders to form a collaborative organization called Jersey Water Works to help New Jersey's cities and towns address their water infrastructure crisis. Supported by New Jersey Future "backbone" administrative staff, Jersey Water Works created its first work plan for 2016, with a focus on four long-term goals: effective green and gray infrastructure, smart combined sewer overflow plans, financially sustainable water infrastructure systems, and empowered stakeholders.

Organizing for collective impact. Jersey Water Works grew to include nearly 220 supporting members in 2016, ranging from public and private utilities to cities, environmental groups, development corporations and others. More than half of its members volunteered to serve on one of Jersey Water Works' committees, which execute their own work plans to implement projects that advance the goals of the collaborative.

Promoting green infrastructure. New Jersey Future's new program Mainstreaming Green Infrastructure aimed to make green infrastructure (GI) the first choice for stormwater management. In partnership with the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, the program conducted two workshops for design professionals on how green infrastructure can be used to improve water quality and supply. Leaders from 20 towns in northwest New Jersey and 14 in the Pinelands region attended. The program also selected Byram, Hammonton and Newton as pilot towns, and will work with them to advance green infrastructure in public and private development projects.

RESILIENCY TO NATURAL DISASTERS

Four years after Hurricane Sandy, New Jersey towns are still recovering and coping with the new realities of sea-level rise and climate change. New Jersey Future is playing a critical role at state and local levels to improve resilience to climate risks.

Driving science-based information and reporting. New Jersey Future participated in a practitioner work session sponsored by the New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance. The session focused on sea-level rise, coastal storms and flood hazards, and resulted in two new reports that evaluate the state's vulnerability.

Leading the public conversation about climate risk. New Jersey Future partnered with Rutgers University to conduct a Health Impact Assessment to evaluate the effects of buyout strategies on personal and municipal health in the Mystic Island section of Little Egg Harbor Township. At the conclusion of the planning process, New Jersey Future and Rutgers presented the findings and recommendations to residents and elected officials of the township.

Improving resiliency of coastal towns. New Jersey Future is undertaking an assessment of the state's requirements for designating development areas under the Coastal Zone Management rules. The objective is to create a comprehensive planning model that will identify ways municipalities can respond to coastal hazards while protecting resources. New Jersey Future is evaluating coastal development patterns and areas of projected inundation in three communities – Little Egg Harbor Township, Tuckerton Borough, and Toms River Township – to develop recommendations for how the state can implement a risk-based, CAFRA Center designation process.

Influencing policy discussions. Collaborating with 11 other public interest organizations across the state, New Jersey Future organized a letter to Governor Christie that urged him to take full advantage of the \$15 million awarded to the state for regional resiliency planning from the National Disaster Resilience Competition. The letter emphasized the need for leadership and regional focus. The campaign was successful. *More on reverse »*

NEW JERSEY FUTURE: YEAR IN REVIEW 2016

AUTHORITATIVE RESEARCH

Independent, fact-based research helps inform and change perceptions about how we plan, grow and develop.

Overcoming developer obstacles to redevelopment. New Jersey Future's report *Redeveloping the Norm* analyzed the various risks that can make redevelopment more challenging than greenfield development. The report provided recommendations on how municipalities can mitigate cost and risk for developers, partnering with them to make the best use of existing developed land and infrastructure.

Analyzing demographic and land-use trends.

Research director Tim Evans published a series of in-depth posts on New Jersey Future's active Future Facts blog. Evans's wide-ranging research examined topics such as trends in redevelopment, school district regionalization, population trends, and population and income growth.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Our research report *In Deep*, which reviewed lessons from our innovative post-Sandy local recovery program, was honored with the national Association of State Floodplain Managers' **Tom Lee State Award for Excellence in Floodplain Management**.

Sustainable Jersey named our deputy executive director Teri Jover **Sustainability Hero** for June.

EVENTS

Our annual **Redevelopment Forum** attracted more than 500 professionals in architecture, planning, law and community revitalization, all focused on ways to redevelop New Jersey's already-built places to accommodate its future growth. Our **Smart Growth Awards** recognized seven outstanding plans and projects and honored Alfred C. Koeppel, former chairman of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. It was the 15th anniversary of the Smart Growth Awards, which have recognized 102 projects in total. In November, we organized and hosted the two-day conference of the **State and Regional Caucus of Smart Growth America** in Newark. New Jersey Future collaborated with re:focus partners to hold a **Build It Green Competition**, which selected Gloucester City, Jersey City and Perth Amboy to receive technical assistance to design innovative projects that reduce combined sewer outflows. Jersey Water Works held its first **conference** in December.

STATE POLICY

State-level land-use advocacy and policy interventions help encourage decision-makers to consider future-oriented implications of growth and development choices. New Jersey Future continues to be at the forefront of these debates, bringing the smart growth and planning perspective.

Influencing the conversation. Important issues on which New Jersey Future weighed in this year include the gas tax, the transportation trust fund fix, New Jersey applications for HUD disaster relief funds, population outmigration, transportation funding, and buyout strategies in municipalities that are vulnerable to climate risk.

Sharing our expertise. New Jersey Future and its staff were quoted, interviewed or mentioned in news stories more than 70 times in 2016, on a full range of smart-growth topics including New Jersey's aging water infrastructure, population growth, safety of drinking water, transportation funding, sea-level rise, urban planning, green infrastructure, and the importance of planning to reducing flood vulnerability. In addition, several staff members were asked to speak at key state and national conferences. Planning manager David Kutner was interviewed in the documentary film *Bad Tidings*, which explored the impact of sea-level rise on New Jersey shore communities. The film was a finalist in the Blue Ocean Film Festival & Conservation Summit.

A NEW CHAPTER

New Jersey Future completed its purchase and renovation of a vacant building in downtown Trenton for its new office space. The new building, at 16 W. Lafayette Street, features collaborative spaces and updated technology that expand the organization's ability to convene partners and stakeholders, improve accessibility to government decision-makers and accommodate its growing staff.



Founded in 1987, New Jersey Future is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes sensible growth, redevelopment, and infrastructure investments to foster vibrant cities and towns, protect natural lands and waterways, enhance transportation choices, provided access to safe, affordable, and aging-friendly neighborhoods, and fuel a strong economy. The organization does this through original research, coalition-building, advocacy, and hands-on technical assistance.

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