



SMART GROWTH IS ECONOMIC GROWTH

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES,
EXPANDED OPPORTUNITY

MARCH 2017



March 2017

New Jersey Future is pleased to put forward a gubernatorial platform to spark a meaningful conversation among the candidates about using smart growth policies as an economic driver to create vibrant communities, use public dollars wisely and expand economic opportunity to all New Jerseyans.

New Jersey deserves a governor committed to reinvigorating and leveraging the state's great place-based assets – our transportation system, our educational and corporate institutions, our parks and beaches, and our diverse and vital neighborhoods. Complicated challenges await the next administration: strained local and state budgets, a rapidly changing global economy, competition from other states for our best and brightest, and the threatening effects of climate change. We need a leader who will take on these issues with innovation, accountability, and the awareness that our land use decisions now will affect many generations to come.

We believe the recommendations gathered here are cost-effective and powerful strategies not only to drive economic growth in the state, but to make our communities healthier, more vibrant places. New Jersey Future is indebted to the many experts and stakeholders who lent us their wisdom and knowledge, and to our platform committee and board members who guided our efforts.

This year, in addition to the governorship, all legislative seats are up for election and we hope all candidates and voters will find the ideas set forth in this platform useful. In the next few months, we will work to educate the candidates on smart growth issues, and look forward to collaborating with the next administration and legislature in continuing to make our state a great place to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Peter Kasabach.

Peter Kasabach
Executive Director, New Jersey Future

A blue ink signature of Peter S. Reinhart.

Peter S. Reinhart
Chairman, New Jersey Future

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION



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1. INVEST WISELY IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

Make smart, cost-effective investments in transportation and water infrastructure to increase New Jersey's competitiveness and support healthy communities.

- ▶ Refocus state transportation agencies on the mission of improving access to more destinations for more people.
- ▶ Fund transit operations and capital improvements adequately in order to restore NJ Transit's systems and make them long-term growth drivers.
- ▶ Pursue a "One Water" strategy to modernize inadequate drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems in ways that strengthen communities and support future growth.



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3. INCORPORATE CLIMATE RISK INTO DECISION-MAKING.

Prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change and sea level rise through long-term planning and education about the growing risk of flooding.

- ▶ Integrate science-based sea level rise projections and other climate change risk into decision-making at all levels of government.
- ▶ Support regional and local approaches to managing increased flood risks through land use changes.
- ▶ Expand real estate disclosure requirements to prospective buyers and renters to include details on flood risk.



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2. SUPPORT GOOD LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT.

Empower cities and towns to take the bold and difficult steps needed to allow them to meet the demographic, economic, and environmental challenges of the next century.

- ▶ Provide technical and financial resources to cities and towns to promote compact, walkable development.
- ▶ Support transit-oriented development and redevelopment through targeted tax credits and coordinated state policies and investments.
- ▶ Adopt a comprehensive housing strategy, including inclusionary zoning practices and incentive programs to ensure individuals and families at all life stages and income levels have access to quality homes.



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4. COORDINATE STATE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

Provide leadership from the governor's office to direct state investments and incentives to ensure a prosperous, sustainable state with great places to live, work and play.

- ▶ Implement an organized and strategic state planning process that guides state actions and aligns local and state efforts.
- ▶ Initiate better data collection and dissemination, utilize performance measurement and open reporting of results.
- ▶ Leverage new financing possibilities such as a state bank and public-private partnerships.

NEW JERSEY IS AT A CRITICAL STAGE.

A number of our cities and towns are experiencing a promising comeback, with redevelopment and new business activity invigorating once-struggling communities. Yet stubborn, chronic problems, including high housing costs, crumbling infrastructure and a neglected transit system, and the increasing vulnerability of our coast and towns to climate change, threaten to impede the state's resurgent economic competitiveness and diminish residents' quality of life.

The next governor of New Jersey will need to take a comprehensive approach to land use and infrastructure that acknowledges the demographic, economic and climate forces shaping the way we live now and will live in the future. Success will depend in no small part on the new administration's willingness to engage in short- and long-term planning efforts that prioritize expanding economic opportunity, increased resiliency and preservation of our natural assets and resources. In addition, the next governor can empower New Jersey's communities by providing financial assistance and technical guidance that will enable them to make the changes needed to achieve the sustainable future they envision.

Shifting demographics are having a major impact on where New Jerseyans choose to live and work, and how they get around the state. Younger generations are migrating toward urban centers and walkable downtowns where they can live, work, and play. They are slower than older generations to marry, have children, to buy cars or homes.¹ At the same time, many baby boomers are looking to downsize to smaller homes and stay independent, while continuing to live in the communities they enjoy. The era of car-centric suburbanization that drove the market for suburban office parks and enclosed shopping malls has ended, and companies increasingly want to locate in walkable communities to follow the talent.² Cities and towns that have vibrant centers near public transportation, universities, and other amenities, like parks and greens, are attracting a young, diverse, talented workforce but are often short of housing to accommodate them.

New Jersey is now confronting national and international competition for a talented workforce for businesses and entrepreneurs. For many years our excellent schools, dependable transit, educated workers, and proximity to New York City fostered a powerful and innovative economy. But now, all too often, we see New Jersey at the wrong end of national rankings that are recognized



LOCAL PARK, BERGEN COUNTY



DOWNTOWN METUCHEN, MIDDLESEX COUNTY

WHAT IS SMART GROWTH?

Smart growth means making land-use decisions that steer new growth to the places where it does our economy, and our environment, the most good; specifically, in and near existing communities where we've already invested in transportation, sewers, schools and services. Smart growth means rebuilding today's older towns, suburbs and cities – rather than building on our last open lands. Smart growth maximizes the investments we've already made in our homes and communities, even as it protects our remaining farmlands, shoreline and woodlands from further development. It expands our options for good communities and homes in which to live, and our choices for how to get around.



as indicators of a healthy and vibrant state: congestion, income growth, property taxes, cost of living. This set of chronic problems must be dealt with in order for the state to compete globally. Rail and bus transit fares have skyrocketed at the same time that service and safety have deteriorated.³ Water main breaks, gridlocked roads, and an overwhelmed public transit system are signs that our aging, neglected infrastructure needs urgent investment. Lack of housing choices, especially close to employment, are hindering upward mobility for many families.

Hurricane Sandy was a harbinger of the destruction and economic risks that New Jersey faces with impending sea level rise and increased storm intensity due to climate change. We must begin to prepare now for the realities of rising seas and catastrophic storms. Our shore is one of our most precious resources, critical to both our state's tourism economy and a productive fishing industry. Currently, neither state nor local public investments come with a directive to plan for the future risks of climate change, which means New Jersey is even more vulnerable than it was before Sandy.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION

New Jersey Future proposes an ambitious but pragmatic strategy to utilize and preserve the state's most valuable assets to build a thriving economy and ensure a healthier environment for our residents. The policy brief that follows lays out a plan of action designed to grow diverse and durable economies in communities across New Jersey and support residents' efforts to attain economic security. The recommendations in this platform have been developed through New Jersey Future's own thorough research, extensive outreach to experts and innovative thinkers, and hands-on experience working with communities who are taking on these challenges.



1. INVEST WISELY IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

Make smart, cost-effective investments in transportation and water infrastructure to increase New Jersey's competitiveness and support healthy communities.

Infrastructure development has tremendous potential to unlock economic growth in New Jersey. The age and increasing deterioration of our trains and buses, pipes and tunnels, roads and rails has led to growing equity, environmental, and safety concerns. Investment in these areas promises thousands of jobs with equitable wages and a better quality of life for New Jersey residents. The next governor has the opportunity to explore new and responsible ways to finance and oversee investments and operations that will open new avenues of growth for New Jersey.

- ▶ Refocus state transportation agencies on the mission of improving access to more destinations for more people.
- ▶ Fund transit operations and capital improvements adequately in order to restore NJ Transit's systems and make them long-term growth drivers.
- ▶ Pursue a "One Water" strategy to modernize inadequate drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems in ways that strengthen communities and support future growth.

Transportation Infrastructure

New Jersey has an incredibly valuable asset: one of the most extensive public transportation networks in the United States. It is used by 11.2 percent of commuters, the second highest rate in the country. A robust mass transit system that provides diverse and equitable transportation choices is the heart of a healthy and competitive economy.

In recent years, we have neglected to safeguard this important economic resource. From 2002 to 2014, transit ridership in the state increased by 20.2 percent, while capital investment decreased by 19.4 percent.⁴ In 2015, the direct state subsidy to NJ Transit's operating budget fell to less than one-tenth of what it was six years before, forcing the agency to divert billions of dollars from its capital budget to fund operations.⁵

Younger generations, older residents, and businesses increasingly want to locate in cities and suburbs with dependable, affordable public transit and a diversity of transportation options, including walking, biking, and transportation network services like Uber and Lyft. And it turns out that long commute times, particularly for those driving cars, have detrimental effects on physical and mental health.⁶ We lead the nation with the number of workers who have "mega commutes" – those longer than one hour. In fact, one in seven New Jersey workers



PATH STATION, JERSEY CITY, HUDSON COUNTY

drives more than an hour to work. And of our 4.1 million commuters, 2.95 million drive to work alone.⁷ In addition to fostering growth, improved and increased public transportation options have the potential to get more cars off the road, reducing congestion, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

The cultures and missions of the Department of Transportation and NJ Transit must be reshaped and integrated in order to transform the state's transportation network into a unified, efficient, economically and environmentally sustainable system. We must prioritize transportation investments to improve public transit, repair critical infrastructure, and develop walkable communities where jobs, housing and amenities are within easy reach of each other. And we must do all this while improving transparency, accountability and equity. Future infrastructure investments must consider the life-cycle of the investment, the synergies between different investments and the integration among investments made at different levels of government. Currently, our system tends to emphasize new projects rather than focusing on making the entire network more efficient, and transportation investments are now isolated from other infrastructure and development needs. Reforming the state's transportation agencies and remodeling the state's principles for how we spend our limited funds will allow us to make smarter choices that reduce traffic and congestion, and improving access to jobs and opportunity.

Water Infrastructure

While New Jersey's cities are becoming the state's economic-growth engine, they are plagued by aging, deteriorating water infrastructure and have a significant problem with combined-sewer overflows (CSOs). In addition, water main breaks, lead contamination, loss of water through leaky pipes, and chronic local flooding are all water infrastructure challenges that affect both small towns and big cities. Among 323 public schools tested last year for lead in drinking water, 137 schools showed results that exceeded the action level.⁸ Square-mile Hoboken had 20 water main breaks in 2016 alone, frustrating residents who have to boil water, increasing traffic and lengthening commutes, and hurting large and small businesses. And an estimated 130 million gallons of treated drinking water are being lost each day across

New Jersey due to leaking pipes; fixing these pipes could save utilities \$10 million per year and remove the need to build new reservoirs.⁹

WHAT IS A "ONE WATER" APPROACH?

For far too long, we have undervalued water as an essential natural resource. The One Water approach, promoted by the nonprofit U.S. Water Alliance, assigns value to all the ways we use and interact with water – for drinking, for food or energy production, for recreation, for waste flow. Even the water that runs off our buildings, sidewalks, lawns, and farms must be valued and managed as a resource. The One Water approach addresses multiple water and water infrastructure concerns throughout the water cycle, with the goal of achieving economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Investments in innovative infrastructure solutions that combine green and grey infrastructure can produce benefits that save money and provide health, energy, air quality, and climate-related benefits. Green infrastructure mimics nature by capturing stormwater so it can either be reused or seep into the ground where it falls, rather than flowing into underground sewer and storm pipes. Installation and maintenance of rain gardens, pervious pavement, planted swales, and storage containers such as cisterns and rain barrels help reduce stress on water systems, provide good local jobs, and enhance the health and beauty of our communities.

A governor who becomes an ambassador for a "One Water" approach can modernize our inadequate drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems through visible leadership, education, and targeted new funding, making New Jersey a national leader in this area. Long overdue, investments in water infrastructure will expand economic opportunity in communities across the state. Effective and innovative water management will institutionalize transparency regarding the condition of our systems, as well as fiscal transparency through asset management and life-cycle pricing.

Managing Infrastructure Investments

New Jersey urgently needs a more innovative, comprehensive approach to paying for and managing our infrastructure. Possible approaches include leveraging private-sector expertise and capital through the use of public-private partnerships, and a state bank. The use of public-private partnerships has grown across the country in recent years, and New Jersey can look to other states and cities to emulate the best examples of effective and equitable allocation of resources, where each party shares in the risks and rewards of the infrastructure project.

With all infrastructure investments and improvements, the state must integrate planning and data collection so that we can manage our infrastructure more sufficiently and effectively over its lifetime, and must help municipalities do the same. For example, by timing road and water line repairs with broadband upgrades, roads need to be opened only once. This means taxpayer dollars can be saved and disruption of commutes can be limited. Infrastructure investments hold great potential for job creation, connections to better job opportunities, and healthier communities. Without a modern approach to financing, more effective selection and management of projects, and a better system for oversight, we run the risk of straining state revenues even further.



RIVERFRONT PARK, NEWARK, ESSEX COUNTY



2. SUPPORT GOOD LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT.

Empower cities and towns to take the bold and difficult steps needed to allow them to meet the demographic, economic, and environmental challenges of the next century.

Smart-growth development can provide fiscal and social benefits to the state and its municipalities. The next governor should seize the opportunity to work with municipalities in their efforts to create vibrant places to live and work. Indeed, economic growth in the state depends on this partnership.

- ▶ Provide technical and financial resources to cities and towns to promote compact, walkable development.
- ▶ Support transit-oriented development and redevelopment through targeted tax credits and coordinated state policies and investments.
- ▶ Adopt a comprehensive housing strategy, including inclusionary zoning practices and incentive programs to ensure individuals and families at all life stages and income levels have access to quality homes.

Sustaining Our Communities

Neighborhoods are our state's lifeblood. Without our even knowing it, our daily lives are shaped by our surrounding communities – the favorite local deli, the coffee shop on the corner, conversations in the barbershop, the sight of kids walking to the elementary school, the Italian restaurant that makes incredible garlic bread, the new funky barbecue joint. New Jersey's downtowns and Main Streets are the economic engines of the state, and it is time to reinvest in their future. Vibrant communities, with transportation choices and walkable neighborhoods, are no longer simply nice destinations; they are an important draw for companies and they foster economic growth, prosperity, and positive health outcomes for the state. Health studies show that a half-hour walk a day translates into \$2,500 in health cost savings per year,¹⁰ while obesity and diabetes rates are lower in the most walkable communities.¹¹

Over the last seven years, New Jersey has handed out over \$7.1 billion in corporate tax breaks to companies to locate or stay in our state, with a mixed economic record to show for it.¹² The good news is that the 2013 legislation

that consolidated the state's tax credit programs has been steering economic growth into smart-growth locations. But the broader economic consequences of all of these tax breaks remain to be seen. The old economic development model of subsidizing jobs has intensified the state's budget woes with forgone future tax revenues. Future economic growth incentives must strengthen the host communities and be appropriately sized.

Incentives and tax breaks for businesses are not the sole reason that companies relocate. While they make a place more financially competitive, recent studies have shown that a number of other factors are important: Quality of life, proximity to higher education and good schools, a skilled labor force, and access to customers are all rated highly by executives and entrepreneurs.¹³

WHAT IS TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT?

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is the creation of compact, walkable communities typically within a half-mile, or walking distance, of transit stations and near a mix of uses, including mixed-income housing, office, retail, restaurants, and other amenities. Effective transit-oriented development should increase transit ridership, take cars off roads, and connect local residents to economic opportunities.

Creating great places to live and work is essential to growing our economy and pulling the state out of its budget troubles. It starts with a hands-on, collaborative approach to reimagining and improving our towns, cities and regions through their public places – streets, parks, public squares, town plazas. And we must emphasize and support our local and regional assets: our historic buildings; our many natural features including riverfronts, mountains, lakes and bogs; the unique artistic talents of a community; New Jersey's strong reputation as a powerhouse of science and technology. Investing in the vibrancy of our suburban towns and our cities and highlighting our strengths is essential to attracting and retaining the workforce we need to grow the state.

Transit-Oriented Development

In recent years, hundreds of companies across the country have moved to and are investing in walkable downtown locations.¹⁴ New Jersey needs to keep pace with this trend in order to attract and retain businesses and their workers. We need to link transportation investments with local planning and encourage towns and cities to allow more intensive development near transit hubs. Pedestrian- and bike-friendly connections to transit facilities are also essential for making commutes safer and more efficient.

Smart-growth development makes economic sense, proving to be less expensive and more revenue-productive for local governments than conventional suburban development. Research has shown that smart-growth development patterns can save an average of 10 percent on the cost of municipal services and save one-third of the construction costs of roads, sewers, water lines and other infrastructure. Higher density development does not overstrain public schools and services, and its compact nature demands less extensive support infrastructure.¹⁵

Smart-growth development also generates more income for municipalities: surveys show that 10 times more tax revenue per acre is created from center-based, dense development than from conventional suburban development.¹⁶ Finally, among large metropolitan cities, the most walkable have higher GDPs per capita and walkable urban office spaces draw higher rents than space in car-centric suburban markets.¹⁷

Affordable Homes

Our housing market is one of the costliest in the country, an increasing threat to our diversity and economic growth. About 41 percent of owner households and 51 percent of renter households are considered to be “cost burdened,” meaning they pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs.¹⁸ To put this in perspective, someone making the state's minimum hourly wage of \$8.38 would have to work 105 hours a week if 30 percent of his or her income went to pay fair market rent (\$1,139) on a one-bedroom apartment in the state.¹⁹

The housing affordability crisis in New Jersey affects both younger and older generations. We have the highest rate in the nation – 47 percent – of Millennials living with their parents.²⁰ And 47.5 percent of households headed by someone 65 years of age or older are paying more than 30 percent of their income for their housing costs. This is the highest rate of cost-burdened 65+ households in the nation.²¹

There are a variety of effective tools for developing homes that are affordable. Zoning policies, development fees, design guidelines, and incentives at the local level should be reviewed and reformed to increase housing types and affordability. Too often, our local and state zoning codes limit our potential, forcing both returning college students and older residents to look beyond our state borders, and keeping far too many working families from reaching the middle class. Recent actions by the state’s courts offer the next governor a unique opportunity to work with municipalities to increase the diversity of housing options, and in turn, create stronger communities and a stronger economy.



HUDSON-BERGEN LIGHT RAIL, JERSEY CITY, HUDSON COUNTY



3. INCORPORATE CLIMATE RISK INTO DECISION-MAKING.

Prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change and sea level rise through long-term planning and education about the growing risk of flooding.

With the effects of climate change accelerating, New Jersey’s coastal areas could face up to six feet of sea level rise early in the next century.²² The next administration must confront the significant economic and health risks associated with weather-related and tidal flooding, aggravated by intensive development.

- ▶ Integrate science-based sea level rise projections and other climate change risk into decision-making at all levels of government.
- ▶ Support regional and local approaches to managing increased flood risks through land-use changes.
- ▶ Expand real estate disclosure requirements to prospective buyers and renters to include details on flood risk.

New Jersey has long been a flood-prone state, ranked third highest in national flood insurance program dollars paid out: \$5.9 billion since 1978, behind only Texas and Louisiana.²³ Inadequate attention to ensuring resilience across the state leaves us unprepared to meet the challenges and consequences of severe rainfall events or to address the long-term threat of permanent flooding.

Numerous communities, as well as critical infrastructure, already face the threat of sea level rise. Atlantic City is now experiencing 24 tidal flooding events per year; in just 15 years that is expected to grow to 92 events and by 2045, to more than 240.²⁴ When this so-termed “nuisance flooding” occurs, people have to park their cars blocks away and walk through knee-deep or higher water to get home; septic systems fail and untreated wastewater pollutes the floodwater; utilities are compromised; emergency responders are hampered; and property values fall.

At one foot of sea level rise, which could occur as soon as 2030, the barrier beach and back bay communities of the Jersey Shore will be affected, and thousands of New Jersey residents and jobs will be displaced. And at three and six feet of sea level rise, permanent



PUBLIC MEETING, LITTLE EGG HARBOR, ATLANTIC COUNTY

flooding will threaten Teterboro Airport, the Secaucus rail station, Giants Stadium, the American Dream mall and entertainment project, and hundreds of miles of critical roads and rail lines.²⁵

Since Hurricane Sandy, a considerable number of state institutions, agencies, and organizations have worked to accumulate detailed experience and extensive scholarship around developing and implementing resiliency strategies. The next governor can tap into this knowledge network, and treat it as an asset. The state must integrate the risk of more severe weather events and sea level rise into all capital investment decisions, land-use planning, and building codes in order to lessen the future costs of public and private property damage and to protect vulnerable populations. To adapt to and mitigate the effects of sea level rise will require vigilance and planning now, and a rigorous effort to determine where water can be kept out and where it can't be stopped.

We continue to place people and property at risk through current local land-use regulations. The next governor should champion the rethinking of our policies and rules to alter the course of future coastal development patterns. Ending our addiction to living on the water will not be easy, and changing the regulatory environment will not occur quickly. But time is not on our side, and we must act immediately to prepare our communities for the next storm and for the incessant rise of the ocean.

Policy tools include stronger and smarter ordinances and zoning, green and resiliency bonds that finance infrastructure improvements to mitigate or adapt to

the effects of climate change, stormwater utility fees, easements, and robust hazard mitigation planning. We must also provide towns with the data essential to their planning efforts. Developing a statewide coastal management plan as a framework for state and local land use and infrastructure planning and capital budgeting, along with a regional implementation and adaptation strategy, has the potential to create a host of benefits in terms of shared resources and reduced costs. The state must build flexibility into its approach and engage proactively the community so that New Jersey residents can learn about these risks and plan for their futures.



4. COORDINATE STATE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

Provide leadership from the governor's office to direct state investments to ensure a prosperous, sustainable state and to support communities' efforts to create great places to live, work and play.

Clear and high-profile policy direction from the next governor is necessary to achieve smart growth and sustainable development in New Jersey. Breaking down agency silos, creating a culture of innovation and collaboration, and instituting transparency and effective performance measurement should be high priorities for the next governor and cabinet.

- ▶ Implement an organized and strategic state planning process that guides state actions and aligns local and state efforts.
- ▶ Initiate better data collection and its dissemination, utilize performance measurement and open reporting of results.
- ▶ Leverage new financing possibilities such as a state bank and public-private partnerships.

The State Planning Act, passed in 1985, establishes a State Planning Commission and directs the commission to consult with municipalities in preparing, adopting, revising, and updating a State Development and Redevelopment Plan. In recent years, this mandate has been ignored, at exactly the time when comprehensive state planning would be indispensable to managing the unique challenges of slowing development in our suburbs and growing economic momentum in our cities.

The State Plan has not been updated since 2001, and the commission has not had a substantive meeting in more than two years.

The next governor has the opportunity to take a fresh, truly comprehensive approach to land development and preservation in New Jersey. Of utmost importance is the re-establishment of some kind of strategic plan or planning process that engages our citizens and communities in crafting a vision for our state's long-term prosperity, livability, and resiliency. Any approach to deciding where and how we grow, and where we prioritize conservation, should be efficient, practical, and politically acceptable, or it will fail to garner the support and commitment needed to carry it out. An invigorated process should

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STATE PLAN

In 1986, recognizing the critical role the state must play in directing future growth and aligning resources accordingly, New Jersey adopted the State Planning Act — a groundbreaking effort to coordinate land-use planning among state agencies and different levels of government. The act mandated the creation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the “State Plan”), as well as the formation of the State Planning Commission and its staff, now housed at the Office of Planning Advocacy in the Department of State.

But our 30-year experience with state planning has produced mixed results. The State Plan vision for strong communities and preserved open lands is widely shared and has helped shape development patterns. For a variety of reasons, however, the plan has not been fully implemented by either state agencies or municipalities. Its most recent iteration came out in 2001, although the original law mandates it be revised and re-adopted every three years. In early 2011, the Christie administration began a process that culminated in the release of a proposed new State Plan update called the State Strategic Plan, but the plan was not adopted and no actions have been taken since October 2012.

not only highlight shared goals and values, but focus on measurable outcomes to track our progress.

Success in carrying out the many components of smart growth cannot be achieved through the current governance configuration or by any one agency. New Jersey Future supports elevating a position within the governor's office that will coordinate and direct smart-growth initiatives, including—but not limited to—investments and policies related to economic development, infrastructure, redevelopment, open space preservation, and resiliency. Repositioning the State Planning Commission and appointing proficient and creative individuals to lead a state planning process is essential. The next governor's office must educate cabinet leadership on smart-growth goals and benefits, and prioritize interagency collaboration and communication. Finally, reforming and remodeling the Department of Community Affairs so that it can fulfill its role as lead agency in supporting local smart-growth efforts is another critical action, as it is currently the main technical and financial resource for cities and towns across the state.

In recent years, the most innovative cities and states across the country have invested strategically in more effective measurement of their programs and policies. Requiring New Jersey local and state governments to be more accountable and transparent to taxpayers is essential to an engaged and supportive public. Details of state investments and incentives should be publicly accessible through a website that can be queried by the type, location, and funding level.



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