



*In 2017, New Jersey Future published new research, convened hundreds of thought leaders, and advanced smart growth policies across the state.*

# NEW JERSEY FUTURE Year in Review 2017

## Policy

New Jersey Future's gubernatorial platform "**Smart Growth is Economic Growth**" advanced four policy recommendations: invest wisely in infrastructure, support good local redevelopment, incorporate climate risk into decision-making, and coordinate state development efforts. Several New Jersey Future staff, board members, and former trustees were named to the **governor-elect's transition team**. New board member Jose Lozano was appointed as head of the transition team. New Jersey Future provided **testimony and statements** on 12 separate occasions, including participating in a **U.S. Senate roundtable** on lead in drinking water. In partnership with 35 other organizations, New Jersey Future recommended a **Year One Clean Water agenda** for the new gubernatorial administration.

## Water Infrastructure

New Jersey Future supported the **Water Quality Accountability Act**, which passed. The Jersey Water Works collaborative grew to **374 members**. Jersey Water Works held its annual **membership meeting** and third annual **conference**, drawing a collective audience of approximately 400. The collaborative published a new report, "**Our Water Transformed**," which presented an action agenda of three practical solutions for improving water infrastructure. Jersey Water Works also co-sponsored the inaugural One Water Awards, recognizing 4 exemplary water projects across New Jersey. As part of the **Day Without Water** campaign, Jersey Water Works partnered with New Jersey Craft Brewers Association for Imagine a Day Without Beer to raise awareness about the value of water. New Jersey Future organized a field trip to Philadelphia for **City of Newark** staff to learn about green infrastructure. New Jersey Future facilitated the formation of **municipal action teams** in Harrison, Kearny, and Bayonne and helped build green solutions for combined sewer overflows, such as new **rain gardens** in Harrison and Newton. New Jersey Future's **Mainstreaming Green Infrastructure** staff convened NJDOT and NJDEP stakeholders to gain input on state-level policy recommendations on green streets. This led to the release of a Green Streets Recommendations report.

## Coastal Resilience

New Jersey Future created the Big Conservations event series to address critical issues facing the state and convene thought leaders on important topics. The series launched with "**The Shore of the Future**," a symposium about climate resilience and sea level rise. This even convened thought leaders from around New Jersey and out-of-state. It attracted approximately 210 participants and generated significant media attention. New Jersey Future also testified at the **New Jersey Assembly Joint Environment Committee** meeting on climate change and published a **comprehensive new report** on coastal hazard mitigation strategy.



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, provide access to safe, affordable and aging-friendly neighborhoods and fuel a strong economy. The organization does this through original research, innovative policy development, coalition-building, advocacy, and hands-on strategic assistance.

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## Local Redevelopment

New Jersey Future is providing **planning assistance** to several New Jersey municipalities to determine whether they promote **aging-friendly communities**. The assessment will include recommendations for becoming more aging-friendly, with the goal of enabling older adults to remain active, healthy, and engaged while continuing to live in their community.

## New Research & Publications

**Assessment of the New Jersey Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program.** *Key takeaway:* Changes to NJHMFA's criteria for tax credits facilitated affordable housing projects in high-opportunity areas, providing a model for other states to reverse concentrated poverty.

**Developer's Green Infrastructure Guide.** *Key takeaway:* Created in partnership with AKRF and New Jersey Builders Association, this resource for developers explains what green infrastructure is, how it works, its costs and benefits, and why it makes business sense.

**Our Water Transformed: An Action Agenda for New Jersey's Water Infrastructure (Jersey Water Works).** *Key takeaway:* Three priority solutions are key to improving water infrastructure: robust asset management, educated stakeholders, and government funding.

**Sustainable and Resilient Coastal Communities: A Comprehensive Coastal Hazard Mitigation Strategy.** *Key takeaway:* New Jersey can adopt specific local policies to increase resiliency and support communities that want to implement risk education strategies.

**Where Are We Going: Implications of Recent Demographics Trends in New Jersey.**

*Key takeaway:* Millennials prefer living in walkable, mixed-use downtowns—and they're leaving New Jersey.

## Events

New Jersey Future held its eleventh annual Redevelopment Forum, drawing more than 500 participants. At the Smart Growth Awards, the organization honored seven exemplary smart growth projects across New Jersey with an audience of more than 300. The ceremony was held in the Hahne & Co. Building in Newark—the first time a previous winner was the event location. New Jersey Future's inaugural *Big Conservation* series event, "The Shore of the Future," drew more than 200 participants.

## In the Media

New Jersey Future was mentioned in 87 news stories. The organization published 7 op-eds and 8 press releases on topics including climate change, sea level rise, traffic, public transit, affordable housing tax credits, demographic trends, and smart growth. New Jersey Future staff appeared on the Brian Lehrer Show (WNYC), Comcast Newsmakers, NJTV, State Broadcast News, the Leonard Lopate Show (WNYC), and Greenable Woodbridge's YouTube channel. By the end of 2017, New Jersey Future's social media followers on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram totaled approximately 12,900.