January 31, 2019

The Honorable Phil Murphy  
Governor of New Jersey  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: New Jersey State Plan

Dear Governor Murphy,

New Jersey is a remarkable place, packing more people per square mile than any other state in the country while still offering 130 miles of shoreline, nearly 233,000 acres of farmland, and everything in between. New Jersey is a place full of places, each with its own unique character, made special by the people living there.

We are on the cusp of setting our state on a course toward economic and environmental vitality through the development of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, the Coastal Resiliency Plan, and the updated Energy Master Plan. In order to streamline resources and maximize results, an overarching blueprint for the state is required. That blueprint is the State Plan.

New Jersey has a rich history as a leader of planning for growth. The State Planning Act was passed in 1985 and directed the creation of the State Planning Commission, the Office of State Planning, and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan to provide a goal for future growth and a plan to get there. The State Planning Act requires the plan to be updated every three years, however New Jersey has not adopted an updated plan since 2001. The state plan was updated in a 2011 draft, but that version was never formally adopted. New Jersey could once again be viewed as a leader in this space.

New Jersey municipalities are looking to the State Plan to guide smart development decisions, but those decisions are being based on a 2001 snapshot of our state’s priorities and challenges. Municipalities with expiring CAFRA centers are actively seeking Plan Endorsement to advance development and redevelopment and are unable to proceed due to vacancies on the State Planning Commission. At the state level, well-intentioned legislation addressing redevelopment, infrastructure, and environmental issues is being introduced and passed while still referring to the 2001 State Plan.

We, the undersigned, call on the State of New Jersey to:

- Fill the vacant seats on the State Planning Commission;
- Update the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, and;
- Reconstitute the Office of State Planning

This effort is important for New Jersey to properly address issues of equity, climate change, and our crumbling infrastructure. Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact Peter Kasabach of New Jersey Future at pkasabach@njfuture.org with any questions or concerns.
Sincerely,

Peter Kasabach
Executive Director
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