

NEW JERSEY

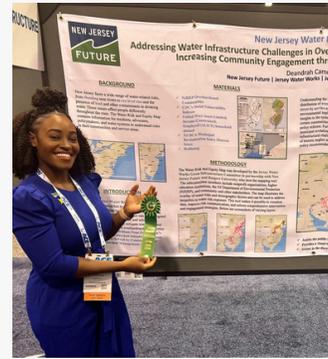
FUTURE

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

Building a Resilient New Jersey:
Progress, Partnerships, and
Possibilities



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New Jersey Future: 2024 Year-in-Review

Building a Resilient New Jersey: Progress, Partnerships, and Possibilities

In 2024, with dedicated staff, board, and partners, New Jersey Future advanced its mission of promoting equitable and sustainable growth across the Garden State. From shaping transformative policies to hosting dynamic convenings, we worked tirelessly to foster vibrant, resilient, and inclusive communities. This year's successes reflect the power of collaboration, innovation, and shared purpose.



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“None of us can do this alone.”

— Ingrid Reed (1936-2024), a founding board of trustee, and champion of New Jersey Future.

A Message from Peter Kasabach, Executive Director, and Meishka L. Mitchell, Board of Trustees Chair

As we close out 2024, we take great pride in reflecting on New Jersey Future's continued leadership as the state's premier nonprofit and nonpartisan advocate for smart, fair growth and sustainable investments. Together with our partners, supporters, and communities, we have made strides in building a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient New Jersey.

This year, our **Great Homes and Neighborhoods for All** initiative advanced efforts to ensure that every New Jerseyan has access to affordable housing in well-designed, safe, walkable neighborhoods. Through thoughtful collaboration with stakeholders across the public and private sectors, we championed policies and programs that expand housing opportunities, create equitable development, and nurture thriving, inclusive communities.

Our commitment to safeguarding New Jersey's natural resources has been unwavering. Working alongside our **Jersey Water Works** partners, we tackled critical water infrastructure challenges to ensure clean, safe, and reliable water for all residents. Together, we are laying the groundwork for long-term resilience, protecting our watersheds, and promoting sustainable water management practices.

We have also intensified our focus on building resilient infrastructure that can withstand the challenges of a changing climate. By advocating for forward-thinking investments and fostering innovation, we're helping communities adapt to environmental challenges while creating sustainable, livable spaces for future generations.

Finally, we were proud to support the **preliminary New Jersey State Plan** update, a long-awaited effort to guide smart growth and sustainable development. By advocating for policies that prioritize inclusive economic opportunities, walkable communities, and climate resilience, we're helping shape a future where every community thrives.

Through it all, we remain dedicated to ensuring sustainable communities for the next generation. From advocating for transit-oriented development to promoting policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, our work continues to prioritize the health, safety, and prosperity of New Jersey families.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership and support in this journey. The challenges we face demand bold vision and collective action. With your help, New Jersey Future will continue to be at the forefront of creating a state where everyone, regardless of zip code, has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for standing with us, and here's to even greater progress in 2025!

With gratitude,



Peter Kasabach
Executive Director
New Jersey Future



Meishka L. Mitchell
Board of Trustees Chair
New Jersey Future

Policy Progress: Driving Systemic Change

New Jersey Future played a pivotal role in advancing smart growth policies that address the challenges of redeveloping our communities, climate change, housing affordability, transportation choice, and infrastructure equity. Through strategic advocacy, coalition-building, and expert analysis, we advanced important initiatives. Here are a few highlights:



Helping Towns Plan for Climate Change:

Produced the *Sustainability and Climate Adaptation Planning: an Integrated Guide for Highlands Region Municipalities* for the Highlands Council that can be used by any town to integrate State-required risk assessments with the town's regular planning process.

Addressing Flooding:

Successfully advocated for increased funding for green infrastructure projects, ensuring communities most vulnerable to flooding receive critical support. Ensured the implementation of the New Jersey flood disclosure law that lets future renters and homeowners know what risks they are facing.



Planning for Affordable Housing:

Advanced the concept that good community planning and transparent obligations should be part of the affordable housing approach in New Jersey and had it embedded in law. Elevated the importance of zoning reforms that encourage walkable, inclusive development, and mixed-income communities.

Creating More Aging Friendly Communities:

Advanced the creation of more age-friendly communities by influencing the draft preliminary State Plan and partnering with Sustainable Jersey to help municipalities implement best practices.



Improving Active Transportation Options:

Successfully advocated for new state resources for local governments to plan for trails and parks and educated decision-makers on best practices for bicycle, pedestrian, and trail-related projects that make it easier to travel safely without a car.

Community Engagement: Strengthening Partnerships for Impact



Central to our success in 2024 was a deep commitment to community engagement. By fostering connections across diverse stakeholders, we turned bold ideas into actionable solutions like the **Great Homes and Neighborhoods for All** Convening. In Princeton, we brought together planners, residents, and policymakers to explore strategies to increase housing opportunities while creating inclusive and walkable neighborhoods, sparking new collaborations and implementable ideas.

“

New Jersey should be a place where residents of all ages and stages of life can choose to live in a safe, affordable neighborhood of their choice.

— Chris Sturm, policy director for land use at New Jersey Future



Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers

The campaign conducted the third Community Action Leadership Program training with 17 community advocates to address their communities' polluting combined sewer systems.



Funding Navigator

The program to help towns access water infrastructure funding grew to work with 11 communities and gave \$30,000 in passthrough grants to fund community projects.



Emerging Water Leaders of Color

The initiative hosted a second cohort with 16 participants. The Water Workforce Utility Program also hosted its second cohort with 19 participants.



Lead-Free NJ

This collaborative, supported by NJF as backbone staff, brings together local and statewide advocates and leaders to eliminate the health threat to our children and families from lead in water, soil, and paint.

Signature Events: Showcasing Excellence and Innovation

This year's events exemplified the breadth and depth of New Jersey Future's impact, offering platforms for learning, collaboration, and celebration. Thank you to the funders, sponsors, and participants for making these events a success.

Smart Growth Awards

Honored six projects that embody the principles of smart growth, including affordable housing options and connections to transit. Ingrid Reed was honored with a posthumous Leadership Award in recognition of a life of service to the betterment of New Jersey. The Ingrid Reed For Our Future Fund was unveiled with a \$10,000 matching gift.



NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference

NJF and APA-NJ welcomed over 900 attendees from across the state to discuss solutions for equitable redevelopment and climate resilience. Highlights included keynote addresses from national thought leaders and a live-streamed roundtable with the 2025 Gubernatorial candidates.

Jersey Water Works Conference

Celebrated its 10th anniversary and convened water professionals and advocates to accelerate progress on water infrastructure challenges, culminating in new commitments to equitable funding and innovative technologies. New Jersey Future serves as the backbone organization that supports the annual event.



I value most the networking and connections made in the NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference space from cross-disciplinary areas and sectors, and it's nice to see dynamic folks and be able to connect and learn from them.

— Tenisha N. Malcolm-Wint, leadership center director,
Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey

New Jersey Future by the Numbers: Impact Highlights

238K

Achieved over 238,000 social media impressions in 2024, a 40% increase from the previous year, while growing our overall audience by almost 5%. NJF created educational short form videos which gained over 54,000 views and contributed to our overall platform growth.

75

Staff reviewed and analyzed over 75 different proposed state bills and regulations, and then educated policy makers and constituents, developed recommendations, and advocated for modifications or acceptance.

700

The Mainstreaming Green Infrastructure (MGI) Program hosted webinars with over 700 registrants.

3K

Reached over 3,000 participants by presenting at various conferences and webinars.

New Jersey Future Welcomes Release of Preliminary State Plan



The State Planning Commission released the preliminary State Plan that featured timely research briefs and population and employment projections prepared by New Jersey Future.

“*This plan is a blueprint for a fairer New Jersey where people can thrive while protecting our natural resources and supporting economic growth. We're proud to support its vision and will continue working with leaders and communities to bring it to life.*

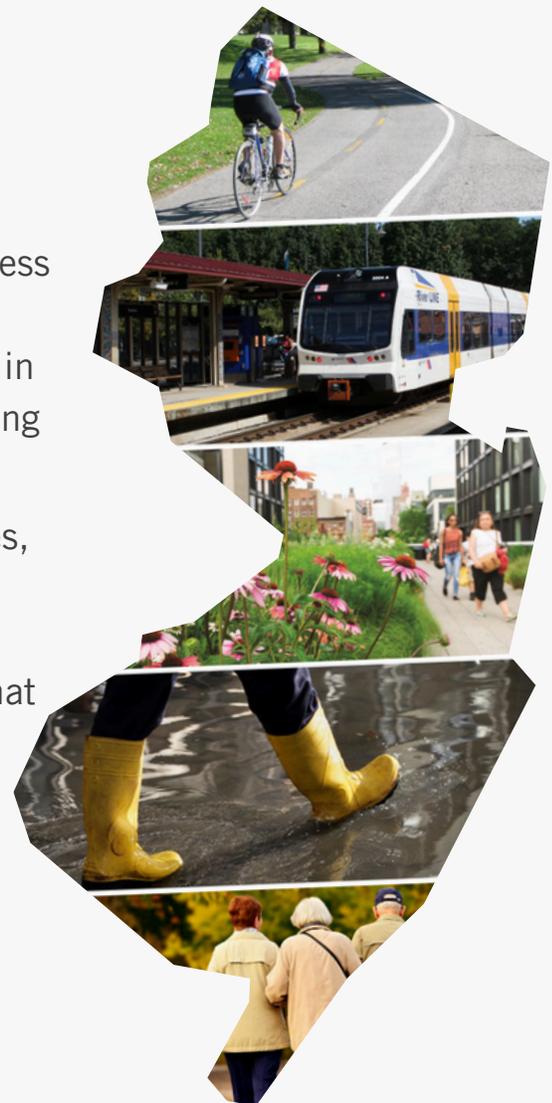
— Peter Kasabach, executive director of New Jersey Future

Looking Ahead: A Bold Vision for 2025



As we reflect on 2024, we are inspired by the progress made and energized by the possibilities ahead. In 2025, we look forward to working with our partners in Trenton on projects like Capital Park and Reimagining Route 29. New Jersey Future will continue to:

- Advocate for stronger climate adaptation policies,
- Expand partnerships to accelerate housing and infrastructure equity,
- Elevate community voices in shaping policies that impact their future,
- Host events and conferences that focus on progress, partnerships, and possibilities.



2025 New Jersey Future Staff

PETER KASABACH
Executive Director

SARA BARREIROS
Development and
Administrative Coordinator

CASSIE BOLINGER
Program and Capacity Building
Coordinator, Lead-Free NJ

GARY BRUNE
Senior Policy Advisor

DEANDRAH CAMERON
Policy Manager

LEE CLARK
Program Manager, Funding Navigator

RON DUKES
Director of Finance and Administration

BENJAMIN DZIOBEK
Community Outreach Specialist

TIM EVANS
Director of Research

PAULA FIGUEROA-VEGA
Director, Jersey Water Works Collaborative
and Organizational Development

HELEN KIOUKIS
Policy Manager, Housing and Land Use

LINDSEY MASSIH, PP, AICP
Program Manager, Climate Adaptation
Policy

VALERIE MERRITT
Communications and Press Manager

SUSAN O'CONNOR
Director of Development and Outreach

SNEHA PATEL
Communications Coordinator

MOLLY RILEY
Program Manager, Climate Adaptation

SABRINA RODRIGUEZ-VICENTY
Advocacy and Government Affairs Manager

ANDREA SAPAL
Program Manager, Sewage-Free Streets
and Rivers

DIANE SCHRAUTH
Policy Director, Water

JESSIKA SHERMAN
Policy and Program Coordinator

HEATHER SORGE
Program and Community Organizing
Manager, Lead-Free NJ

CHRIS SOTIRO
Policy and Program Coordinator

CHRIS STURM
Policy Director, Land Use

ALESHA VEGA-LEVY
Program Coordinator

JYOTI VENKETRAMAN
Director of Collaborations
and Organizational Equity

ZEKE WESTON
Policy Coordinator

ALYSSA ZABINSKI-ABRAMS
Digital Communications and
Marketing Manager

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Kean University (emerita)

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Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey

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Maraziti Falcon LLP

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Kyle + McManus Associates

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We invite you to join us in building a New Jersey that works for everyone. Together, we will keep pushing for policies, projects, and programs that spark conversations and create lasting, positive change for the future.

Thank you for being a part of our journey. We are grateful to the foundations, corporations and individuals that support our work. Here's to a future of equitable growth and shared success!



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