

Draft Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan - Summary

This document is intended to serve as a summary of the Draft Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan, approved by the State Planning Commission on December 4, 2024. Please note that the Draft Plan includes additional information and details related to the Goals, Strategies, and Priorities. Please refer to the original Draft Plan document for additional information¹.

Economic Development

Goal: Promote economic growth that benefits all residents of New Jersey

Strategy: Actively promote economic development policies that benefit all residents, including those who have historically been ignored or under-represented.

Government Coordination

- Coordinate economic development activities both horizontally within each level of government and vertically among different levels of government.
- Restructure and simplify government regulatory activities
- Promote interstate cooperation that maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure and fosters regional economic growth while discouraging intra-regional bidding wars.

Business Retention & Expansion

- Continue to promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses, the relocation of businesses from other states or abroad, and the creation of new businesses in Centers
- Identify and target for appropriate public policy support those economic sectors with the greatest growth potential and public benefit that can capitalize on the State's strengths
- Promote the modernization of the existing economic base
- Provide support to the State's Main Street New Jersey districts, Urban Enterprise Zones, Special Improvement Districts, and Designated Opportunity Zones
- Develop trade policies and programs
- Provide adequate capital facilities

Workforce Development

- Coordinate public and private economic development activities with secondary schools and institutions of higher learning
- Enhance the quality of the workforce and improve labor-market functioning

Regional Planning

- Support location of large industrial facilities consistent with the New Jersey Environmental Justice Law (N.J.S.A. 13:1D-157 et seq.) and only where the appropriate transportation infrastructure exists, or will exist, and where the negative impacts of these uses will not adversely affect residential or mixed-use communities.
- Preserve and enhance the capability of New Jersey's public-use airports
- Promote planning, investment, and maintenance of maritime facilities and services

¹ The Preliminary Draft of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan is available through the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy, State Planning Commission website: <https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/state-plan/development/>

- Coordinate and direct economic development activities to promote urban revitalization
- Provide financial and technical assistance for the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of obsolete or underutilized public and private facilities
- Enhance both domestic and international travel and tourism throughout the state by investing in facilities, services, and marketing
- Encourage county and local governments to include a regional jobs-to-housing ratio analysis. Encourage municipal master plans to provide proximity between housing and access to employment to achieve a balance between housing and job opportunities and to ease commuter travel.

Sustainable and Inclusive Development

- Promote workplace health and safety
- Encourage economic development and employment opportunities that enhance the viability of agriculture, retain, and expand key services and industries that underpin our agricultural sector, such as regional food hubs, food processing facilities, agricultural equipment suppliers, and urban agriculture, as an industry
- Promote market and pricing policies that incorporate true social, economic, and environmental costs
- Promote the efficient use and conservation of resources and other activities that protect and enhance the livelihood of future generations. Avoid the depletion of resources and any other activities that negatively affect the quality of life.
- Encourage the Clustering of compatible industries
- Promote the creation and expansion of businesses that use raw materials from renewable sources (including recycled materials)

Housing

Goal: Provide an adequate supply of housing for residents of all ages and incomes in communities of their choosing that meet their needs and offer ready access to the full range of supportive goods and services

Strategy: Promote diverse, affordable, and high-quality housing options accessible to all New Jersey residents, regardless of income or background.

Housing as a Catalyst of Economic Development

- Allow for increased residential development densities as a consideration for providing required affordable housing set-asides
- Consider a density increase/set-aside percentage nexus that maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure utilization and site conditions, when establishing inclusionary zoning standards
- Use public-private partnerships, including employer-sponsored housing.
- Capitalize on municipal fair share obligations as catalysts for local growth goals
- Balance housing with non-residential uses

Housing Stock Diversity

- Encourage intergovernmental planning for housing for persons with special needs
- Integrate age-friendly housing into communities
- Increase multi-bedroom rentals for families.

Reducing Barriers to Development

- Minimize restrictive zoning

- Minimize proximity to negative land uses
- Tighten enforcement of fair lending laws
- Promote multi-modal planning
- Avoid displacement from redevelopment

Health & Environmental

- Require residential construction to meet best in class green building standards.
- Rehabilitate aging housing stock to address health and safety concerns
- Improve in-unit amenities
- Combine resources at all government levels to minimize environmental harm

Housing & Transportation

- Integrate green infrastructure into new housing
- Boost transit ridership through Transit-Oriented Development
- Minimize parking mandates near transit

Infrastructure

Goal: Economic Opportunity through Nation Leading Infrastructure

Strategy: Maintain and expand New Jersey's infrastructure with a focus on sustainability, safety, and affordability

Transportation

- Maintain and expand public transportation to areas of planned higher-density development
- Prioritize the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists and enhance the design and natural characteristics of adjacent areas
- Promote the conversion of abandoned or discontinued rights-of-way into active transportation routes or greenways
- Promote market-based incentives to encourage transit and alleviate congestion
- Continue to support the coordination and integration of transportation planning efforts among the relevant public, quasi-public, and private transportation interests
- Evaluate the public health impacts – both positive and negative – of transportation highway project, particularly in Overburdened Communities
- Install green infrastructure and attain and maintain the NAAQS
- Minimize total vehicle miles traveled through compact land development patterns, public transit, walking, and biking/micro-mobility use. Incorporate aesthetic values and public art in all Capital Planning projects
- [Use] traffic calming techniques to reduce fatalities and improve air quality for communities near major roads
- Prioritize the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists and enhance the design and natural characteristics of adjacent areas. Promote the conversion of abandoned or discontinued rights-of-way into active transportation routes or greenways.
- Preserve and enhance New Jersey's public-use aeronautical facilities to maintain statewide access to the global air transportation network and act as a stimulus for the regional economy
- Complete intra- and inter-modal transportation linkages and facilities

- Emphasize the movement of people and goods rather than the movement of vehicles and enhance access to employment, goods, services, and information
- Maintain or expand public transportation to areas of planned higher-density development
- Adhere to access management policies and programs that protect system capacity
- Separate regional through traffic from local traffic by way of limited access roads
- Employ transportation planning to shape growth and leverage economic development opportunities
- Link places of residence with those areas of growing employment opportunities
- Consider seasonal demands

Clean Energy

- Use the State Energy Master Plan
- Promote and encourage the development of and expanded use of environmentally sensitive, renewable energy resources and energy conversion processes
- Promote and encourage development and redevelopment in higher intensity mixed-use, Urban Planning Areas, Suburban Planning Areas, growth areas, endorsed plans, Centers and re-centered urbanized areas that accommodate the use of alternative modes of transportation and shared parking and other site improvements and infrastructure.
- Encourage and promote energy-efficient pedestrian, public, and group transportation options through compact forms of development
- All new buildings in the State should be energy efficient and existing buildings should be retrofitted and weatherized to reduce energy demand.
- Maintain, enhance and strengthen the grid
- The highest priority should be given to infrastructure projects and programs statewide that mitigate life-threatening situations and emergent threats to the public's health and safety

Revitalization and Recentering

Goal: Revitalize and recenter the State's Underutilized Developed Areas

Strategy: Enhance the latent human capital and underperforming economic assets located in underutilized activity centers throughout the state, whether urban, suburban, or rural.

Revitalizing Older Centers

- Identify new centers
- Reevaluate mandatory parking requirements
- Reduce Parking Lot Footprint
- Carefully reevaluate local land use policies
- Carefully reevaluate local land development procedures to streamline the review and approval process at all levels of government; conforming development applications to be fast-tracked.

Recentering Underutilized Developed Areas

- The redevelopment process [through] redevelopment plan[s] [should] introduce Center-like features [and] establish connections between parcels
- Landscaped buffers common in suburban zoning districts constitute impediments to pedestrian circulation and should be modified to incorporate walking paths as part of every recentering effort
- Introduce housing wherever appropriate

Climate Change

Goal: Effectively address the adverse impacts of global climate change

Strategy: Promote climate action to protect public health, economic stability, and community resilience in New Jersey.

Decarbonization

- Coordinate efforts across state, county, and municipal governments, in partnership with the private sector, to decarbonize New Jersey's economy, focusing on transportation, building sectors, energy production and distribution, and renewable energy resources.
- Encourage zero-emission vehicle fleets, energy-efficient heating and cooling, and low-carbon building practices
- Integrate land and transportation planning to support walking, biking, and public transit, and encourage dense, mixed-use communities
- Advance carbon sequestration

Hazard Mitigation (Flooding, Extreme Heat, Wildfires, and Other Adverse Impacts of Climate Change)

- Implement hazard mitigation strategies [and] coordinate their Hazard Mitigation Plan and their Master Plan
- Mitigate urban heat islands through green infrastructure
- Reduce wildfire risks through forest management practices like selective burning and fuel load reduction
- Promote regional, watershed-level stormwater planning
- Support intergovernmental and community partnerships for comprehensive stormwater modeling

Coastal Areas and Riverine Corridors

- Continue coordination efforts to establish a more comprehensive, detailed, intergovernmental coastal and riverine management program
- Protect and restore natural habitats
- Promote well-managed coastal and riverine communities
- Promote economic growth through tourism, eco-tourism, recreational opportunities, and equitable public access
- Coordinate growth management programs and policies with emergency response planning and mitigation
- Promote smart growth by implementing DEP floodplain regulations
- Protect vital ecological and special hazard areas
- Conserve water resources and protect coastal and riverine water quality

Natural and Water Resources

Goal: Protect, maintain and restore the State's natural and water resources and ecosystems

Strategy: Actively protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources, prioritizing science-based decision-making, targeted acquisitions, and carbon sequestration on public and private lands, especially in Overburdened Communities.

New Jersey and its local governments act as trustees of the state's natural resources, and are tasked with protecting its lands, waters, air, and living resources for the benefit of its residents.

Habitat Preservation & Restoration

- Identify and protect the habitats of resident and migratory threatened and endangered species.
- Municipalities, with the technical support and assistance of State agencies, should adopt construction standards and performance standards for new development that minimize soil disturbance
- Expand and maintain the existing urban tree canopy applying sound urban forestry principles.
- Cooperate in mapping important forest resources. Forest resources that serve an overriding public purpose should be acquired for public use and preservation. Reforestation management should promote carbon sequestration to advance climate change mitigation goals.
- Continue to design forest management practices to protect watersheds, wetlands, stream corridors and water bodies from non-point source pollution that threatens water quality and aquatic habitat. Encourage and support planting and maintenance of trees.
- Streams that have been buried in culverts should be identified and restored ("daylighting"). Removing dams that are a legacy from an industrial past, no longer serving their intended purpose, enhances aquatic ecosystems and provides recreational opportunities for kayakers and canoeists.

Agriculture and Food Production

- Allocate and leverage funds for farmland preservation to:
 - maintain the long-term viability of the agricultural industry
 - utilize preserved land to mitigate climate change impacts through carbon sequestration and improved land management practices
 - fostering local food production to address food insecurity and promote healthy communities.
- Creative land planning and design can help to accommodate future growth and development in ways that help maintain agriculture as a viable industry and avoid conflict with agricultural uses.
- Promulgate local ordinances and state building codes and fee criteria.

Air Quality

- Conversion of fossil fuel vehicle fleets to zero-emission vehicles
- Land use policies should locate multiple uses close to each other and encourage walking, biking/micro-mobility use, and mass transit to reduce total vehicle miles traveled.
- The State should undertake cooperative research, regulatory initiatives, land use planning, and transportation planning initiatives to meet, maintain, or exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as per the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act
- The State should also delineate current "hotspots" and determine feasible actions to address them.

Water Quality

- Coordinate the planning efforts of agencies that manage and protect land, water, and other environmental resources. Integrate State, regional, and local land use and water management planning to avoid surface and groundwater degradation due to the cumulative effects of point and non-point source pollution.
- Institute a watershed-based resource planning and permitting program
- Integrate county and municipal land use planning with information on the Carrying Capacity of natural systems and landscape units. Enhance water supply management practices. In areas experiencing

stresses in water supply, improve current systems and manage water use and development intensity to minimize the need for additional water supply facilities. Create emergency systems.

- Proper siting, design, and installation of on-site stormwater best management practices and wastewater treatment systems in consideration of local environmental features. Plan for stormwater management and flood control systems on a watershed basis.
- Encourage regional flood and stormwater management planning and implementation, where appropriate, and support the creation of regional control facilities. Require new development to reduce peak runoff rate. Convey stormwater to surface water bodies.
- Prevent further contamination of ground and surface waters by effectively managing the location and design of any land uses or structures that involve the use, storage, treatment, or disposal of toxic and hazardous materials. Reduce and, where feasible, eliminate the volume and toxicity of pollution
- Protect and enhance wetlands and forests.
- Identify and delineate sensitive surface water and groundwater resources, including aquifer recharge areas, headwaters, reservoirs, and Category 1 systems. Establish maintain, and restore appropriately vegetated buffers along streams, rivers, wetlands, reservoirs, and scenic waterways
- Reduce water consumption
- Consider the water needs of agriculture, including urban agriculture
- recognize areas that are prone to flooding now and in the future of less than one square mile as Critical Environmental Sites.

Pollution and Environmental Clean Up

Goal: Protect the environment, prevent and clean up pollution.

Strategy: Restore degraded freshwater bodies, lands, and natural systems in both public and private ownership through targeted and concerted remediation programs

Brownfields and Lead

- Commit public resources and assistance to communities with well-thought-out Brownfield redevelopment strategies
- Plan, locate, and market redevelopment projects to capitalize on opportunities presented by Brownfield sites
- Prepare Brownfield redevelopment strategies that coordinate community planning efforts
- Lead paint remediation or abatement in older housing stock and all public buildings is critical.
- Replace lead service lines

Waste Management and Recycling

- Efficient waste management and recycling are crucial to a sustainable future and require appropriate planning at all levels of government.
- Coordinate the existing statutory and regulatory mechanisms. Promote multi-jurisdictional planning, design, and siting.
- Promote self-sufficiency in waste management and develop educational programs.
- Conserve resources and promote the economic reuse and recycling of materials and support expansion of the State's remanufacturing capacity
- Reduce exposure to toxic emissions
- Promote composting to divert organic waste from the trash stream. Develop community and regional facilities that can collect and convert organic waste for household use.

Historic and Scenic Resources

Protect, enhance, and improve access to areas with exceptional archeological, historic, cultural, scenic, open space and recreational value.

Strategy: Preserve and enhance New Jersey's historic, cultural, and natural resources to support vibrant communities, economic growth, and public enjoyment.

Historic Resources, Cultural Resources, and the Arts

- Identify historic areas, historic sites, historic landscapes, archeological sites, ceremonial stone landscapes, and scenic corridors
- Promote the character of historic sites, landscapes, structures, and scenic areas
- Promote uniformity in guidelines
- Locate and design public and private infrastructure improvements to protect historic resources
- Promote adaptive reuse of historic structures
- Promote historic district management programs
- Investigate, protect, and document archaeological resources
- Support museums, libraries, interpretive centers and archives
- Encourage high-quality design of all public buildings and landscapes and promote the use of art

Open Space and Recreational Resources

- Coordinate regional, county, and municipal land use plans with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Plan and design the preservation of recreation and open space lands to maximize implementation of other Statewide Policies, including habitat restoration, stormwater management, and climate change mitigation, while also implementing recreation and open space policies.
- Promote adequate and appropriately located indoor and outdoor recreational facilities
- Connect large contiguous tracts
- Create new redevelopment programs that provide for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of recreational and public open space.
- Implement the New Jersey Trails Plan
- Encourage and facilitate rails-to-trails conversions
- Where appropriate, promote and encourage the protection and enhancement of privately owned tracts of open space, wetlands, forest lands, or recreation facilities
- Encourage and provide incentive programs to property owners and conservation Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Establish and maintain undeveloped publicly owned lands within the watersheds of potable water supply reservoirs as public open space
- Maintain and improve public access to coastal and waterfront areas of recreational, aesthetic, cultural, or ecological value
- Provide for public recreational use of public lands and facilities.
- Protect the scenic qualities of forested areas that are visible from public roads, trails, and waterways
- Designate areas of known critical habitat of less than one square mile as Critical Environmental Sites during the preparation of municipal plans to support State and local resource protection efforts.

Equity

Goal: Implement equitable planning practices to promote thriving communities for all New Jerseyans.

Strategy: Utilize data-driven approaches to document public health impacts associated with environmental factors, including cognitive challenges in children, urban heat islands, and elevated asthma, diabetes, and obesity rates.

The State of New Jersey is committed to fostering a stronger and fairer state for all residents.

Equity and Environmental Justice

- Provide equitable outcomes for all New Jersey residents through the achievement of the goals of the State Planning Act. All levels of government should take appropriate action to foster public engagement in a manner that ensures the benefits and burdens of implementing of the State are equitably shared by all of our communities.
- Resources for addressing challenges are limited and must be strategically deployed.
- Promote more innovative land use and transportation decisions and coordinating investments.
- The State Plan encourages programs that protect our farming communities, further enhance farming as an industry, and coordinate the needs of communities that lack access to fresh foods.
- The State Plan should not be used in a manner that places an inequitable burden on any one group of residents. The achievement, protection, and maintenance of equity and justice should be a fundamental consideration in public policy decisions as public agencies and the private sector develop plans and policies aimed at being consistent with the State Plan.

2024 Comprehensive Planning

Goal: Foster sound and integrated planning and implementation at all levels statewide

Strategy: Use the State Plan and the Plan Endorsement process as a guide to achieving comprehensive, coordinated, short- and long-term planning actions that are based on actionable metrics, accurate capacity analysis, and active citizen participation.

Comprehensive Planning and Design

- Mix uses and activities as closely and as thoroughly as feasible.
- Develop, adopt, and implement design guidelines that achieve these goals
- Apply design principles to create and preserve spatially defined, visually appealing, and functionally efficient places
- Design circulation systems to maximize connectivity:
 - Create and maintain a network of interconnected segments designed to be shared by a wide variety of modes and users
 - Increase the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and create communities and places that are safe and attractive to walk and ride
 - Establish and maintain a regional network that facilitates multi-modal links
 - Distinguish between local and regional road networks
 - Reassess changing roadway vehicular distress measurements
- Consider the consumption of energy, water, and materials and the potential advantages of natural over mechanical approaches when designing street layouts and selecting building locations, building orientation, building materials, heating and cooling systems, and landscaping materials.

- Make places safer, more accessible, and more desirable through site layout, building placement, land use mix, lighting, and other positive design techniques
- Reduce the visual impact of the automobile
- Design corridors, including rivers, greenways, transit, and roadways, to connect communities
- Redesign existing areas of sprawl
 - Increase and focus densities to use space more effectively and facilitate the economic feasibility of producing low- and moderate-income housing
 - change auto-oriented environments to pedestrian/bicycle/micro-mobility- and transit-supportive environments, and enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety through traffic calming and other techniques
 - increase connectivity where possible and appropriate, even if limited to pedestrian and bicycle connections
 - encourage a greater diversity of uses and activities
 - promote the redevelopment or, where appropriate, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, sites, and infrastructure, encouraging mixed-use
 - create opportunities for site intensification by replacing parking lots with new buildings or structured parking where economically feasible
 - reassess unnecessary buffers, berms, fences, and other physical devices frequently required by local zoning
 - use enclosed skywalks and/or underground passageways where justified to allow pedestrians to overcome particularly difficult physical barriers
 - redesign internal circulation systems to create more pedestrian- and transit-oriented environments by adding sidewalks or walkways
 - calm internal circulation systems by reducing street widths, allowing on-street parking, and selectively using traffic calming devices
 - improve the management of the circulation network through access management, driveway consolidation, and cross-easements
 - create new service roads as alternatives to high-speed arterials and collectors
 - selectively infill with new buildings, redevelop parking lots or detention facilities, and intensify existing structures through upper-level additions. Office districts can broaden their range of uses by introducing restaurants, daycare facilities, personal and professional services, retail, and residential uses previously lacking
 - replace expansive pesticide- and fertilizer-intensive lawns with low-maintenance indigenous species to minimize run-off and reduce non-point source water pollution
 - establish, where appropriate, district-wide management entities that, among other responsibilities, underwrite joint liability insurance over common space
 - reduce or eliminate signs of visual clutter including inappropriate billboards, signs, overhead power lines, and over-scaled and poorly directed lighting.

Regional Planning and Areas of Critical State Concern

- Coordinate with regional entities, including Pinelands Commission, Highlands Council, NJSEA, Fort Monmouth Redevelopment Authority, and CRDA, and their adopted plans and regulations.
- Additional areas of critical concern include:
 - Delaware and Raritan Canal (D&R Canal)
 - Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
 - Delaware River and Bayshore Areas
 - Great Swamp Watershed

- Skylands Region
- Sourlands

Pinelands

- The State Plan should acknowledge the statutory treatment of the New Jersey Pinelands
- Local jurisdictions should use the statewide policies of the State Plan for issues not addressed in the CMP, including development, affordable housing, urban revitalization, and transportation
- Coordinate planning efforts for consistency between adopted plans, maps, programs, and regulations
- Coordinate planning efforts with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission so that the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, county and local plans, and CAFRA regulations are consistent within the Federal and State legislation
- Procedures should be developed to allow for coordinated review of developments that may have regional impacts affecting the Pinelands area
- Projects in appropriate Pinelands management areas receive State public infrastructure investment financing priority

Hackensack Meadowlands District (NJSEA)

- Promote close cooperation between the NJSEA, its constituent counties and municipalities, and the State.
- Properties within the Hackensack Meadowlands District that are zoned for development, excluding wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, are considered to be located in a State Smart Growth Area, akin to the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1)
- The Commission shall rely on the plans and regulations of the NJSEA to implement the objectives of the State Plan
- Coordinate planning efforts so that the Hackensack Meadowlands District Master Plan and the State Plan are consistent concerning growth management objectives
- Coordinate planning efforts with the NJSEA's constituent counties and municipalities to maintain consistency of the Hackensack Meadowlands District Master Plan and county and local plans with State Plan objectives
- Establish infrastructure investment priorities

New Jersey Highlands

- Continued coordination on any proposed updates or amendments to the RMP.
- Continued coordination on municipal and county RMP conformance
- Use of the RMP Land Use Capability Zone Map as the State Plan map
- Provide support for Highlands communities to effectively address the need for low- and moderate-income housing
- Incorporation of environmental justice and climate change into the RMP
- Conservation of water resources both in the Highlands Region and in areas outside of the Highlands Region for which the Highlands is a source of drinking water
- Coordination of Affordable Housing policies and obligations with the RMP
- Continued recognition of designated Highlands Centers as State Plan Centers.
- Continued recognition of conforming municipalities as having received Plan Endorsement
- Coordination of planning efforts so that the Highlands RMP and county and local plans are consistent with State Plan objectives.

- Establish infrastructure investment priorities within the Highland Council's jurisdiction consistent with the Fair Housing Act and the State Plan priority system intent

Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA)

- Rely on the plans and regulations of FMERA to implement the objectives of the State Plan.
- Coordinate planning efforts so that the Fort Monmouth Reuse and Redevelopment Plan and the State Plan are consistent concerning growth management objectives.
- Coordinate planning efforts with FMERA's constituent municipalities and maintain consistency of the Fort Monmouth Reuse and Redevelopment Plan and local plans with State Plan objectives.
- Establish infrastructure investment priorities within the FMERA's jurisdiction consistent with the intent of the State Plan priority system.

Casino Reinvestment Development Authority

- Rely on the plans and regulations of CRDA to implement the objectives of the State Plan.
- Coordinate planning efforts so that the Tourism District Master Plan. Leverage available assets and revenues with private and public investment capital
- Coordinate planning efforts so that the State Plan, Tourism District Plan and local plans are consistent. Promote good land use planning and clean and safe initiatives in the Atlantic City Tourism District.
- Establish infrastructure investment priorities. Present world class entertainment events and conventions at target areas in Atlantic City.

State Plan Policy Map & Planning Areas

Through the Cross Acceptance process, the State Plan Policy Map and Planning Areas will be evaluated to determine consistency with local and county policies. To assist with this process, the State developed two online tools:

- [Interactive Locator Map](#)- This tool can be used to overlay Planning Areas with other publicly available datasets including State Planning Center and Node boundaries, sewer service areas, public transportation systems, and environmental features.
- [NJ Smart Growth Explorer BETA](#)- The State, in connection with Rowan University Geospatial Research Lab, developed a Suitability Model for informational purposes to assist with the Cross Acceptance Process. This layer represents a detailed GIS analysis which ranks land area based upon Re/Development and Environmental Suitability.

PA1 Metropolitan Planning Area

Intent

- provide for much of the state's future growth in compact development and redevelopment
- revitalize cities, towns and neighborhoods, and in particular overburdened neighborhoods
- address existing legacy issues such as air pollution, urban heat islands, lead contamination, Brownfields, urban highways, and combined sewer systems
- prevent displacement and gentrification
- promote growth that occurs in Centers, other appropriate areas that are pedestrian friendly, and in compact transit-oriented forms
- rebalance urbanization with natural systems
- promote increased biodiversity and habitat restoration
- stabilize and enhance older inner ring suburbs
- redesign and revitalize auto oriented areas
- protect and enhance the character of existing stable communities

Guiding Criteria

- Density of more than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Existing public water and sewer systems, or physical accessibility to those systems, and access to public transit systems.
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile.
- A population of not less than 25,000 people.

PA2 Suburban Planning Area

Intent

- provide for a portion of the state's future growth in compact development and redevelopment in Centers and other appropriate areas
- promote walkability and multi-modal transportation options
- protect and enhance the character of existing stable communities
- protect and enhance natural resources and promote increased biodiversity, reforestation and habitat restoration
- redesign auto-oriented areas and promote traffic calming and other forms of pedestrian counter measures

- reverse any further sprawl development, including warehouse sprawl
- revitalize and enhance towns and other traditional settlements

Guiding Criteria

- Population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Infrastructure systems reasonably anticipated to be in place by 2050 that have the capacity to support development that meets the Policy Objectives of this Planning Area. These systems include public water supply, sewage collection and treatment facilities, stormwater management, various modes of transportation, public schools, and parks.
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile.

PA3 Fringe Planning Area

Intent

- accommodate growth in Centers
- protect and enhance natural resources
- protects the Environs primarily as open space or forested areas
- provide a transition between more developed Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas and less developed Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas
- confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers, except where public health is at stake;
- revitalize towns and older traditional communities;
- protect and diversifies the character of existing stable communities

Guiding Criteria

- Population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile.
- Generally lacking in major infrastructure investments. The circulation system is mainly provided by state and county roadways with a major emphasis on moving traffic through the area. Some Centers are served by public water and sewer.
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile

PA4 Rural Planning Area & PA 4B Rural Environmentally Sensitive Area

Intent

- maintain the Environs as large contiguous areas of farmland, open space, and forested areas;
- enhance habitats and sensitive lands
- accommodate growth in Centers
- reverse auto-oriented patterns of development
- promote a viable agricultural or forestry industry
- revitalize cities, towns, and other traditional settlements
- protect, enhance, and diversify the existing character and agricultural economy of stable communities; and
- confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers, except where public health is at stake.

Guiding Criteria

- Population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile.

- Area greater than one (1) square mile.
- Land currently in agricultural or natural resource production or having a strong potential for production:
 - Soils of local importance as determined by the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB); or
 - Prime and unique soils as determined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service; or
 - Soils of statewide importance as determined by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) State Soil Conservation Committee.
- Undeveloped wooded areas, vacant lands, large contiguous tracts of agricultural lands, and other areas outside Centers predominantly served by rural two-lane roads and individual wells and septic systems.
- Programmed sewer and public water services are confined to Centers.
- Land satisfying the guiding criteria for Rural Planning Area (PA4) that also meets the guiding criteria for the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5) is designated as Rural/Environmentally Sensitive (PA4B).

PA5 Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area

Intent

- protect environmental resources
- protect both large and small contiguous areas of land
- promote restoring habitats and bio-diversity
- accommodate growth only in Centers
- confining programmed sewers and public water services to Centers
- revitalize cities, towns, and older traditional settlements
- protect, enhance, and diversify the existing character of stable communities

Guiding Criteria

- Population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile
- Land area greater than one (1) square mile
- One (1) or more of the following features outside Centers
- trout production waters and trout maintenance waters and their watersheds
- pristine non-tidal Category I waters and their watersheds upstream of the lowest Category I stream segment
- watersheds of existing or planned potable water supply sources
- prime aquifer recharge areas of potable water supply sources and carbonate formations associated with recharge areas or aquifers
- habitats of populations of endangered or threatened plant or animal species
- coastal wetlands
- contiguous freshwater wetlands systems
- significant natural features or landscapes such as beaches, coastal spits, barrier islands, Steep Slope areas, ridge lines, gorges and ravines, and important geological features (including those associated with karst topography) or unique ecosystems
- prime forested areas, including mature stands of native species
- programmed sewer and public water services are confined to Centers

PA5B Environmentally Sensitive Barrier Island Planning Area

Intent

- protect and enhance, to the extent possible and feasible, the existing character of barrier island communities
- protect and enhance barrier island ecosystems and restore damaged ones
- minimize the risks to life and property from natural hazards
- carefully evaluate those conditions under which retreat of human habitation from barrier island locations, with subsequent de-urbanization, would be prudent and advised
- provide access to coastal resources, under safe conditions, for public use and enjoyment
- maintain and improve coastal resource quality

Guiding Criteria

- Same as Planning Area 5: Environmentally Sensitive

Critical Environmental Sites (CES) & Historical and Cultural Sites (HCS)

Intent

- recognizing the need for strategic investment decisions designed to protect and enhance rather than adversely impact these resources
- applying statewide policies, including, but not limited to, those specifically relating to water resources, open lands and natural systems, coastal areas, and historic, cultural and scenic resources.

Guiding Criteria

The designation of CES and HCS is to provide policy direction for resource protection and enhancement.

Contains one (1) or more of the following features

- Features for Critical Environmental Site (CES) designation:
 - Prime (or locally important) aquifer recharge areas
 - Well-head protection areas
 - Public water supply reservoirs
 - Coastal dunes, beaches, and shorelines
 - Steep Slope areas
 - Floodplains
 - Habitats of endangered or threatened plant or animal species or unique ecosystems
 - Habitats with a wide diversity of resident species or large resident populations
 - Coastal and freshwater wetlands and ponds
 - Staging areas for migratory species
 - Stream corridors
 - Wildlife corridors
 - Significant natural features such as ridge lines, gorges and ravines, or unique geological features (including limestone outcrops)
 - Prime forested areas, including mature stands of native species
- Features for Historical and Cultural Sites (HCS) designation:
 - greenways and trails
 - dedicated open space
 - parks

- historic sites and districts
- archeological sites
- scenic vistas and corridors
- natural landscapes of exceptional aesthetic or cultural value
- Less than one (1) square mile in area.
- Identified in local or county master plans, state functional plans, environmental resource inventories, or other documents.
- Protected by federal or state regulations, local ordinance, public ownership or deed restriction, if applicable.
- Not currently under regulatory review, at the time of submission of the petition for designation

Parks, Open Space, & Natural Areas

Intent

- protect critical natural resources
- provide for public recreational and educational opportunities
- promote continued maintenance of associated facilities
- incentivize the connection of these areas to a system of open lands

Military Installations

The only land in New Jersey that is located outside the Pinelands and designated as a Military Installation is the Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County. These lands are not subject to the State Plan because they are under Federal jurisdiction.

Centers & Nodes

The following information regarding Centers & Nodes are provided for informational purposes only. Centers and Nodes can only be created during the Plan Endorsement Process². Plan Endorsement is a process that is separate from Cross Acceptance. Municipalities seeking Center Designation should notify the County of their intent. More information on the Plan Endorsement Process can be found here:

<https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/plan-endorsement/overview/>

Centers

The State Plan establishes a hierarchy of five (5) types of Centers, each with specific designation criteria and growth management strategies. Designating a Center is part of the Plan Endorsement Process.

Urban

Offer the most diverse of industry, commerce, institutions, services, open space, residential options, and cultural facilities in a compact transit-supportive setting. Atlantic City, Camden, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, New Brunswick, Paterson & Trenton are the permanently designated Urban Centers in New Jersey.

Regional

A compact mix of residential, commercial, and public uses that serve a large surrounding area and are developed at an intensity that makes public transportation feasible.

² Plan Endorsement is defined as the process undertaken by regional agencies, counties and municipalities to have Master Plans, Municipal Strategic Revitalization Plans, Urban Complex Strategic Revitalization Plans and Regional Strategic Plans endorsed by the State Planning Commission.

Town

Traditional centers of commerce and/or government throughout New Jersey that include diverse residential neighborhoods with Mixed-Use Development and offer locally oriented goods and services.

Village

Compact places that have limited residential, public facilities, consumer services, community activities, and often a central public space.

Hamlet

Small-scale, compact places that are organized around residential and a community focal point, such as a house of worship, eatery, small parks, or a civic building.

Nodes

Nodes are single-use and fairly dense areas that can include Commercial, Manufacturing, Heavy Industry-Transportation-Utility, Working Waterfront, and Medical Facilities. Nodes may be appropriate in PA1, PA2, PA3, and PA 4, but are likely inappropriate in other Planning Areas. Designating a Node is part of the Plan Endorsement Process

Environs

Environs are the areas outside Center Boundaries and provide policy guidance for decisions regarding potential conservation or development. These areas are not “designated” in the State Plan.

CRITERIA FOR CENTER DESIGNATION/PLANNING FOR THE YEAR 2050

Category	Urban	Regional Center (PA 1, 2)	Regional Center (PA 3, 4, 5)	Town	Village	Hamlet
Area (sq. mi)	-	1 to 0	1 to 10	<2	<1	10 to 50 acres without wastewater; <100 acres with wastewater
Population	>40,000	>10,000	>5,000	1,000 to 10,000	<4,500	25 to 250
Gross Population Density (ppl/sq mi)	>7,500	>5,000	>5,000	>5,000	>5,000	3,000
Housing	-	4,000 to 15,000	2,000 to 15,000	500 to 4,000	100 to 2,000	10 to 100
Gross Housing Density (units/acre)	>4	>3	>3	>3	>3	>2
Employment	>40,000	>10,000	>5,000	>500 to 10,000	50 to 100	
Jobs to Housing Ratio	>1:1	2:1 to 5:1	2:1 to 5:1	1:1 to 5:1	1:1 to 4:1	0.5:1 to 2:1