Final Draft
New Jersey
State Development and Redevelopment Plan
Volume I
Placeholder for Commission Chair’s Letter
New Jersey State Planning Commission

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Charles Richman,  
*Member*

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*State Treasurer, Department of Treasury*

Louise Wilson  
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Ben Spinelli  
*Secretary and Principal Executive Officer*

Daniel J. Reynolds, Esq.  
*Deputy Attorney General, Department of Law and Public Safety*
Year after year our scenic treasures are being plundered by what we call an **advancing civilization**. If we are not careful we shall leave our children a legacy of billion-dollar roads **leading nowhere** except to other congested places like those they left behind.

- General Omar N. Bradley
Introduction

During the Colonial Era, Benjamin Franklin referred to New Jersey as “a barrel tapped at both ends”. This was a reference to the influence on the state from New York City to the northeast and Philadelphia to the southwest. The effect of these two major population centers on development in New Jersey has been evident throughout the state’s history and continues to the present. However, our state has its own character, its own identity and its own issues. New Jersey is an extraordinarily diverse state with a broad range of planning issues that must be successfully addressed to insure a sustainable and prosperous future for both current and succeeding generations of the state’s residents.

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation with approximately 1,100 people per square mile. Much of the state is highly urbanized or suburbanized. However, a great deal of the state remains rural with both valuable natural features and a substantial agricultural presence. New Jersey’s diversity is its defining characteristic and the source of the high quality of life that has led to so many people calling the state home. With a vibrant economy and a growing population, balancing the protection of vital environmental resources that support that population with the needs of the people living in our state will present a daunting challenge.

New Jersey’s future will be subject to a number of varied, often competing interests. The State Development and Redevelopment Plan sets forth a vision for the state that seeks to provide appropriate guidance to balance and align those interests. The development trends of the recent past will ultimately prove to be unsustainable from an economic, an environmental and a social standpoint. The goals and policies contained in this plan are designed to alter those trends. The success or failure of this plan will be measured by the degree to which those goals and policies can be implemented.

The State Planning Commission Findings

The State Planning Commission finds and declares that:

Substantial benefits have already been achieved from the development of the State Plan, its associated processes and the implementation of aspects of the State Plan including, but not necessarily limited to the following:

- The establishment of a public forum for the comprehensive review of economic growth, natural and cultural resource conservation and environmental protection policies on a recurrent basis
- The function as a forum to identify and assess the State’s future infrastructure needs
- The provision of technical planning and significant financial planning assistance by the State to county and municipal governments
- The development of a vision that provides increased coherence to individual State department and agency initiatives and underscores the value of local government projects that are consistent with the State Plan
- The elevated awareness of state and regional planning issues among public officials and the public-at-large along with the enhanced role for county planning that serves to advance regional planning in New Jersey
- The creation of an improved means to relate to the State’s legislatively established regional planning entities
- The improvement of communications among planning professionals in both the public and private sectors and throughout the State of New Jersey as a result of the focus provided by the State Plan
The State Planning Commission Findings

- The active engagement with other states involved in State Planning in ways that benefit the State of New Jersey and its multiple levels of government

Substantial benefits will continue to accrue to the State of New Jersey and local governments as the State Plan is employed as a guide to achieve the following outcomes:

- The facilitation of shifts in population, employment, economic development and redevelopment into more compact, mixed-use, center-based and less sprawling settlement patterns that optimize land-use and infrastructure efficiencies while ensuring that natural and cultural resources are protected and enhancing the potential for multi-modal transportation alternatives to the automobile

- The provision of more affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate income and minority populations throughout the state

- The distribution of economic benefits from development and redevelopment in more equitable ways;

- The improvement in governance that necessarily results when multiple government levels and departments and agencies on each of those government levels coordinate and align plans, policies, programs and regulations to achieve sustainability as a result of their participation in the State Plan development and implementation processes without the imposition of mandatory land-use controls

Nevertheless, the State Plan, its processes and implementation will be improved and more effective in achieving its goals in the future by having the State Plan address the following concerns:

- Strengthen anti-sprawl strategies and policies by continuing to focus on the State Plan’s most fundamental concerns including where State and local governments should encourage and discourage development and redevelopment as well as the quality of development and redevelopment at those locations

- Employ the State Plan more effectively as a public infrastructure investment guide by multiple government levels

- Expand the formerly narrow definition of “equity” contained in the State Plan to include the de-concentration of poverty and the notion of environmental justice without, in any way, diminishing the preservation of property values as an equity issue as was formerly included

- Improve the integration of the State Plan Statewide Policies and the State Plan Policy Map, while simultaneously incorporating the concept of “sustainability” into the State Plan

- Enhance the coordination, integration and alignment of the State Plan with the numerous plans, policies, programs and regulations which operate pursuant to their own respective statutory authorities

- Establish a reasonable and defensible set of population, employment and housing projections that may be predictably and consistently applied by State departments and agencies and local government jurisdictions

- Reduce the frequency of Cross Acceptance

- Focus increased attention on State Plan implementation by aligning State department and agency program incentives and disincentives to local government jurisdictions and by reviewing and appropriately adjusting the State Plan-Plan Endorsement Process to encourage increased local government participation

- Acknowledge the importance and necessity of adequately staffing the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) to develop, implement and administer the State Plan
Why is the State Plan Important?

New Jersey has been historically blessed with abundant resources and an attractive quality of life. Its strong economy has allowed its residents to live well and to prosper. Yet the development and implementation of The State Plan is important to meet the multiple challenges that New Jersey is likely to face over the next twenty years. In addition to meeting these challenges effectively and efficiently, a major purpose of the State Plan, as directed by the State Planning Act, is to seek an appropriate balance, a balance that carefully weighs economic growth and development and the conservation and protection of the State’s natural and cultural resources. The State Plan also tries to ensure that the costs and benefits of future growth are fairly distributed so that all New Jersey residents share equitably in the State’s bounty.

Why Plan?

Why do large organizations like the State of New Jersey need to plan? The simple answer is that a failure to plan is tantamount to planning to fail! Without a plan, decision-makers across often far-flung organizations such as state government will make decisions to allocate increasingly scarce resources for whatever purposes and based on whatever priorities they think are appropriate at any given moment in time. For a large organization this means moving in different and, at times, conflicting directions in the short-term and without adequate ability to plan for the longer-term.

A plan is especially important when the future involves a set of interdependent decisions, or a “system” of decision-making. Its complexity derives from the inter-relatedness of these decisions rather than from the individual decisions themselves. Large and complex organizations have a need to make an effort to coordinate their activities.

At minimum, the State Plan serves as a communications tool. By improving internal communications, State government will function more efficiently and effectively. The State Plan also serves to communicate its vision, goals, policies and the nature of its programs to regional, county and municipal government jurisdictions as well.

Through the articulation of its vision, State government reveals another important planning feature. The State Plan is about the future. The State Plan should begin to get the organization’s numerous
Why is the State Plan Important?

**The Fundamental Issues**

operating parts thinking about New Jersey’s future in more disciplined ways than otherwise occur. Planning done well will help the different parts of the organization, in this case State departments and agencies, regional agencies, counties and municipalities, to prepare for the inevitable, to pre-empt the undesirable and to control the controllable.

Furthermore, planning around development, redevelopment and cultural and natural resource conservation issues is especially important. The issues that will most likely arise with respect to these concerns will have no simple cause. They will lack a quick fix. Despite the efforts of special interests to label their antagonists, there will most likely be no easily identifiable villains. No “silver bullet” action will exist to provide a quick and easy solution. Changes in direction will only come gradually in seeming slow motion if at all, and then in response to plans and their implementation over time. Competition over scarce fiscal resources will present themselves at every turn.

**The Fundamental Issues**

The State Plan concentrates on three fundamental issues that need to remain in sharp focus. These issues need to be highlighted at the outset and returned to so that they do not become lost in the inevitable detail and complexity of the State Plan or in the State Plan process.

The three fundamental issues are the following:

1. Where are the most appropriate locations where future development and redevelopment should be encouraged, and conversely where are the locations where future growth and development should be discouraged?

2. What should be the nature of the future development and redevelopment that should be encouraged in those appropriate locations and how might the locations where development and redevelopment should be discouraged be protected?

3. How should the numerous participants engaged in the planning process, organize themselves to effectively devise and utilize a State Plan to guide development decisions and implementation of decisions reached?

Addressing these three fundamental issues and providing the guidance necessary to arrive at their answers is central to the purpose of the State Plan. While other important issues inevitably arise in the course of attempting to address these issues, these three issues are the fundamental issues facing the State Plan. They should remain prominent.

**The State Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 et. seq.)**

In 1985, the New Jersey State Legislature found that New Jersey must plan for its future to preserve and maintain its abundant natural, cultural, economic and social assets and its quality of life. In response, it adopted the State Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 et. seq.). Among the goals of the act is the following:

… conserve its natural resources, revitalize its urban centers, protect the quality of its environment, and provide needed housing and adequate public services at a reasonable cost while promoting beneficial economic growth, development and renewal.
The State Planning Act
What the State Planning Act Directs

The State Planning Act is at once both simple and complex, but on its face unassailable. In its essence, the State Planning Act announced that if the State of New Jersey wants to preserve and maintain its quality of life comprised of both its economic strengths and its abundant natural and cultural resources, it must plan for its future.

The adoption and execution of the State Planning Act in 1986 marked the start of a new era for New Jersey State Planning, but one that built upon a long tradition that stemmed back for more than a half-century, nearly as long as planning had occurred on the part of New Jersey’s local government jurisdictions.

The State Planning Act was expected to bring attention to state and regional planning. It represents an effort to redefine, but still remain respectful to the concept of “Home Rule” in the modern context. This understanding of “Home Rule” has a persuasive allure, rooted in American traditions of self-determination and local democracy. Yet the cumulative impacts as population and economic activities continue to spread across the countryside can be divisive and costly, at times pitting one municipality against another.

Instead, the State Planning Act redefines Home Rule in the expectation that it will lead to policies that are mutually beneficial from multiple government level perspectives. This redefinition is important because municipalities are faced with many infringements that impose on their decision-making abilities and prerogatives. For example,

- Municipalities may not have adequate planning resources or planning capacity to face today’s complex planning issues;
- Municipalities may face an increased loss of control that results from the actions of neighboring municipalities;
- Municipalities may be imposed upon by State and county infrastructure investments, spending programs and regulatory decisions in numerous and sometimes unanticipated ways.
- Municipalities typically exercise land use prerogatives in reaction to developer-driven proposals, at times only taking into account short-term positive fiscal impacts due to reliance on local property tax revenues, rather than accounting for a community’s long-term vision or potential for long-term costs;
- Municipalities may not be the appropriate focus of issues related to traffic, environment or social equity considerations because of questions of scale and overspill effects as these concerns tend to be regional in nature and do not respect municipal boundaries.

What the State Planning Act Directs

The State Planning Act directs that ten important actions be taken including the following:

1. The State Planning Act points to the need for sound and integrated statewide planning and the coordination of statewide planning with local and regional planning organizations in order to conserve its natural resources, revitalize its urban centers, protect the quality of its environment, provide needed housing and adequate public services at a reasonable cost, while promoting beneficial economic growth, development and renewal (N.J.S.A. 53:18A-
The State Planning Act

What the State Planning Act Directs

2. The State Planning Act establishes a 17-member State Planning Commission to be representative of State government departments, county and municipal jurisdictions and members of the public (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-197);

3. The State Planning Act creates the Office of State Planning to assist the State Planning Commission in performing its duties and established the Executive Director of that Office as the Secretary to and Chief Executive of the State Planning Commission (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-201);

4. The State Planning Act identifies as one of the major responsibilities of the State Planning Commission the development of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan to serve as a tool for assessing suitable locations for infrastructure, housing, economic growth and conservation (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 (c));

5. The State Planning Act directs that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan should be a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive plan for the growth, development, renewal and conservation of the state and its regions and which shall identify areas for growth, agriculture, open space, conservation and other appropriate designations leading to the development of the State Plan Policy Map (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-199 (a));

6. The State Planning Act requires that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan represent a balance of development and conservation objectives best suited to meet the needs of the state by taking into account a wide scope of substantive concerns including land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture and farmland retention, recreation, urban and suburban redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services, and inter-governmental coordination (N.J.S.A.52:18A-200(f));

7. The State Planning Act authorizes and outlined a Cross Acceptance process as a means of developing the State Development and Redevelopment Plan to be conducted as a process of review, revision and re-adoption of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan on a three-year cycle (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-202 and 52:18A-199);

8. The State Planning Act elevates and enhanced the role of county planning by empowering county planning boards to negotiate the plan Cross Acceptance process so that county planning boards are in effect encouraged to subject municipal plans and zoning ordinances to a new level of scrutiny (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-202 (b));

9. The State Planning Act invites the State Planning Commission to influence future development and redevelopment by directing it to review and make recommendations to the Governor and the State Legislature with respect to the “necessity, desirability and priority of state infrastructure investments” (N.J.S.A. 52:18A – 199 (f));

10. The State Planning Act responds to the New Jersey Supreme Court’s Mt. Laurel Decisions announcing that it was in part a response to the judicial decisions requiring municipalities to provide opportunities for low- and moderate-income housing, while simultaneously expecting that a sound and comprehensive planning process would facilitate the provision of equal social and economic opportunity to benefit all of New Jersey’s citizens so as to counteract a situation whereby concentrations of the poor and minorities were residing in older urban areas in ways that jeopardized the future well-being of this state, (N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 (g) (h))
What the State Planning Act Does Not Do

Despite the specific direction provides by the State Planning Act, the State Planning Act does not direct certain actions that point to at least important constraints under which the State Planning Commission currently labors. An understanding of those constraints helps to clarify what needs to be done to make the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and its implementation more effective. These constraints include the following:

1. **The Nature of the Cross Acceptance Process** – The State Planning Act limited the role of the State government in general and the State Planning Commission, more specifically, with respect to the development of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan by requiring a Cross Acceptance process as the prescribed means to develop the State Plan, thereby restricting the role of State government and the State Planning commission and simultaneously enhancing the role of county planning and municipal jurisdictions.

2. **The Nature of State Plan Implementation** – The State Planning Act provides little guidance with respect to State Plan implementation. Instead, it recommends intergovernmental coordination as a goal, but it is not specific about the nature of that coordination or the degree to which State departments and agencies, counties and municipalities are bound by the State Plan. The State Planning Act provides a broad set of goals that presumably serve as a guide to decision-making, but leaves the actual business of decision-making to others.

3. **Statutory Overlap and Potential Conflicts** – The nature of State Plan implementation is further complicated by the fact that despite the wide sweep of the State Planning Act it does not directly address the way that it should reconcile already existing statutes and additional ones that might be enacted subsequent to its enactment, touching on the same or similar substantive questions. To what extent should the State Planning Act and the State Plan have influence with respect to these pre-existing and future statutory enactments?

The Role of the State Plan

The State Plan is intended to serve as a guide for public and private sector investment for New Jersey’s future. The State Plan is a policy document for state, regional, county and municipal government departments and agencies. It should be employed to guide and inform their functional plans, investment decisions, spending practices and regulatory decisions.

The State Plan is different from State department and agency plans and county and municipal master plans. State departments and agencies should review their plans, policies and regulations and make appropriate modifications within the scope of the department and agency’s authority. If the necessary modifications exceed that department’s or agency’s authority, it should seek to obtain that authority through normal legislative or rule-making processes. While the State Plan is voluntary for
The Role of the State Plan

counties and municipalities, when county and municipal master plans are updated, they should be modified to reflect the provisions of the State Plan.

The State Plan is not intended to be regulatory. It is intended to be a guide, to provide a framework for decision-making. The State Plan should inform regulatory decisions in a manner similar to the ways that it informs infrastructure investment, spending programs and tax policy decisions. Ideally, the State Plan will serve as a guide to improve the coordination and integration of these diverse policies directed at the attainment of the State Plan's vision and goals.

The State Plan approach is very different from and easily distinguishable from a regulatory approach. In fact, the State Plan if properly employed can be an effective means to counteract the deficiencies that so often plague regulation. While it is important to acknowledge that regulations have been helpful in cleaning up the environment, and making significant improvements in other areas, they suffer from a number of inherent flaws.

Among the inherent flaws of a regulatory approach is the lack of coordination across programs within the executive branch; the absence of deliberation to reconcile conflicts or to establish accountability; the difficulty of “capture” when a narrow factional interest successfully puts its stamp on a particular regulation at the expense of some wider calculation of the public interest.

In addition, regulations impose costs that are rarely if ever calculated. They tend to be enacted to remedy a specific abuse, but are prospectively applied in more general and uniform ways. They frequently lose sight of tailored solutions, when a single approach seldom fits neatly with the variety of situations it seeks to address. This problem poses special difficulties in a state as diverse as New Jersey.

The State Plan approach is not reacting to prior abuses. Instead it poses a vision, attempting to build consensus around that preferred future; then disaggregating that vision into a set of attainable goals that might be reached through effective strategy and sets of public policies honed to achieve them. Monitoring and evaluation provides the necessary feedback to make the adjustments to further sharpen those policies and to ensure that they are meeting their stated objectives. Accountability is achieved by subscribing to a highly interactive public participatory process, or in State Plan parlance, the “Cross Acceptance” process.

The State's resource allocation decisions will then be influenced by the alignment of county and municipal plans and regulations with the vision and goals of the State Plan. The State Plan’s purpose is to guide when and where State funds should be expended to achieve the vision and goals of the State Plan which were also designed to comport with the State Planning Act’s direction.

To strengthen its accountability to the public, the State Planning Commission articulated a fundamental policy to guide its actions. The first State Plan policy is to ensure that its implementation is guided by equity standards. Accordingly, it is the intent of the State Planning Commission that the benefits and burdens of implementing the State Plan should be equitably distributed among all its citizens. Where implementation of the goals, policies and objectives of the State Plan affects the reasonable development expectations of property owners or disproportionately affects the equity of other citizens, departments and agencies on all appropriate levels of government should employ programs that mitigate such impacts.
The State Plan’s Structure

The State Plan’s Structure consists of six main components including the following:

- **Vision Statement** – Provides a description of New Jersey’s future in 2030 when the goals of the State Plan are expected to be achieved along with the likely major challenges facing the state during that period
- **Goals** – Reiterates the goals contained in the State Planning Act
- **Statewide Policies** – Provide more specific guidance for State, regional, county and municipal government officials on a wide range of public policy issues in 20 different public policy categories
- **State Plan Policy Map** – Provides the geographic component, identifying and locating Planning Areas, Centers, and other geographical features that are important to the State Plan’s guidance function
- **Resource Planning & Management Structure** – Promotes the preferred forms for future growth and development in New Jersey, including the promotion of growth and development in already developed areas where infrastructure capacity already exists and designing and locating compact, mixed-use communities surrounded by protected natural landscapes on the metropolitan fringe and still rural and environmentally sensitive areas of New Jersey
- **Monitoring & Evaluation** – Identifies key indicators and targets for achieving the State Plan’s goals and summarizes the findings of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Impact Assessments
The State Plan Baseline

An assessment of current conditions and trends is a necessary element of preparing a credible plan for the future. The State Planning Commission retained the services of the Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) to provide a statistical analysis of New Jersey’s demographics, including population, housing and employment projections. This information is discussed in more detail in the Impact Analysis (IA) and Infrastructure Needs Analysis (INA) that are companion documents to the State Plan. A summary of that data is presented here to provide a statistical context for the State Plan.

There are several different sets of projections that have been compiled in addition to the CUPR analysis prepared for the State Plan. The New Jersey Department of Labor, the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) and the three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that serve New Jersey have all recently prepared population, housing and employment projections for the state. These projections have utilized differing methodologies for preparation, project to different time horizons or provide different breakdowns of statistical information. Despite differing methodologies of preparation, the data estimates do not vary to any great degree. However, these projections should be recognized for what they are; estimates of future changes in population, employment and housing.

The projections prepared by CUPR for use with the State Plan are but one set of guidance statistics. They must be viewed in light of other similar analyses that have been conducted and are subject to changing conditions in the future. These statistics inform the State Plan and provide one part of a complex set of factors that will guide the implementation of the State Plan’s goals and policies as well as local planning actions designed to further those goals and policies. These estimates of future trends are valuable planning tools as they provide an outlook regarding the important factors that will affect the sustainability of New Jersey from environmental, economic and social standpoints. They also provide an indication of and identify the critical issues that must be planned for. The trends identified in these projections offer essential information that will assist in formulating the strategies and methods necessary to achieve the goals and policies of this plan.
The State Plan’s Vision for New Jersey in the Year 2030

What should New Jersey be in 2030? That is the question that the vision attempts to both pose and answer. A vision draws on the past. The past is its prologue. The present is its opportunity. Opportunity may knock more than once, but it rarely waits very long. The choices that are made today will influence, if not entirely determine, New Jersey’s future.

The State Plan’s vision is rooted in New Jersey’s natural, built, social and political environments. The New Jersey vision was first sketched by the State Legislature through the enactment of the State Planning Act. It was elaborated upon in two previous iterations of the State Plan and by the State Planning Commission in the conduct of its work. That vision is augmented in this version of the State Plan.

What is the Vision?

In 2030, New Jersey promises to be a unique and special place. It will continue to be influenced by its proximity to the two large metropolitan centers to its northeast and southwest. Its character will persist as a major corridor between those two large metropolitan regions. Economically, it will continue to function as a major gateway with respect to international trade.

New Jersey’s compelling natural resources and social traditions will still prevail as distinctive hallmarks. For those who are familiar with New Jersey, it is much more than simply a series of exits on the New Jersey Turnpike or the Garden State Parkway. Land use patterns and development design will distinguish its diverse communities and celebrate its special places.

Its demographic diversity contributes to a distinctive New Jersey cultural mix as has been true throughout much of its history. More attention was paid in the past two decades to its interesting history, one that stems back to the colonial days of the 18th century and to its 19th century industrial revolution. Numerous historic sites restored since 2000 add to New Jersey’s character, establishing an effective state storyline so that its history now serves to buttress New Jersey tourism generating increased significant economic impact.

After engaging in a multi-decade State Plan strategy to combat the sprawl that left its indelible mark on the State’s landscape during the second half of the 20th century, New Jersey’s landscape in 2030 is a more easily discernible pattern of population and economic activity concentrations connected by limited access highway corridor connections that are increasingly used by public transit and light- and regional-rail connections. Slowly rising energy prices after considerable price volatility in 2008 and 2009 combined with increased government regulations to discourage automobile travel out of concern for greenhouse gas emissions and oil dependence have combined to produce a significant multi-modal shift. This combination has reinforced the goals and policies that the State Plan emphasized since the adoption and approval of the first State Development and Redevelopment Plan in 1992.

Human activities concentrate in more traditional urban and suburban forms that have extended from both New York City and Philadelphia for more than the past century. These places have histori-
The State Plan’s Vision for New Jersey in the Year 2030

What is the Vision?

Central New Jersey Region

Existing Conditions: A view of the Central Jersey region, stretching from Burlington County, NJ and Bucks County, PA north to Hartford and New Haven, CT, with the Delaware River in the foreground left and Long Island Sound in the upper right.

Trend Development: New development continues to sprawl. Older cities and towns decline further as a result of disinvestment. Farmland, open space and natural features are lost. The character of existing communities is eroded. The region experiences expansion of low-density, automobile-dependent, single-use development.

Plan Development: The region reinvests in its existing centers and creates new centers with distinct identities and a balance of housing, employment and open space. Farmland, large contiguous areas of open lands and important natural features are protected. Waterfronts are revitalized and accessible to the public. Transit systems are upgraded and extended, increasing ridership and providing a framework for further regional development. The region continues to grow in a healthy and more sustainable pattern while its places retain their character.
The State Plan’s Vision for New Jersey in the Year 2030

What is the Vision?

The relatively densely populated centers of varying scales, for the most part, are organized into better designed, highly livable, attractive communities that are both environmentally sound and less dependent on the automobile. Attention to environmental amenities and carefully planned and well-designed active and passive recreational open space have been employed as magnets to attract compact, mixed-use development and people to these places, despite an initial resistance to the higher densities. Demographic changes that have taken place during the past two decades that were just beginning to be evidenced in 2010 have reinforced the attraction to more urban, higher density locations throughout this 20-year period.

The striving to create greater sustainability has had a powerful and positive impact on New Jersey’s cities and towns. Strategically located, brimming with human talent and potential, supplied with and served by a more efficient public transportation system and housing choices, these cities and towns are at once more livable, healthy and economically productive places to live and work. They reflect a renewed energy and commitment to creating a better quality of life.

New Jersey’s cities and towns are green. Trees purify the air, cool the hot summers and conserve millions of dollars otherwise spent on less efficient energy use. Public and private partnerships have created safer streets and more effective schools. For the first time in many years, people of all economic and educational levels, choose to live in New Jersey’s cities and towns without evidence of discrimination based on race, religion, or ethnic group.

New Jersey’s cities and towns are also where more companies are starting up and choosing to make the state their place of business. A sound business climate, a streamlined land-use regulatory process, an enhanced quality of life and the reduction of costs through the provision of cost-effective public services has led the state to become the most prosperous and affluent in the nation.

Residents get the services they need. They are able to conveniently reach a wide variety of destinations. As a result, fewer New Jersey residents choose to use private automobiles as their main mode of transportation.

Commuter and light rail systems have added to this urban center and first ring suburban attraction. Transportation system decision-makers have strategically targeted...
The State Plan’s Vision for New Jersey in the Year 2030
What is the Vision?

communities with substantial need for improved transportation services and built or re-built bus or rail lines in those areas. Residents get the services they need. They are able to conveniently reach a wide variety of destinations. As a result, fewer New Jersey residents choose to use private automobiles as their main mode of transportation.

The look of New Jersey’s suburban landscape has also significantly changed. Shopping and office centers have been retrofitted or redeveloped to make them more accessible and more pleasant places to live, work and shop. Housing has been added, to increase densities and to increase the likelihood of feasible public transportation alternatives. These places are now also friendly to pedestrian and bicycle use. Developers and local governments realized that this suburban transformation was advantageous for both public and private bottom lines. Increasingly cost conscious consumers also found a less expensive lifestyle more to their liking in the face of the severe economic downturn at the outset of this period.

New Jersey’s historic and new rural centers have accommodated growth and achieved new vitality while maintaining the rural character and large contiguous areas of farmland and open spaces. This situation has been achieved through more cooperative planning among large landowners, farmers, counties and municipal governments through the application of more effective planning tools.

New Jersey needs to learn to “design with nature,” to match its needs with essential processes so that the state and its residents both benefit and thrive. In addition, financial incentives and regulatory reforms have fostered the development of “green businesses” that provide jobs and profits while significantly improving the State’s environment.

In 2030, New Jersey is a place that strikes the appropriate balance between the economic needs of its people and the protection of its natural and cultural resources. It will be a place where present and future generations will enjoy the benefits of the State’s natural beauty and cultural heritage, while engaging the rest of the nation and the world through its economic productivity.

Sustainable development is an important aspect of the New Jersey vision for 2030. That concept grew in popularity because it implied that the production and consumption of goods and services could be accomplished without harming the natural environment. The natural environment provides the air, water and land resources necessary to sustain human life. It also serves as a “sink” for human waste.

Sustainable development recognizes that the natural environment does not have limitless ability to absorb and assimilate waste or to provide the “natural capital” for unlimited human consumption. There are limits. These limits or “carrying capacities” may be expanded and stretched through engineered solutions and infrastructure investments, but always at a cost. The State Plan serves to make the nature of those costs, financial and non-financial, more explicit and transparent during this time, and thereby provided a useful tool to better inform public policy debate.

The State Plan Cross Acceptance process helped to structure this public policy debate over the past two decades recognizing that no single sector or entity, either public or private, can entirely shape a successful New Jersey future with respect to its land use. Rather that future needs to emanate from the active participation and interaction of governments, businesses, civic groups and individual citizens working together toward a common vision. The strong partnerships that have evolved have produced strategic plans by government departments and agencies, private companies, non-profit
organizations and community groups that once implemented optimize the advantages of New Jersey’s cities and towns.

Additional experience with the notion of sustainable development also clarified that the early political polarization that once occurred in defining choices between the economy and environmental protection proved to be a false one. Principles of Sustainability reconciled these differences.

Neither was sustainable development a choice between an unfettered free market or complete government control. Rather skillfully fashioning appropriate regulations to meet competing social priorities while making important infrastructure investments and creating meaningful incentives and disincentives through spending and tax policies enable the marketplace to function in more efficient, socially beneficial and equitable ways. These policies induce governments, businesses, non-profit organizations and the public-at-large to operate as more effective stewards of both New Jersey’s natural and built environments.

Finally, New Jersey’s vision for 2030 is one in which the state has successfully met specific challenges that the state will need to face between 2010 and 2030. What are the critical challenges that the State of New Jersey needs to address?

The Challenges to the State Plan’s Vision

New Jersey faces a number of important challenges that will be necessary to confront and overcome if it is going to attain the State Plan’s vision for 2030. Among the challenges are the following:

- Will New Jersey meet the changing economic demands of the 21st Century?

New Jersey is faced with serious economic and employment opportunity challenges at the outset of this period. Its economy benefited historically from its geographic location. The state is home to a significant number of large corporations that chose to be located in New Jersey. The State’s major businesses continue to include chemicals, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, transportation and logistics, petroleum-based products, insurance and tourism.

The Port of New York and New Jersey is especially important to New Jersey’s future economic growth. It is the largest port complex on the Eastern Seaboard and the third largest port complex in the United States. It is a major gateway to the North American continent. However, at the outset of this period, the Port of New York and New Jersey faces serious challenges including the need to modernize and expand port facilities and improve its accessibility to ensure its global competitiveness.

The Governor’s Economic Growth Strategy released in November 2007 highlighted six important priorities. Those priorities include marketing New Jersey for economic growth by partnering with the State’s businesses; developing a world-class workforce through appropriate educational investments; promoting sustainable growth with a particular emphasis on the State’s cities by making strategic infrastructure investments to support economic growth and protect the environment; nurturing the development of new technologies and continuing to ensure that the state is an innovation leader; encouraging entrepreneurship and the growth of small, minority-owned and women-owned businesses; and taking the necessary steps to enhance the global competitiveness of New Jersey’s quality of life are also important to its economic vitality.
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The Challenges to the State Plan’s Vision

New Jersey’s businesses. Investments in New Jersey’s institutions of higher education for both research development and for workforce education and training are also essential.

Improvements to New Jersey’s quality of life are also important to its economic vitality. By maintaining an attractive quality of life, New Jersey will be better able to retain and attract both the businesses and the highly-trained and well-paid employees that it seeks. The implementation of the State Plan provides a framework to achieve that attractive quality of life that will support the amount and nature of economic activities that New Jersey seeks.

- Will New Jersey change the nature of its settlement pattern and transportation system to become more energy efficient and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Relatively low-density and sprawling land use patterns continue to demand high levels of energy consumption at increasing costs in addition to the dependence fostered on oil imports. Energy consumption is affected both by single-family, detached housing and the suburban lifestyle and also by the heavy dependence on automobiles and trucks that are then the predominant means of servicing this sprawling settlement pattern.

New Jersey is facing a challenge to modify its settlement pattern and the transportation system that services it to reduce energy consumption and dependence on foreign oil. Alternative energy sources can play a role. For example, solar, wind, biomass, nuclear and hydrogen energy sources have far less impact on air and water quality than burning fossil fuels; and unlike fossil fuel, the sun and wind are renewable energy resources. The application to the suburban settlement pattern has yet to be tested and needs to be applied.

The successive waves of suburban economic growth and real estate development economic growth in the post-World War II period were predicated on major additions to the State’s transportation infrastructure. The economies of the 1960’s and 1970’s were buoyed by enhanced transportation capacity provided by the region’s toll roads. The prosperity of the 1980’s and 1990’s relied upon additional mobility spurred by the completion of the Interstate Highway System. However, changes were already evident by the mid-1990’s.

Adding transportation capacity came under more careful scrutiny. Traffic congestion remained a serious concern despite the massive amounts of highway construction that had previously occurred. NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) acknowledged that addressing traffic congestion would require paying more attention to land-use planning and travel demand management techniques in the face of increased public resistance to new highway construction. NJDOT began to change its views on adding lane miles to relieve traffic congestion.

In addition, the recently released NJDEP Draft Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report in December 2008 underscores the importance of the land-use and transportation connection to reduce energy consumption through the reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

- Will New Jersey make the necessary infrastructure investments to ensure future economic prosperity?
New Jersey has pressing infrastructure needs. Infrastructure funding that once abundantly emanated from the Federal government in the 1970’s and 1980’s was reduced and eventually eliminated. New Jersey like other states established the Environmental Infrastructure Trust (EIT) to replace opportunities that were once grant-funded with loans. These loan opportunities carry additional costs that some municipalities have difficulty meeting. Maintenance and operations too often defer necessary attention that infrastructure deserves. The priority infrastructure investments that New Jersey needs to address include railroad and highway bridges that have for too long been neglected, combined sewers that overflow in storm events, segments of the interstate highway system that are now approaching their normal life expectancies. Adequate water supplies to meet the needs of continued population and economic growth are also a growing problem in environmentally sensitive regions of the state. Water supply and sewer infrastructure are therefore among the increasing infrastructure concerns.

In addition, infrastructure investments that require targeting to meet the demands of the 21st century’s changing information technology, demands for alternative energy sources, reductions of greenhouse gas emissions to result in the modified settlement patterns recommended by the State Plan need to be made. Federal and State government stimulus packages concentrating on investment ought to help fill this need. The State Plan and its Infrastructure Needs Assessment should to take these needs into account and to guide future infrastructure investments.

- **Will New Jersey engage in significant regulatory reform?**

These priorities, in part, emanate from the recognition that New Jersey has to change the perception and to a lesser extent the reality that it is a high-cost state in which to do business. Some of these costs are within government’s control such as regulations and taxes. Others are not, for example utility and labor costs. By 2030, New Jersey will have to make progress in addressing these concerns to ensure that it is more economically competitive in ensuring its future economic prosperity.

Encouraging economic activities will require a review of the business climate in general and regulatory reform in particular. Regulation has to be intelligent, based on science, but also must take competing social priorities into account. Insistence on standards of statewide uniformity that fail to take into account local conditions and a tendency to exceed Federal government standards that are often more restrictive than adjacent states carry additional costs.

- **Will New Jersey modify its heavy reliance on property taxes to finance local public services?**

Numerous municipal government planning decisions that affect statewide concerns trace themselves back to the heavy dependence on the part of New Jersey municipalities to rely on local property taxes to finance municipal services. This dependence leads to municipal decisions that weigh short-term fiscal impacts related to specific projects more heavily than other
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long-term considerations. Unfortunately, from a state and regional perspective, these concerns that affect the general welfare more generally are left primarily to municipal decision-making. The most conspicuous examples include the provision of adequate opportunities for affordable housing, school finance and natural resource protection.

Too often, under these circumstances, the local calculation relies on persuading local public officials and in some instances taxpayers that the particular development before them will generate sufficient property tax revenues to offset any increases in municipal costs. That does not appear to be a rational way to engage in land-use planning, to provide affordable housing opportunities, to finance local education needs or to protect valuable natural resources. Under these circumstances, until there is a way to pay for public services from some regional or state source and have it based more on income and less on real estate; competition for development among municipalities threatens to undermine any semblance of rational land-use planning.

**Will New Jersey maintain its level of prosperity in the face of what is likely to be slowed suburban growth?**

The growth of sprawling suburbs will slow during this 20-year period. The conversion of farmland, forests and environmentally sensitive land areas to large-lot, low-density housing subdivisions, shopping malls and office parks will decrease when contrasted with the preceding 20-year period. The slower growth will result from a combination of social, economic and political forces that began with demographic shifts leading to lifestyle changes that commenced even before the turn of the 21st century. Adjustments to gradually higher energy prices, encouraging residents to travel less, especially by automobile, also accelerated lifestyle changes. They will have the effect of reducing real estate development on the metropolitan periphery in fringe, rural and environmentally sensitive areas. The collapse of the real estate market and mortgage credit tightening contributed to changes in the direction of growth and development. Unfortunately, these circumstances may last longer than first expected.

The public policy direction depicted in earlier versions of the State Plan, but then difficult to implement, are gradually becoming more compatible with market forces. Large landowners have begun to view government as a more attractive purchaser of their holdings, especially in light of previously adopted regulations that made development in some rural and environmentally sensitive regions more difficult. NJDEP wastewater rules adopted at the outset of this period as well as rules adopted with respect to stormwater management and permitting, developments on septic systems and protections for threatened and endangered species habitats further curtailed development in outlying areas.

The adoption and implementation of the Highlands Regional Master Plan had similar impacts on a region-wide basis in northwest New Jersey. The previously protected Pinelands region experienced similar changes two decades earlier. The introduction and improvement of more sophisticated planning tools such as Transfer of Development Rights facilitated these changes, making compact, mixed-use communities more practical realities.

No new major roadways will be built during this 20-year period, a period instead characterized by a renewed emphasis on public transportation and multi-modal transportation alternatives to automobiles and trucks such as the ARC Tunnel under the Hudson River and transit oriented developments (TODs) that are spawned by it. New regulations introduced to address climate change concerns to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will also have an effect of reinforcing the
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tendency towards more compact, more densely developed, mixed-use and walkable community designs.

- **Are already developed Urban Centers and Suburbs willing and capable of accommodating additional development and redevelopment to compensate for the slow down in suburban expansion?**

Hudson County municipalities along with medium-sized cities and towns in other counties throughout New Jersey underwent substantial growth during the preceding 20-year period. A number of positive signs related to the redevelopment of urban areas buoyed the fortunes of several New Jersey’s largest urban centers early in this period. Some of this redevelopment was impelled by the strength of the overspill effects from the New York City economy, which may now be called into question. However, some of this redevelopment is also part of wider trends leading to the rediscovery of urban living.

Small- to medium-sized cities throughout New Jersey underwent significant revitalization during this period. Those that had access to public transit and could take advantage of transit-oriented development did especially well. The Riverline municipalities in Burlington County fall into this category as did towns on the PATCO line and other notable municipalities in northern and central Jersey such as Red Bank in Monmouth County, Rahway and Cranford in Union County and Maplewood and South Orange in Essex County. Hudson County municipalities benefited from the establishment and operations of the new light rail line spanning the county and plans are in place to extend the line into eastern Bergen County.

A number of county seats, including New Brunswick, Morristown, and Somerville, benefited from rail connections. They were able to capitalize on emerging urban opportunities. Their rising fortunes, each with a unique story, provide additional models for New Jersey to showcase. This growing list of redeveloping urban municipalities will become longer and more diverse as the horizon year of 2030 approaches.

These redeveloping municipalities will have to keep pace with increased infrastructure capacity demands and improvements and infill support to match increased redevelopment activities. Changing zoning requirements will also need to keep pace. Parking issues will need to be addressed in light of newly calculated demands that reflect changing social and economic circumstances and the growing convenience of multi-modal transportation alternatives. Prudent redevelopment will take advantage of environmental amenities to further bolster redevelopment opportunities through thoughtful urban design. All this will require added planning capacity.

These municipalities also face concerns raised by incumbent low- and moderate-income residents related to gentrification or the displacement of the incumbent population by new, higher income people if reinvestment occurs too dramatically and without appropriate safeguards. Housing subsidy commitments made by previous generations will soon expire and need to be addressed. In the absence of solving the State’s persistent affordable housing dilemma, the
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State Plan Goals

- maintenance of its existing affordable housing stock in urban centers and first ring suburbs is critically important. The proximity of this housing to likely increases in employment activity makes the upkeep of this housing stock even more important.

State Plan Goals

Translating the State Development and Redevelopment Plan vision into goals is an attempt to convert aspects of the vision into logical, practical and achievable ends. The eight original goals of the State Plan were derived from the State Planning Act by the State Planning Commission over a long period of deliberation. A ninth goal recognizing the emerging issues of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Fossil Fuel Dependence and Climate Change has been added. The State Plan Goals include the following:

1. **Revitalize the State’s Cities and Towns** – Revitalize New Jersey’s cities and towns by investing wisely and sufficiently in improvements in their infrastructure systems, public spending programs, tax incentives and regulatory programs to leverage private investment and to encourage infill and redevelopment in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

2. **Conserve the State’s Natural Resources and Systems** – Conserve the State’s natural resources and systems by planning the location and intensity of growth to maintain natural resource and systems capacities and make the necessary infrastructure investments to protect natural resources and systems in ways that guide growth and development in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

3. **Promote Beneficial Economic Growth** – Promote beneficial economic growth in locations and in ways that improve the quality of life and the standard of living for all New Jersey residents by providing infrastructure in advance of, or concurrent with, the impacts of new development sufficient to maintain adequate facility standards, by encouraging partnerships and collaborative planning with the private sector and by capitalizing on the State’s strategic location, economic strengths including its existing business enterprises, entrepreneurship, the research and development capacity of its institutions of higher learning, skilled workforce, cultural diversity and logistic facilities in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

4. **Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean up Pollution** – Protect the environment, prevent and clean up pollution by planning for growth in compact form at locations, densities and intensities that protect land, air and water quality, allow expeditious regulatory reviews and encourage multi-modal transportation alternatives to the automobile more feasible to help achieve and maintain acceptable air quality standards. Develop performance standards to create incentives to prevent and reduce pollution and toxic emissions at the source, to conserve resources and protect public health. Promote development at the locations and in ways to promote environmental protection and reduce pollution that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

5. **Provide Adequate Public Facilities and Services at Reasonable Cost** – Provide adequate public facilities and services by supporting investments based on comprehensive planning and by providing financial incentives for jurisdictions that cooperate in providing public infrastructure and shared services. Encourage the use of infrastructure needs assessments and life-cycle costing. Provide adequate public facilities in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

6. **Provide Adequate Housing at Reasonable Cost** – Provide adequate housing at reasonable cost
through public/private partnerships that create and maintain a full range of attractive, affordable, and environmentally sensitively-designed and developed housing, particularly for those most in need, at densities and locations that provide greater efficiencies and serve to support public transportation alternatives and reduce commuter time and expense and easily accessible to employment, retail, cultural, civic and recreational opportunities to reduce housing and commuting costs in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

7. **Preserve and Enhance Areas with Historic, Cultural, Scenic Open Space, and Recreational Value** – Preserve, enhance, and use historic, cultural, scenic and recreational assets by collaborative planning, design, investment and management techniques. Locate and design development and redevelopment and supporting infrastructure to improve access to and protect these sites. Support the important role of the arts in contributing to community life, civic beauty and redevelopment in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

8. **Ensure Sound, Coordinated and Integrated Statewide Planning** – Ensure sound, coordinated and integrated statewide planning by using the State Plan as a guide to planning and growth-related decisions at all levels of government in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

9. **Increase Energy Efficiencies and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions** – Increase Energy Efficiencies and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by promoting the improved coordination and integration of transportation planning and land-use planning and decision-making to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs); and by the siting, development, design and use of green-building construction materials in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

**The State Plan Strategy**

The strategy is the way to achieve the vision through the attainment of specific goals. A vision and goals absent a strategy are a dream. The strategy is critical to provide both the logic and detail to get from here to there. The State Plan Strategy is to simply employ the Statewide Policies, State Plan Policy Map, the Resource Planning and Management Structure, which includes Planning Areas and its Centers Hierarchy, and the Cross Acceptance process to achieve the Vision and Goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

**Statewide Policies**

The Statewide Policies are designed to improve both the planning and coordination of public policy among all levels of government through flexible application. The Statewide Policies address 20 substantive areas. These policies provide guidance for state and local planning initiatives. Using the State Plan Policy Map as guidance, these policies are applied to each Planning Area, Center and Environ in unique but appropriate ways to achieve the goals of the State Planning Act.

1. **Equity** – Equity, as a State Plan fundamental policy principle, should serve as a guide to the implementation of the State Plan to be considered and taken into account with respect to the
implementation of all State Plan policies.

The Challenge: To preserve the Equity concept as it pertained to land values in previous State Plans, but to add to it by incorporating concepts of social equity and environmental justice as aspects of Sustainability.

2. Comprehensive Planning – The State Plan is a comprehensive plan as its is comprised of a vision, goals, strategy, statewide policies, a Resource Planning and Management Structure along with implementation steps and a way to monitor and evaluate actions taken pursuant to the State Plan. It is a legislatively-directed initiative to guide State government’s executive branch while improving the coordination and integration of State government plans with those of regional, county and municipal jurisdictions.

The Challenge: To draw upon the numerous functional plans of State Departments and agencies as well as the numerous regional, county and municipal plans to develop a State Plan that is comprehensive and respectful, while also pointing to strategic directions for the State of New Jersey’s Executive Branch and its regional, county and municipal jurisdictions.

3. Public Investment Priorities – Accommodate New Jersey’s projected population and employment growth, development and redevelopment through a set of public investment priorities that are consistent.

The Challenge: To devise a general guide for State, regional, county and municipal decision-makers to influence public investment decisions in ways that will be consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals and without loss to population and employment growth, development and redevelopment.

4. Infrastructure Investments – Provide public infrastructure and related services more efficiently by restoring, maintaining and investing in infrastructure systems to guide growth, to promote development and redevelopment in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas (Planning Areas 1, 2) and in centers in appropriate locations and ways in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (Planning Areas 3, 4, 5), while discouraging development in the environs adjacent to or surrounding those centers, appropriately phased and timed in accordance with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

The Challenge: To more efficiently and effectively plan, design, invest in, construct and maintain public infrastructure and related services in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan as a means of meeting New Jersey’s infrastructure needs for the 21st Century.

5. Economic Development – Promote beneficial economic growth to improve New Jersey’s quality of life and standard of living by encouraging economic development through facilitating access to capital, supporting research and development, promoting appropriate education and training, building strategically upon the State’s economic and geographic strengths, and influencing the location of employment activities in proximity to affordable and workforce housing, accessible to multi-modal transportation alternatives with facilities that are planned and constructed in environmentally sound ways, and in accordance with the vision and goals
of the State Plan.

*The Challenge:* To develop and implement a long-term, coherent and effective economic development strategy that can take advantage of New Jersey’s strengths, respond to the current economic downturn, overcome the difficulties posed by multiple government jurisdictions, and is consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan and the social equity considerations of the concept of Sustainability.

6. **Housing** – Preserve and expand the supply of safe, decent and reasonably priced housing while meeting the constitutional mandate with respect to affordable housing through improved planning, regulatory reform, supportive infrastructure investments, housing subsidies, tax and discounted fee incentives and municipal property tax relief in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge:* To match changing housing demand with adequate housing supply in a way that meets the New Jersey Constitutional obligation and is also consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

7. **Urban Revitalization** – Revitalize urban centers and first ring suburbs by devising a regional metropolitan area strategy that concentrates public resources to attract public and private investment to enhance economic development, employment opportunities, housing redevelopment and transportation options to produce neighborhoods of choice and middle class growth in those communities while slowing development on the metropolitan periphery, in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge:* To revitalize urban centers and first ring suburbs by devising a coherent state and regional strategy that will concentrate reinvestment in those municipalities while managing growth on the metropolitan periphery.

8. **Transportation** – Improve transportation planning and management by enhancing inter-department coordination on multiple government levels, and stabilizing transportation funding to maintain and repair existing transportation infrastructure to ensure public safety and regional mobility rather than engage in systems expansion. Integrate transportation and land-use decision-making, encouraging multi-modal transportation alternatives to automobiles and trucks, to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and greenhouse gas emissions as well as the impacts of other environmental, historic and cultural and equity concerns that affect New Jersey’s quality of life in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge:* To fund the maintenance and operations of the existing transportation system in ways that ensure public safety and regional mobility; To transform that system to be less dependent on automobiles and trucks to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs), energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

9. **Historic, Cultural & Scenic Resources** – Protect, enhance, and where appropriate rehabilitate
The State Plan Strategy

Statewide Policies

historic, cultural and scenic resources by identifying, evaluating and registering significant
historic, cultural and scenic landscapes, districts, structures, buildings, objects and sites, and
ensuring that new growth and development is
compatible with historic, cultural and scenic values
in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals
of the State Plan.

**The Challenge:** To protect, enhance and where appro-
appropriate, rehabilitate historic, cultural and scenic resour-
ces through appropriate means that will enhance not
only the historic, cultural heritage and scenic resources,
but also make significant contributions to the State’s
economy.

10. **Air Resources** – Protect and enhance air quality by improving inter-governmental coordination
and integration to achieve National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS); by enhancing
coordination and integration between the State Plan and the NJDEP State Implementation Plan
(SIP) and relevant transportation and regulations along with the plans prepared by New Jersey’s
three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and by NJDOT; by reducing imported fossil
fuel dependence while promoting the use of clean and renewable fuels; and by encouraging
the multiple levels of government to plan and implement policies, programs and regulations
that will result in land-use patterns that reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs) and encourage
the use of multi-mode transportation alternatives to the automobile, in ways that are consistent
with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

**The Challenge:** To improve the coordination and integration of plans, policies and programs across
State departments and agencies and on multiple government levels to encourage land use patterns
that will result in less vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and encourage multi-modal transportation alter-
natives to the automobile to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

11. **Water Resources** – Acknowledge water resources as a public resource, while protecting and
enhancing water resources through improved coordination and integration of watershed-base
planning and management aimed at protecting water supplies. Reduce point source and
non-point source pollution, promoting water conservation and encouraging locations, types
and designs of development to reduce adverse impacts on water resources and flood hazards.
Protect the natural functions of streams and wetland systems, maintaining and enhancing
ground water and ensuring that principles of sustainability guide planning, management and
use of water resources in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

**The Challenge:** To manage water resources and land-
uses that affect them more comprehensively by em-
ploying a watershed-based planning and management
approach as a framework to make better informed and
more sustainable decisions.

12. **Open Lands, Natural Systems & Recreation** – Plan
for the acquisition, management and protection of
open spaces, natural systems and recreational areas
for the purposes of preserving biological diversity,
protecting water resources, wetlands, forested
lands, critical slopes, scenic vistas. Reduce the amount of greenhouse gases to supplement and improve existing land acquisition, regulatory and management techniques in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge: To improve the protection of New Jersey's valuable and diverse open lands, natural systems and recreational open spaces in the face of increased population pressures, competing demands for alternative land uses and a highly fragmented institutional framework.*

**13. Energy Resources** – Ensure an adequate energy supply through facility modernization, and technological improvements, while shifting away from fossil fuel consumption and in favor of alternative renewable energy sources, cogeneration and conservation in ways that will promote beneficial economic growth while significantly reducing dependence on foreign energy imports and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge: To secure a long-term energy supply, become more energy efficient and independent from foreign energy sources while conserving energy and reducing energy-related pollution including greenhouse gas emissions.*

**14. Waste Management, Recycling & Brownfields** – Promote recycling and source reduction through product design and materials management and by coordinating and supporting legislative, planning and facility development efforts regarding solid and hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal. Capitalize on opportunities provided by Brownfield sites through coordinated planning, strategic marketing and priority redevelopment of these sites in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

*The Challenge: To reduce the amount of waste that has to be land-filled through source reduction, materials substitution, product design and recycling; and with respect to brownfields, to compile and disseminate an accurate and up-to-date statewide brownfields inventory that will become the basis for the development and implementation of a strategic brownfields site remediation and redevelopment approach that results in more efficient and effective clean-up and redevelopment.*

**15. Agriculture** – Promote agriculture as an industry and preserve the agricultural land base by coordinating planning and innovative land preservation techniques to support agricultural sustainability in recognition of agriculture's valuable contributions to conserving the State's natural resources and its quality of life, while accommodating growth in rural areas in ways that are consistent with the State Plan's vision and goals.

*The Challenge: To promote agriculture as an economically viable industry in this highly urbanized state by defining and supporting appropriate agricultural niches, while also continuing to preserve the farmland base when agricultural land values often adversely compete with land values for residential and commercial development.*

**16. Coastal Resources** – Protect and conserve New Jersey's coastal resources, by striking an appropriate balance between the important contribution that the Jersey Shore makes to New Jersey's economy and its fragile environmental resources upon which so much of that economic contribution relies. Account for the dramatic change likely to occur as a consequence of natural...
geologic forces, sea-level rise and increasing coastal hazards due to the effects of global warming.

The Challenge: To carefully balance human economic activities and the protection and conservation of natural resources upon which much of the economic activity at the shore is dependent. Simultaneously, careful attention must be paid and appropriate actions must be taken in response to sea-level rising and the increasing probability of extreme storm coastal events that may result from climate change including, but not limited to mitigating coastal hazards and addressing the needs of emergency response and coastal evacuations.

17. Planning Regions Established by Statute – The State Plan acknowledges the special statutory treatment accorded to the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and the New Jersey Highlands Council; and relies on the adopted plans and regulations of these legislatively-established agencies in developing the State Plan. The State Plan’s policies with respect to those regional agencies are intended to coordinate and integrate the State Plan efforts with the adopted plans, policies, procedures and regulations of those agencies in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

The Challenge: To effectively coordinate and integrate the policies of these legislatively-established regional agencies in ways that are consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

18. Special Resource Areas – Recognize an area or region with unique characteristics or resources of statewide importance to advance regional planning efforts in ways that are consistent with the State Plan vision and goals with respect to the Special Resource Areas’ unique resources.

The Challenge: To develop and adopt planning and implementation strategies to advance the State Plan’s vision and goals relevant to the Special resource Area’s unique resources, while clarifying the purpose of Special Resource Areas within the State Plan framework and overcoming any local fears and resistance that may exist regarding a regional approach to planning.

19. Designing More Sustainable Built Environments – Tailor community design, intensity and form to fit with local needs that may vary from urban centers to first ring suburbs in need of redevelopment to retrofitting newer suburban communities to center-based development for rural and environmentally sensitive areas to create spatially defined, visually appealing and functionally efficient places with respect to each of those different contexts in ways that help to create a distinctive identity, build to human scale and establish a sense of place that enhances economic viability and includes circulation patterns that facilitate multi-modal transportation alternatives to the automobile in
ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

The Challenge: To devise attractive community designs for a range of different community types from the redevelopment essential to revitalizing urban centers and first ring suburbs, to retrofitting newer suburbs to designing, attractive, center-based developments in the rural and environmentally sensitive locations in the state.

20. Climate Change – Encourage land-use changes in the State’s predominant settlement pattern and the transformation of the State’s transportation system to lessen vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions in ways that are consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan.

The Challenge: To employ the State Plan’s vision and goals more effectively to coordinate and integrate public and private sector activities to implement the State Plan’s long-standing policy recommendations to reduce New Jersey’s contributions to greenhouse gas emissions by achieving the limits established by Executive Order No. 54, the Global Warming Response Act, the New Jersey Energy Master Plan and the Draft Global Warming Response Act Recommendations.
The State Plan is not itself a regulation but a statement of state policy that has been adopted by the State Planning Commission pursuant to statute to guide state, regional and local agencies in the exercise of their statutory authority.
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)

The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM) recognizes that New Jersey requires different approaches in its Metropolitan, Suburban, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas. The SPPM has two major components: Planning Areas, which identify the unique natural and built infrastructure in specific areas across New Jersey; and Centers & their respective Environs, which identify the scale, location and design of livable communities and natural landscapes. The SPPM also has other identified features including Critical Environmental Sites (CES) and Cultural/Historical Sites (CHS). The SPPM also identifies “Nodes,” “Cores” and selected “Neighborhoods.”

Resource Planning & Management Structure

Some may consider the Resource Planning and Management Structure as the “heart” of the State Plan. They certainly provide the State Plan with a geographic focus. However, the Statewide Policies, the SPPM along with the Cross Acceptance Process and Monitoring and Evaluation are also essential parts of the State Plan’s Structure and ultimately its strategy. The State Plan’s Resource Planning and Management Structure is comprised of a number of fundamental parts including Planning Areas, Centers and their Environs.

Planning Areas

Planning Areas are large masses of land that share a common set of conditions, such as population density, infrastructure systems, relative degrees of development and natural systems. The Planning Areas serve an important classification function related to the State Plan Intent and fundamental policy objectives to accomplish that intent. The Planning Areas are carefully delineated geographically on the State Plan Policy Map (SPPM). Because each Planning Area is unique and is the object of a different State Plan Intent, it contains different Statewide Policy Objectives. These Statewide Policy

Acres in Planning Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Area</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan (PA1)</td>
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<td>Suburban (PA2)</td>
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<td>Rural (PA4)</td>
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<td>Rural/Env. Sensitive (PA4B)</td>
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<td>Env. Sensitive (PA5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Env. Sensitive/Barrier Islands (PA5B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
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<td>Special Resource Areas (PA6)</td>
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<td>(Highlands, Meadowlands, Pinelands)</td>
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Legend:
- Developed
- Agricultural
- Forested
- Undevelopable
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)

Planning Areas

Objectives as applied to the different Planning Areas ensure an appropriate balance between development and conservation of natural resources as directed by the State Planning Act and as guided by the State Plan’s vision and goals. If adhered to, the differing Statewide Policy Objective will also ensure that the appropriate development will occur within Planning Areas’ centers and environs. Infrastructure capacities and natural systems were important criteria in identifying and delineating the Planning Areas, Centers and Environs classifications.

The State Plan’s vision and goals considers five Planning Areas and two sub-Planning Areas. The Five Planning Areas are the following:

1. **The Metropolitan Planning Area** – This Planning Area includes a variety of municipalities that range from large Urban Centers to 19th century towns shaped by commuter rail and post-war suburbs. The Communities in this Planning Area have strong ties to major metropolitan centers – New York/Newark/Jersey City metropolitan region; the Philadelphia/Camden/Trenton Metropolitan Region; and on a smaller scale the Easton/Phillipsburg Metropolitan Region.

   These municipalities have many things in common: mature settlement patterns; infrastructure systems that are approaching their reasonable life expectancy; an aging housing stock in need of rehabilitation; recognition that redevelopment will be the predominant form of growth; and a growing realization of the need to regionalize services and systems. In addition, the wide and often affordable choice of housing in proximity to New York and Philadelphia has attracted significant immigration, resulting in noticeable changes in demographic characteristics over time.

   In the Metropolitan Planning Area, the State Plan’s intent is to do the following:
   - Provide for much of the State’s future development and redevelopment
   - Revitalize Cities and Towns
   - Take advantage of increased densities and compact building design
   - Encourage distinctive, attractive neighborhoods with a strong sense of place
   - Provide for mixed-use concentrations of residential and commercial activity
   - Create a wide range of residential housing opportunities and choices with income mix
   - Provide for a variety of multi-modal transportation alternatives
   - Prioritize clean-up and redevelopment of brownfields and greyfields sites
   - Create cultural centers of state-wide significance
   - Re-design any existing areas of low-density sprawl

2. **The Suburban Planning Area** – The Suburban Planning Area is located adjacent to the Metropolitan Planning Area, but can be distinguished by a lack of high intensity Centers, by the availability of developable land, and by a more dispersed and fragmented pattern of predominantly low-density development. Suburban Planning Areas are served by regional infrastructure. These areas have typically been designated for growth in municipal master...
Current development patterns outside of Centers are almost entirely dependent on the automobile for transportation. Scattered subdivisions and employment centers offer few if any focal points for community interaction that may have been provided in older urban or suburban communities by traditional main streets or a town common. The effect of local planning efforts has been to isolate land uses from each other, using zoning requirements such as large setbacks or extensive buffers, the location of stormwater detention facilities and unnecessarily wide roads to create physical barriers between land uses and different activities. Current trends continue to extend sprawl throughout this Planning Area, focusing primarily on the same single-use or limited use development in response to developer and market demand that generally conform to local government zoning requirements.

In the Suburban Planning Area, the State Plan’s intention is to do the following:

- Provide for much of the State’s future development
- Promote growth in center-based developments by increasing densities and employing attractive community design to encourage more compact forms of development
- Protect the character of existing stable communities
- Revitalize existing cities and towns
- Promote increased coordination and integration of transportation planning and land-use decision-making
- Encourage multi-modal transportation alternatives to the automobile
- Protect natural resources
- Re-design and retrofit existing areas of sprawl
- Reverse the current trend toward additional sprawl

3. The Fringe Planning Area – The Fringe Planning Area is predominantly still a rural landscape that is not prime agricultural or environmentally sensitive land, with scattered small communities and free-standing residential, commercial and industrial development. Throughout the Fringe Planning Area are older communities, some of which serve as county government seats or have become magnets for specialty retail.

In the Fringe Planning Area, large investments in water and sewer and local road networks have not yet occurred. Circulation is primarily provided by a state and
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)
Planning Areas

Suburban Highway and Rail Corridor

Existing Conditions: A historic town center, containing a mix of office, retail, institutional and residential uses, is still surrounded by large areas of rural countryside. The regional commuter rail is experiencing dramatic increases in ridership at the small congested stations. Office parks and commercial development are beginning to appear along a state highway. Residential subdivisions are replacing farms and forests. Formerly rural roads are increasingly congested with traffic from strip commercial development. Some of the region’s best agricultural soils are under imminent threat of development.

Trend Development: The historic town center loses its role as the commercial and social hub for the surrounding area. The state highway is widened, but becomes even more congested. Increased non-point source pollution leads to a decline in the quality of the river’s water. Prime agricultural soils are paved over. Development and housing fragment green corridors while trails and aquifer recharge areas are lost. The open countryside defining the historic town center is overwhelmed by development. Air quality declines. Residential subdivisions consume the remainder of the region’s rural forests and farmlands.

Plan Development: Balanced in-fill growth in the town center reinforces the traditional mix of uses, drawing from and enhancing the historic context. The historic center is still surrounded by rural countryside. The river is protected by open space buffers and preservation of water recharge areas. Service on the commuter rail line is expanded. Improved station area facilities include a shared parking deck, and become the focus for new transit-oriented town centers. Access to the state highway is limited and road expansions are unnecessary. Air quality is protected. Residential growth is redirected to existing centers and to new, walkable centers served by transit.
Suburban Commercial Strip

Existing Conditions: A generic suburban commercial strip, where roads and surface parking lots dominate the landscape. Single use, low-density zoning has led to dependence on the automobile, which in turn has resulted in severe peak-hour congestion. While the strip is mostly prosperous, some older shopping centers have closed, unable to compete with big box retail. Stormwater runoff from parking and roads is degrading the water quality of a nearby stream. Undeveloped areas along the highway are zoned for additional strip commercial development. While some open space, woodlands, and farmland still remain, wildlife habitat is fragmented.

Trend Development: Strip development along the highway has continued, resulting in many miles of highway-oriented uses and a cluttered, unappealing environment. A parallel road network has not been created, requiring every trip—even short local trips—to enter the highway. As a result, extreme traffic congestion, safety concerns and conflicts between regional mobility and local access have led to several highway widenings. Older shopping centers have continued to decline due to competition from big box retail. Air quality has declined, and stormwater runoff has seriously degraded the water quality of a nearby stream. Most open space has been consumed, with a concomitant loss of wildlife habitat.

Plan Development: A smart growth approach to the corridor focuses growth in a series of compact centers along the highway, connected by express bus. Infrastructure improvements and other incentives encourage redevelopment of the failed shopping centers with attractive, higher density, mixed-use structures convenient to adjacent structured parking. Well-designed offices and higher density housing are added to the retail and service uses. As part of the redevelopment, a new internal street network creates real places and helps disperse traffic. Congestion has decreased due to reduced automobile use and availability of alternate routes. Another mixed-use area straddling the highway is developed further down, separated from the existing area by preserved open space. Air quality has improved. The surrounding dispersed residential areas, along with the woodlands and farmland, are preserved.
county system of highways supplemented by locally maintained roads. Investments in water and sewer are mainly in existing Centers.

In the Fringe Planning Area, the State Plan’s intent is to employ this Planning Area as a “buffer” or “transition area” in the following important ways:

- Direct growth into and revitalize cities and towns
- Accommodate additional future growth through more compact, center-based developments
- Confine future sewer and public water service areas to center-based developments
- Enhance the character of existing stable communities
- Protect the existing environs primarily as open space and farmlands
- Protect natural resources
- Provide a less developed buffer between more developed Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas and less developed Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas
- Devise and implement long-term planning strategies to stabilize the existing character of these Fringe Planning Areas.

4. The Rural Planning Area – The Rural Planning Area – including the Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area – comprises much of New Jersey’s countryside, where large masses of cultivated or open land surround rural Regional Centers, Towns, Villages and Hamlets. Relatively isolated residential, commercial and industrial sites are clearly distinguishable from typical suburban development in this Planning Area. The open lands of this Rural Planning Area include most of New Jersey’s prime farmland, which has the greatest potential for sustaining continued agricultural production in the future along with forested woodland tracts. These areas along with the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area – Planning Area 5, serve as the “greensward” for the larger region and are not currently nor are they expected to be urban or suburban in nature in the future.

This classification also includes a sub-Planning Area the Environmentally Sensitive/Rural Planning Area. The State Plan Intent for this sub-Planning Area is to support continued agricultural development on lands with environmentally sensitive features.

In the Rural Planning Area, the State Plan’s intention is to do the following:

- Maintain the environs as large contiguous tracts of farmland and open space
- Promote a viable agricultural industry and compatible off-the-farm economic opportunities for farmers
5. **The Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area** – The Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area contains large contiguous land areas with valuable eco-systems, geological features and wildlife habitats particularly in the Delaware Bay and other estuary areas, the Highlands Region and the Coastal Area. New Jersey's future environmental integrity and a substantial portion of its economy depends on the protection of these irreplaceable resources. Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas are characterized by watersheds of pristine waters, trout streams and drinking water supply reservoirs; aquifer recharge areas for potable water supplies; habitats for endangered and threatened plant and animal species, coastal and freshwater wetlands; prime forested areas; scenic vistas and other significant topographical, geological or ecological features, particularly coastal barrier spits and islands. These resources are critically important not only for the local residents of these areas, but for all New Jersey residents and tourists who may travel great distances to visit these sites.

Existing Centers within the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area have been, and often remain, the focus of residential and commercial growth and public facilities and services for their region, as well as supporting the travel, tourism and recreational industries. These Centers generally are linked to each other by rural roads and separated from other developments by open spaces or linked to the mainland by state highways crossing coastal wetlands and waterways.

- Protect environmental resources through the protection of large contiguous tracts of open space
- Accommodate growth in existing cities and towns and new Center-based developments
- Revitalize existing cities and towns
- Protect the character of existing stable communities
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)

Critical Environmental Sites & Historic/Cultural Sites

- Confine water supply and sewer systems to existing cities and towns and new Center-based developments
- Impose impervious cover restrictions and require restoration, maintenance and enhancement of the natural landscape.

This Planning Area also includes a sub-Planning Area, the Environmentally Sensitive/Barrier Islands Planning Area. The intent of this sub-Planning Area is to protect and enhance the existing character of the Barrier Island communities, minimize the risks of natural hazards, provide public access to coastal resources and maintain and improve coastal resources. The question of climate change and sea-level rising are obvious of deep concern with respect to the barrier islands.

In the Environmentally Sensitive sub-Planning Area or Planning Area 5B, the State Plan’s intention is to account for and/or to do the following:
- Seasonal population fluctuations
- Disaster and coastal hazard preparedness including those that may emanate acutely from sea-level rising and the increased frequency of extreme weather events
- Long-term coastal changes including those that may emanate more gradually from sea-level rising and beach erosion
- Extended tourist seasons and year-round residential development
- Protection of sensitive areas exposed to high public use
- Expansion of public access along beaches and bay fronts

Critical Environmental Sites & Historic/Cultural Sites

The State Plan relies upon Critical Environmental Sites (CES) as a primary means of identifying, protecting and managing areas of valuable natural resources that may be found throughout the State in locations other than the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area or Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area. For these identified and designated areas, the State Plan applies the intent and relevant provision of the environmental Statewide Policies of the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas.

Centers & Environs

Centers are compact forms of development that when compared to sprawl development, consume less land, deplete fewer natural resources, are usually less expensive in terms of infrastructure investment and are more efficient with respect to the delivery of public services. The Centers concept is the State Plan’s key organizing principle for development and redevelopment in the state. The State Plan’s strategy is to promote and accommodate growth in Centers, rather than continue to sprawl across the State’s dwindling farmlands, woodlands and remaining open spaces.

Centers are complex, richly textured living communities, where a physical framework of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces actively support the economy and fabric of civil society.
Rapidly Developing Suburban Fringe

Existing Conditions: The Garden State of New Jersey has some of the nation’s best farmland, yet much of this irreplaceable resource is currently zoned for low-density development. The farmland and open space forms a continuous, productive landscape. Woodlands and hedgerows provide important wildlife habitat. Buildings are clustered in farmsteads and hamlets. The local roads are designed for low levels of rural, farm traffic. The beauty of the rural landscape is an important asset for New Jersey.

Trend Development: Suburban development overwhelms the farmland, open lands and natural landscape. Rigid zoning codes create homogenous tracts of single-family homes, shopping centers and office parks. Individual septic systems increase chances to pollute the groundwater and conflict with wells. Local roads become congested and require widening, destroying the rural character. Conventional development creates visual monotony and clutter that replaces the once-scenic landscape.

Plan Development: New development occurs, but inspired by garden city ideals. Higher-density uses occur in a new village center, with larger lots on the outskirts. Compact growth preserves working farms, which are separated from the new community by green buffers that reduce conflicts. Natural systems handle wastewater and stormwater. Traffic congestion is limited, due to reduced automobile use. Sensitive design creates attractive new buildings and public spaces.
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)

Centers Components

Traditional compact communities have evolved and continue to evolve over long periods of time, demonstrating a frequently overlooked capacity for adapting to changing, and sometimes adverse circumstances. A community’s ability to respond positively to changing conditions is in part attributable to the basic soundness of its physical framework, which, unlike the uni-dimensional, single purpose developments typical of suburban sprawl, is designed to support a wide diversity of uses and activities for diverse users.

As Centers are planned to be the location of much of the future growth and development in New Jersey, it is critical that they be located and designed with the capacity to accommodate future desired growth. Promoting redevelopment in particular, is the key strategy for promoting and accommodating growth in New Jersey.

Centers Components

Centers have three fundamental components: Center Boundaries or “edges;” Cores and Neighborhoods.

Centers Boundaries

Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas have Center Boundaries or distinctive “edges.” The boundaries delineate the geographic focus of development and redevelopment activities, infrastructure and other investments. The delineation of the Center Boundary is less a concern for Centers in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas where the boundary or “edge” between development and undeveloped land is not clear.

Center Boundaries are delineated to reflect, where possible, physical features such as streets, streams or steep slopes, or changes in the character of development. Center Boundaries can be distinguished by greenbelts – large tracts of undeveloped or developed open space, including areas under cultivation, areas maintained in a natural state, parks or school playgrounds and areas with low intensity, land intensive uses such as golf courses or cemeteries. Center Boundaries may also be marked by “bluebelts” such as rivers, lakes or the ocean.

Cores

The Core is the commercial, cultural and civic heart of the Center or urban area. It is a bustling place which provides a dynamic setting for human interaction. Activities that generate the most pedestrian traffic, such as restaurants, retail services, should be focused in the Core. Cores can take a variety of physical forms including Main Streets, organized along one or both sides of a commercial street, and concentrated cores comprising one or more square blocks.

Neighborhoods

Distinct Neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of Centers. Neighborhoods are defined by walking distances. They contain balanced mix of uses and activities or contribute towards such a balance within the overall Center. Neighborhoods exhibit a distinguish-
able identity. They are known. The neighborhood may be characterized by its physical design features, by capitalizing on the presence of dramatic natural features, by some local institution, or by its ethnic, racial or religious character.

Types of Centers

Centers are recognized in a range of scales, from small hamlets to the State’s major urban centers. The SPPM applies different criteria and policies to the different types of Centers.

Urban Centers

Urban Centers are the largest of the State Plan’s five types of Centers. These Urban Centers offer the most diverse mix of industry, commerce, residences and cultural facilities of any central places in the state. While New Jersey’s Urban Centers have suffered from significant decline during the Post World War II period, they still contain many jobs and household residences. They are the repositories of large infrastructure systems – water, sewer, transportation – and a considerable number of manufacturing jobs, corporate headquarters, hospitals and medical centers, universities and research centers, government offices and cultural centers including performing arts centers, museums and sports arenas.

Regional Centers

In Metropolitan Planning Areas, Regional Centers may include some smaller cities not designated as Urban Centers. In the Suburban Planning Areas, Regional Centers often serve as major employment centers and often regional services such as higher education, health and arts/entertainment facilities. In the Fringe and Rural Planning Areas, Regional Centers are often population centers or county seats with small business districts serving local and neighboring municipality residents.

New Regional Centers should be located along the State’s major transportation corridors and designed to organize growth that otherwise would sprawl throughout the corridor, creating difficult to service demands. They should be relatively compact and contain a mix of residential, commercial and office uses at an intensity that will make a variety of public transportation options feasible as the Centers build out. New Regional Centers should have a core of commercial activity. The Centers boundaries should be relatively well-defined by open space or significant natural or human-made features.
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)

Types of Centers

Towns

Towns are the traditional centers of commerce or government throughout the state. They are relatively freestanding in terms of their economic, social and cultural functions. They may contain several neighborhoods that together provide a diverse housing stock in terms of types and price levels. Towns are relatively compact, usually with a defined central core containing shopping services, offices and community and government facilities.

New Towns should seek to emulate to the extent feasible the most cherished features of these traditional New Jersey towns which may have organically grown over centuries. They offer an attractive setting, built to human scale with blocks, streets and open spaces. They are walkable, providing easy access to civic and community activities. Larger towns provide a collection of neighborhoods offering diversity in terms of culture and style as well as housing price range and tenure choice.

Villages

Villages are compact, primarily residential communities that offer basic consumer services for their residents and nearby residents. They may also offer more specialized services to a wider area. Villages are not meant to provide major regional shopping or employment for their regions.

New Villages will comprise a small core and collection of neighborhoods. In the Suburban Planning Area, new Villages are likely to be distinguished from surrounding development only by a more cohesive and structure development form; and by greater proximity between residential and non-residential uses. The Village Center may consist of limited retail and/or public buildings, e.g., the municipal building or post office. In the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, new Villages should be surrounded by natural areas, farmland or greenbelts of open space. Commercial activities may fill the center or core. Those activities should be capable of offering neighborhood-scale goods and services.

Hamlets

Hamlets are the State Plan’s smallest types of Centers. Existing Hamlets are found primarily in rural areas, often at crossroads. Hamlets are not synonymous with conventional single-use residential subdivisions. Although Hamlets are primarily residential in character, they may have a small, compact core offering limited convenience goods and community activities, such as a multi-purpose community building; a school; a house of worship; a tavern or luncheonette; or a commons or similar land uses. The density of a Hamlet should conform to the carrying capacities of the natural and built systems.
State Plan Policies for Centers

The Resource Planning and Management Structure includes policies that address the locations and function of Centers. These policies include providing land for growth in Centers, balancing growth between the Centers within a region to accommodate projected growth, utilizing capacity information to designate Centers and designing Centers to make them attractive and more livable.

State Plan Policies for Environs

Areas outside of Center Boundaries are the Environs. The Environs contain large contiguous areas of farmland, open space and forests or woodlands. The strategies expected to be applied to preserve the Environs include density transfers into Centers, purchasing or donating easements, restricting the extension of capital facilities and adopting ordinances that limit development.

The Metropolitan Planning Area does not generally have Environs in the form of open land separating communities and protecting natural and agricultural resources. In most instances, the large tracts of contiguous farmland, forests and environmentally sensitive lands in Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas function as the Environs of the Metropolitan Planning Area. In the Suburban Planning Area, the Environs should be established to separate Centers without compromising the area’s capacity to absorb projected growth. The State Plan Policy Objectives for the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas specifically call for protection of the Environs from development.

Growth otherwise planned for the Environs should be focused in Centers. Development in the Environs should maintain and enhance the farmland, natural resources and character of the area. It should use creative land use and design techniques to ensure that it does not exceed the capacity of the natural systems and existing infrastructure. The State Plan Policies for the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas should employ comprehensive planning and consistent capital investment and regulatory strategies to continue to preserve large contiguous tracts surrounding Centers with greenbelts where practical, and ensuring that development in the Environs meets the State Plan’s Policy Objectives of the relevant Planning Area while transferring density from the Environs to Centers. Prior public investments in farmland and open space preservation should remain protected.

Special Use Designations

Within an established planning area, there may be more localized special uses that, by their nature and character require policies and regulations that are particular to that use. The use may be incompatible with uses recommended for the particular Planning Area, but may not be of sufficient size or scale to qualify for its own planning area designation. Accordingly, the State Plan acknowledges the identification of “Cores,” which are locations hosting more intense development than the surrounding development; or “Nodes,” which are areas of a specialized, dedicated use. The establishment of these concepts allows for local planning to support these uses to adequately accommodate them.

These areas should be identified through Plan Endorsement, employing that process to evaluate the planning context in which these areas are being established and to assure that they are appropriately designed and scaled for their location. Policies should be enacted that support properly located and established “Cores” or “Nodes,” e.g., infrastructure investment decisions, impervious coverage restrictions, and appropriate zoning designations.
The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM)
Cores & Nodes

**Cores**

Cores are downtowns and major neighborhood commercial concentrations in urban areas, suburbs and centers. They are characterized by their greater intensity and mixed-uses. When located within a Center, a Core identifies the commercial, cultural and civic heart of the Center. Cores denote locations that provide a focus for human activity and interaction. Cores in villages tend to be considerably smaller than those found in cities and suburbs. They may be comprised of no more than a handful of civic and commercial buildings around a public space, and supported by concentrated higher density housing. A Core should be an area identified within a Designated center. However, within Planning Areas 1 and 2, a Core may be designated outside of a Center due to the overall existing dense pattern of development in these areas of the State.

**Nodes**

- **Agricultural Nodes**

  New Jersey’s agricultural industry is largely located in the State’s predominantly rural areas, delineated for the purposes of the State Plan in Planning Areas 4, 4B and 5. The State Plan’s policies discourage unmanaged growth and development in these Planning Areas in an effort to preserve and protect the working and natural landscapes associated with these Planning Areas. However, to maintain and enhance the economic viability of agriculture as an industry, supportive infrastructure and services must be located in close proximity to farming activity. To minimize any adverse impacts of these uses on the landscape, it is useful to concentrate these activities in appropriate locations with suitably planned and implemented measures to protect the characteristics of surrounding areas. To acknowledge the importance of agriculture-supportive infrastructure and services the State Plan includes Agricultural Node designation. The Agricultural Node will be established and mapped through the Plan Endorsement process. They should be strategically located to utilize existing infrastructure where possible and provide maximum support to the local agricultural community.

- **Industrial Nodes**

  Within any planning area, there may be an area where localized industrial development exists or is anticipated. The future economic vitality of the State will rely upon the ability to adapt to changing industrial needs, to anticipate new opportunities and to balance the opportunities with the constraints the State currently faces.

  An area dedicated to commercial or industrial development may be designated and incorporated into a county or municipal master plan. Identification of appropriate locations for such uses may result from a determination that it is desirable to segregate the use because of incompatibility with other uses such as residential development; or the benefits available by consolidating industrial or commercial uses in an suitable location to improve services to those uses.

  Designation of “Heavy Industrial” or “Commercial or Light Industrial” Nodes is to occur through the Plan Endorsement process. Local community effects, environmental and transportation impacts ought to be weighed against potential economic benefits. Input from the relevant State departments and agencies ought to be provided in making such a determination. A commitment from the host municipality to properly plan for these uses is essential. State government support may be required if the municipal costs outweigh local benefits, but the commercial/light industrial activity is considered to be beneficial to state interest.
Plan Adoption & Revision

The Plan Adoption & Revision Process

The State Planning Act created a statewide planning process that it dubbed “Cross Acceptance.” That process ensures that government at multiple levels as well as the public-at-large participates in the preparation of the State Plan and with its periodic revision. The State Planning Act describes the Cross Acceptance Process in the following way:

“… a process of comparison of planning policies among governmental levels with the purpose of attaining compatibility between local, county and State plans. The process is designed to result in a written statement specifying areas of agreement or disagreement and areas requiring modification by parties to the Cross Acceptance. (N.J.S.A. 18A-202b).

Cross Acceptance follows a set of prescribed steps that includes an initial comparison phase, negotiation, public hearings and the commissioning of an independent assessment to examine the economic, environmental, infrastructure, community life and intergovernmental coordination aspects of the State Plan, followed by a final review phase with additional public hearings before the State Plan is finally adopted by a vote of the State Planning Commission. This process is unique in the country, but provides enormous opportunity for public participation and involvement.

Implementation

Implementation of the State Plan’s vision and goals through its Statewide Policies, State Plan Policy Map, Resource Planning and Management Structure and the Cross Acceptance process is neither simple nor straight-forward. The situation is complicated by the fact that the State Planning Act is silent on the question of implementation. Even if the State Legislature had been more explicit about implementation, State Plan implementation would be difficult without guidance on the way the broad sweep of the State Plan is to relate to prior legislative enactments and those that would certainly come subsequent to the State Planning Act. This situation is especially problematical with respect to the NJDEP, which functions predominantly as a regulatory agency and administers more than a dozen statutes affecting regulatory programs that touch on the Planning Areas affected by the State Plan.

Without State departments and agencies moving further to incorporate the State Plan into their plans, policies, investments and regulatory decisions, a major component of State Plan implementation will fall short. The effort on the part of State Departments and Agencies is essential because it is through their collective aegis that counties and municipalities will uncover the incentives and disincentives that they will require as motivation to change their planning and decision-making behaviors.

The Office of Smart Growth (OSG) administers a certification process called “Plan Endorsement.” The Plan Endorsement process is a certification process by which primarily municipalities and to a lesser extent counties have presented themselves for certification that they have complied with the State Plan and accordingly seek the “blessing” of the State Planning Commission. That certification...
Plan Adoption & Revision

Monitoring and Evaluation

should serve as authorization to State departments and agencies throughout State government to begin to prioritize their respective processes and resource allocations to the benefit of those who have passed this test. Plan Endorsement only occurs if and when the State Planning Commission is satisfied that a municipality’s plan is consistent with the State Plan’s vision and goals.

Regional entities and counties are strongly encouraged to present regional and county plans to the State Planning Commission for endorsement as well. These plans will be expected to take a regional perspective into account, including regional growth projections and capacity analyses.

Having a plan endorsed by the State Planning Commission provides the opportunity for a municipality, a county or a regional agency to implement the plan with priority for state discretionary funds as well as expedited permitting and enhanced planning assistance. Even more importantly, however, may be the benefits gained by coordinating their plans and regulations with state departments and agencies, ensuring a statewide, coordinated and integrated vision for the future in addition to the inherent benefits of undergoing a thorough and thoughtful multi-jurisdictional planning process.

While the Plan Endorsement process provides a formal method of aligning local and regional plans with the State Plan as well as access to a wide array of state agency programs, all municipalities may not wish to engage in this program. Nevertheless, the Plan Endorsement process provides a valuable guide for comprehensive planning that can serve as a structure for any planning entity to follow. The concept of integrating all aspects of planning with state or region wide goals as well as utilizing innovative and novel planning implementation mechanisms to achieve local goals will always have value, regardless of context. The recognition of how any of the state’s 566 municipalities appropriately fits within the broader framework of the State Plan should always be a basic element of local planning efforts.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The State Planning Act requires the State Planning Commission to include “the appropriate monitoring variables and plan targets in the economic, environmental, infrastructure, community life and intergovernmental coordination areas to be evaluated on an on-going basis….” In response, the State Plan identifies six critical indicators and targets that relate to these five areas and ## additional indicators that offer additional monitoring of trends. In addition, the State Plan considers the results of an Infrastructure Needs Assessment and an Impact Assessment Study, both of which are prescribed by the State Planning Act.

Impact Assessment of the New Jersey State Plan

Prior to adoption of the State Plan, a detailed analysis of alternative growth patterns was tested. This analysis, The Costs and Benefits of Alternative Growth Patterns: Impact Assessment of the New Jersey State Plan, was performed by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University. Two growth scenarios were compared: TREND, a continuation of current development traditions in the absence of the State Plan and PLAN, based on implementation of the State Plan’s strategies and policies. Based on a quantitative analysis of economic, environmental, infrastructure, community life and intergovernmental coordination implications, the research team concluded that New Jersey would grow by ##### people, #### households and #### jobs (not including agricultural jobs or self-employment) over the 20-year period under both scenarios. In both situations, quality of life in the state will continue to increase. However, by following the State Plan, urban communities will see their
populations rise by #### more people than under trend development patterns. The plan would also increase jobs and income in New Jersey’s cities, inner suburbs and rural towns, doubling the number of new jobs in urban communities. With full implementation of the State Plan, the benefits for New Jersey in 2030 will include:

**Infrastructure Needs Assessment**

Infrastructure is the foundation of a sustainable state, supporting a productive economy, a healthy environment and a just society. The State Plan defines infrastructure as those capital facilities and land assets under public ownership, or operated or maintained for public benefit, that are necessary to support development and redevelopment and to protect public health, safety and welfare. Investment in capital facilities and other infrastructure is one of the most powerful tools available to implement comprehensive plans for development and redevelopment. The New Jersey State Planning Act recognizes the importance of infrastructure by promoting development or redevelopment where infrastructure capacity exists or may be readily provided and discouraging development where capacities are limited.

Key findings of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment include:

**KEY RESULTS FROM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT INSERTED HERE:**
Plan Adoption & Revision
State Agency Functional Plans

State Agency Functional Plans

Strategic plans are now being applied by state agencies to guide public investments in economic development, transportation, energy, water supply, open space, higher education, affordable housing, the arts and other key infrastructure components. The importance of long range capital improvement planning as a management and fiscal planning tool to help state and local governments finance and build infrastructure is being increasingly highlighted, and is now part of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for public agencies.

Key Indicators and Targets

The State Planning Act requires the State Planning Commission to include “the appropriate monitoring variables and plan targets in the economic, environmental, infrastructure, community life and intergovernmental coordination areas to be evaluated on an on-going basis…”

In response, the State Plan identifies six key indicator and target series related to the eight goals of the plan.

1. Revitalize the State’s Cities and Towns
   - Indicator 1A: Municipal Revitalization Index in Planning Area 1 cities
   - Indicator 1B: Percent of Jobs in Urban Aid Municipalities
   - Indicator 1C: Percent of New Building Permits in Urban Aid Municipalities
   - Indicator 1D: Tax Base Differential Between Majority Planning Area 1 Land Municipalities and Statewide Average

2. Conserve the State’s Natural Resources and Systems
   - Indicator 2A: Loss of Farmland
   - Indicator 2B: Conversion of Farmland for Development Per Capita
   - Indicator 2C: Land Permanently Dedicated to Open Space/Farmland Preservation
   - Indicator 2D: Loss of Freshwater Wetlands
   - Indicator 2E: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

3. Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for all Residents of New
Indicator 3A: Meet Present and Prospective Needs for Public Infrastructure Systems
Indicator 3B: Agricultural Output
Indicator 3C: Municipalities with Median Household Incomes Less Than 50% of NJ Median
Indicator 3D: Percentage of Census Tracts with High Levels of Poverty

4. Protect the Environment
Indicator 4A: Percent of Potable Water Supplies Meeting All Standards
Indicator 4B: Number of Unhealthy Days Annually Caused by Air Pollutants
Indicator 4C: Percent of New Jersey Waterways Supporting Aquatic Life

5. Provide Public Services at a Reasonable Cost
Indicator 5A: Means of Transportation to Work
Indicator 5B: Progress in Socioeconomic Revitalization for Urban Aid Municipalities
Indicator 5C: Increase in Transit Ridership
Indicator 5D: VMT Per Capita

6. Provide Housing at a Reasonable Cost
Indicator 6A: Percent of Renters Unable to Afford a 2-Bedroom Home at Fair Market Rate
Indicator 6B: Number of Municipalities with COAH Certification
Indicator 6C: Ratio of Median Rent to Median Personal Income
Indicator 6D: Ratio of Median Home Price to Personal Income
Indicator 6E: Percent of New Units Permitted in Multi-Unit Buildings

7. Preserve and Enhance Areas with Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space and Recreational Value
Indicator 7A: Loss of Farmland
Indicator 7B: Land Permanently Dedicated to Open Space/Farmland Preservation
Indicator 7C: Loss of Freshwater Wetlands

8. Ensure Integrated Planning Statewide
Indicator 8A-1: Permits Issued in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas or Centers
Indicator 8A-2: Population in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas or Centers
Indicator 8A-3: Employment in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas or Centers

Epilogue
Epilogue

The circumstances and conditions faced by New Jersey at the time that this Plan was drafted will likely be very different when the next version of a statewide plan is created. An economic crisis, housing issues, budget constraints, local property taxes, threats to environmental resources and the perils of global climate change define our current concerns. Many of the issues addressed in this edition of the State Plan will likely continue to be significant challenges long into the future. When the next plan is written, an honest and frank analysis of the success or failure of our state to promote the goals and policies of this state plan must be conducted. That analysis should include an examination of a number of factors that influenced this version of the Plan. In the interval between this plan and the next version of the State Plan, how the following principals were addressed will be a measure of the state’s commitment to the plan’s policies and goals:

- Implementation of the State Plan should be prioritized over re-writing the policies and goals of the Plan
- Progress should be measured through objective ascertainable criteria and data collection and analysis should be conducted to assist in this examination
- Utilize creative methods of implementation of the State Plan’s policies and goals
- The State Plan Map should be utilized as a guide for planning and the pressure to utilize the map as a regulatory tool should be resisted.
- Integration of the policies and goals of the State Plan through
  - Inter-agency cooperation
  - Coordination of local land use decisions
  - Regulatory reform that is consistent the State Plan
- Align spending decisions and fiscal policy with the State Plan including capital and infrastructure investments
- Engage the Legislature in promoting the goals and policies of the State Plan through enactment of appropriate legislation
- Reduce the influence of the local property tax on land use decisions
- Provide significant affordable housing opportunities that are appropriate in design, scale, and location
- Significantly alter the trend in land consumption
  - Increase urban development and re-investment
  - Reduce loss of farmland and open space
  - Link development and transit
- Utilize eco-system services to reduce the impact of development, reduce long-term costs and improve quality of life

This plan should serve not only as a guide for future decisions, but also as a measure for future planners. Assessing whether or not the significant challenges of our time have been adequately addressed must inform the next generation of planners facing the task of producing a State Plan so that appropriate adjustments to policy and implementation mechanisms can be made. New Jersey is a remarkable state that provides both great opportunity and an excellent quality of life for its residents. The state also faces tremendous social, economic and environmental challenges. Successfully meeting those challenges will be the key to maintaining the factors that make our state a good place to live.
New Jersey Office of Smart Growth

Ben Spinelli  Executive Director

Planning
Karl Hartkopf  Director
Barry Ableman  Principal Planner
Leigh Jones  Planner
Stacy McCormack  Planner
Katherine Meade  Planner
Julius Richards  Planner
Lorissa Whitaker  Principal Planner

Policy
Joy Farber  Chief Counsel

Research
Steven Karp  Director
Jason Goldberg  Geographic Information Science
John Reiser  Geographic Information Science

Special Projects
James Requa  Director
Mukund Kumar  Project Specialist
Alan Miller  Outreach Program Manager
Brownfields Program Manager
Cynthia Weiser  Administrative Support

Brownfields
Donna Rendeiro  Director

Main Street New Jersey
Jef Buehler  Director
Heather McCall  Planner

Grants, Funding & Support
Jennie Purcell  Grants & Fiscal Manager
Denise Sampson  Technical Assistant
Dawn Starling  Secretarial Assistant 1
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