

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Governor Announces \$3 Million In 'Smart Growth' Planning Grants For Municipalities and Counties**

New, smart growth planning grants totaling \$3 million are now available for municipalities and counties, Gov. Christie Whitman and Community Affairs Commissioner Jane M. Kenny announced today.

Mayors of the Garden State's 566 municipalities and officials of 21 county governments are receiving a letter early this week from the Commissioner and a program guide outlining how to apply and how the grant requests will be judged.

"Our program to preserve 1 million acres of open space over the next 10 years is only part of the solution to providing our children and grandchildren with a New Jersey that they can enjoy in the future," said Gov. Whitman. "The other half of the equation is to encourage smart growth of the land that is to be developed and redevelopment of our cities and towns."

"These grants will enable counties and municipalities to develop plans that will lead to more livable and sustainable communities," said Commissioner Kenny. Sustainable communities are those that protect today's resources so they are there for the future.

"One of the goals of Governor Whitman and the Department of Community Affairs is the promotion of comprehensive, community-based planning that supports the department's varied initiatives in the areas of community development, affordable housing, redevelopment, capital planning and regional planning," she said.

"Until now, we have not been able to provide the financial support that so many cities and towns and suburbs and rural communities and counties have requested. That has changed. I am pleased that the Legislature agreed with Governor Whitman's inclusion of \$3 million for local planning assistance in the department's fiscal year 2000 budget," she added.

Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., Chairman of the State Planning Commission, applauded the Governor and the Legislature for new \$3 million appropriation in the Department's budget for planning grants.

"These grants present an exciting opportunity for municipalities and counties to show us what they can do to implement smart growth strategies in their local land-use decisions," Maraziti said.

There are three regional workshops scheduled for officials to explain the new grant program to representatives of municipalities and counties.

They are:

Oct. 4, 11 a.m. to noon, Department of Community Affairs, Room 129, 101 South Broad Street, Trenton;

Oct. 4, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., NJ Transit headquarters, fifth floor conference room, 1 Penn Plaza East, Newark; and

Oct. 7, 10 a.m. to noon, Atlantic County Library, 451 South Egg Harbor Road, Hammonton.

"I am looking forward to receiving proposals by counties and municipalities and working in partnership to create an economically prosperous and environmentally sound New Jersey," said Commissioner Kenny.

The program guide will be available on the Office of State Planning's web site. The address is <http://www.state.nj.us/osp/>

