

# STATE PLANNING NOTES

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## Gov. Whitman Gets National Honors For Smart Growth Planning Efforts

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Gov. Christie Whitman's efforts to make sure New Jersey grows smart are being recognized in a big way this spring.

In two days, the state's governor received national awards from both the American Planning Association and Renew America. The governor received a Renew America award for environmental sustainability in Washington, D.C., on April 17 and the APA's top honor for an elected official the next day at the APA's annual conference, which was held in New York City.

The awards kicked off a series of

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## \$2.4 Million in Smart Growth Grants To Help 92 Communities and 7 Counties

More than \$2.4 million in 21 new, smart growth planning grants have been awarded to help 92 municipalities and seven counties chart their futures in ways that curb sprawl.

"These grants will allow municipalities and counties to develop plans that will lead to more livable and sustainable communities," Governor Whitman said in announcing the \$2,405,085 in

grants at the Salem County Courthouse in Salem on March 22. Sustainable communities are those that protect today's resources so they are there for the future.

"Smart growth doesn't mean no growth. It means building where it makes sense and preserving land as much as we can. It means striking a balance," the governor added. "We want future generations to have a place to work, but

also a place to play. We want them to breathe the freedom from excessive government regulation, but we also want them to inhale clean air. And while we want them to achieve the American dream, we hope it's a beautiful place still worthy of their dreams."

"Smart growth is about building that future - a future of profitable development, livable communities and environmental integrity," she

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# Briefly...

## Bound Brook Hosts ULI Advisory Panel to Revitalize Flood-Flooded Downtown Area

The Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services Panel has provided its smart growth recommendations on redevelopment planning in Bound Brook, which suffered extensive damage from flooding.

On Sept. 16, Hurricane Floyd, a tropical storm by the time it hit New Jersey, combined with a weather system from the west and dropped significant rainfall in portions of the state. Clearly, the hardest-hit area was the Raritan River Basin and the downtown area of the Somerset County community of Bound Brook was devastated.

The institute's panel recommended a diversified revitalization strategy for the downtown area, including rehabilitation, neighborhood preservation, infill, selective demolition and relocation.

This strategy builds upon the traditional small town character of the downtown, proximity to the

Raritan River and the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, the availability of train service and the proximity to Interstate 287.

The plan also envisions the coordination of this effort with the ongoing planning efforts in neighboring South Bound Brook as part of a petition to the State Planning Commission for a joint town center designation.

"We need to incorporate smart growth principles in the decisions made regarding how much, what type, and where, reconstruction occurs after flooding," says Herbert Simmens, director of the Office of State Planning. "The joint efforts of our office, along with the ULI advisory panel and the state Department of Community Affairs, is an example of this approach."

This effort was funded through \$57,000 provided by the state Department of Community Affairs. Somerset County, the

Somerset Alliance for the Future and the Somerset Coalition for Smart Growth also provided financial assistance.

ULI's advisory panel process is 50 years old, but this is their first time in New Jersey. The panel was chaired by Smedes York, a developer and former mayor of Raleigh, S.C., and included eight experts in planning, design, real-estate market analysis, implementation and finance. A similar panel advised the City of Cedar Rapids, S.D., which was also devastated by a major flood.

The panel arrived on March 19 and presented its recommendations at a well-attended public meeting on March 24. The panel's recommended plan assumes that construction of a levee along the north bank of the Raritan and other flood-control measures under the aegis of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will remove future threats from the area.

## Hunterdon County Publishes Community Design Handbook

The Hunterdon County Planning Board has recently published, *Preserving Community Character in Hunterdon County—A Community Design Handbook*.

The "how to" manual includes planning tools and techniques found in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and discussed in a community design workshop conducted in 1998. During the workshop, local officials, developers and interested residents create site designs for residential and nonresidential developments using various planning and design tools.

The manual, funded by the Office of State Planning, offers a step-by-step process for developing community design guidelines. It also contains examples of specific guidelines that municipalities can incorporate into their own land-use ordinances.

In addition, it describes a planning technique called open space zoning, which is aimed at preserving farmland and open space in rural Hunterdon County and to provide more compact patterns of growth.

The handbook also offers answers to commonly asked questions concerning the legality of design guidelines, the strength of deed restrictions and conservation easements for open space, and wastewater treatment options associated with open space zoning, according to the book's introduction.

Principal authors are Linda B. Weber and Caroline J. Armstrong, who are both principal planners, and Assistant Planner James Kyle.

For more information, call the Hunterdon County Planning Board at 908-788-1490.

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# Chesterfield:

## *The State Plan in Action*

A cutting-edge, smart growth proposal by Chesterfield Township that would accommodate growth in a new, planned village and preserve the character of the village of Crosswicks and the hamlets of Chesterfield and Sykesville has received enthusiastic support.

At press time, the Commission was expected to approve Chesterfield Township's petition at its April 26 meeting, culminating a decade-long local planning and consensus-building effort.

This is the State Plan in action, said Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr.

A major component of Chesterfield Township's plans involves a voluntary Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) program to preserve agricultural lands in the 21.61-square-mile township in northwestern Burlington County.

Of the 13,830 total acres in the township, more than 6,600 of them are preserved. About 2,900 undeveloped acres in the township will be eligible for transferring development potential to the planned village, which is designed for future growth.

The TDC program is outlined in the township's master plan, which underwent a comprehensive revision before adoption in October 1997. Under the transfer concept, a receiving area is designated to receive development credits from a sending area consisting of the township's vast agricultural lands.

According to the township's petition, the new, planned village located about 2.5 miles southeast of the New Jersey Turnpike's Exit 7 will be a compact, mixed-resi-

dential community with a core of mixed uses for the economic, social and cultural activities of all of Chesterfield Township.

The new village would accommodate compact, as opposed to typical, suburban sprawling, land uses including commercial, office, public and recreational uses. In addition, there would be walkable neighborhoods containing a wide variety of housing types including low- and moderate-income housing units.

Since the Transfer of Development Credits program is voluntary, success is only assured if landowners transfer their credits. However, Chesterfield Township officials are confident that will be happen.

### **10-year Effort**

Chesterfield officials have been working on the transfer concept in conjunction with the Burlington County Office of Land Use for more than 10 years.

Dr. Edward Conway, Chesterfield Township's mayor and a member of the township Planning Board, praised the county Land Use office as well as state agencies for their cooperation and enthusiasm for his township's extensive efforts.

Herbert Simmens, director of the Office of State Planning, said the work done by Chesterfield in analyzing traffic impacts is a model for other communities throughout the entire state.

The township hired traffic engineer Mel Lehr to do a township-wide transportation study, which was incorporated into the 1997 master plan. The purpose of the

study was to develop recommendations for maximizing transportation efficiency in the township while also minimizing the effects of future growth.

The study compared two different future scenarios. One showed transportation needs if development continued under the existing zoning code; the other projected transportation needs if the Transfer of Development Credits program were implemented and funneled future growth into a new village.

This study, comparing the transportation impacts of center-based development versus sprawl, is unique in New Jersey, and its findings provide valuable input to the growth management debate in the state, said Simmens.

Simmens said the study was the first he's heard of in New Jersey that looks at the future implications of dependence on automobiles and compared a municipality's existing zoning as well as an alternate vision of a compact village center. It demonstrated fewer automobile trips in a Center versus existing zoning.

"This makes a very powerful argument to communities around the state for center-based development," Simmens said.

There are strong incentives for municipalities to participate in the state planning process. Municipalities and counties that have their plans endorsed by the Commission are entitled to greater priority to receive funding, permit review, and technical assistance from state agencies.

events occurring during Earth Week, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of Earth Day.

“I am delighted that our efforts in New Jersey to encourage sustainable business and smart growth are being seen nationally for what they are - a statewide commitment to make New Jersey a better place to live, work and raise a family,” said Governor Whitman.

“A sustainable society is all about protecting the resources we have today so they are here for tomorrow,” she said.

“In New Jersey, our state’s commitment to sustainability and smart growth is evidenced in many ways - and is all the more crucial for us since we rank as the nation’s most densely populated state,” she added. “Under my administration, we’ve committed to preserving 40 percent of the state as open space, promoting environmentally responsible industry, and encouraging successful urban redevelopment plans.”

The APA singled out New Jersey’s governor for the national planning group’s “Distinguished Leadership Award for an Elected Official.”

## Exemplary Record

“Her track record and support for planning in the Garden State is exemplary,” said Dennis Andrew Gordon, chair of the APA’s awards jury. “Under her leadership for the past six years, New Jersey has distinguished itself as one of the handful of states whose smart growth, open space protection and related efforts merit national acknowledgement.”

In announcing the award, the APA said that some of Governor Whitman’s most significant planning-related accomplishments

include:

- Implementing a state ballot initiative overwhelmingly approved by the voters in November 1998 to preserve one million acres of open space and farmland over the next decade; and
- Initiating state funding to help municipalities and counties do smart-growth planning. Recently, the Department of Community Affairs announced more than \$2.4 million in 21 grants based on applications by seven counties and 14 municipalities. In all, 92 municipalities, in addition to the seven counties, will be helped by the grants.

## Protect Resources

The APA also cited the governor’s initiation of a \$700 million housing program; increasing funding through the Transportation Trust Fund for local aid to \$130 million a year; and establishing publication of an annual report on the state’s progress in promoting sustainability. Basically, sustainability means protecting today’s resources so they are available for future generations.

Governor Whitman was also praised for consistent support for the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The plan is the blueprint for smart growth in the nation’s most densely populated state.

The State Plan presents strategies for New Jersey to grow in ways that make sense - and also saves billions of tax dollars.

In short, the State Plan lays out how to accomplish three key ideas for how we use our land rather than gobble it up by wasteful sprawl. They are: invest money and effort in our existing cities and towns; create new, real communities where people can live, work,

shop, play and raise families; and build in ways that conserve precious farmland, open space and natural resources.

Renew America’s award is for the governor’s multi-faceted Sustainable Development Program. According to the governor, her administration’s program won based on the synergy and effectiveness of four major initiatives. They are her historic open space and farmland preservation initiative; the State Plan; the Office of Sustainable Business; and the Urban Redevelopment Initiative.

Governor Whitman’s open space initiative provides over a billion dollars in stable funding to preserve an additional one million acres of land over the next decade for agriculture, recreation, greenways and watershed protection.

Another initiative key to the state’s Sustainable Development Program - that has been hailed as a model for smart growth - is the State Plan, according to the governor. This component helps refocus development to areas where infrastructure already exists in the state’s cities and older suburban areas.

The Urban Redevelopment initiative targets many of the state’s economic development incentives to New Jersey’s 27 Urban Enterprise Zones and other designated growth areas. Under this umbrella, the Urban Coordinating Council was initiated to work with 68 cities and towns to promote local revitalization plans.

## Brownfields

In addition, landmark legislation offers generous incentives for brownfields redevelopment, to which Governor Whitman recently committed \$15 million for a new



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## Highlands Deemed 'Special Resource Area'

The Highlands region in seven northwestern counties should be recognized as a "special resource area" for coordinated land-use planning, a committee of the New Jersey State Planning Commission has recommended.

The Plan Development Committee unanimously voted on Feb. 17 to recommend to the full Commission that it adopt language that incorporates the 1,000-square-mile Highlands province in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan as the first "special resource area."

The current State Plan, adopted in 1992, has no such language deeming any such area in New Jersey. If the Commission adopts the new, revised plan including the language, the Highlands would be the first such special resource area.

The Highlands stretches over an area spanning 90 communities in Morris, Sussex, Hunterdon, Bergen, Warren, Passaic and Somerset counties.

The designation would recognize that the Highlands province "is an area or region with unique characteristics or resources of statewide importance, ... which are essential to the sustained wellbeing and function

of its own region and other regions or systems ... and the quality of life for future generations."

Such systems could include environmental, economic, and social systems.

The recognition as a "special resource area" should stimulate and support collaborative planning to sustain the value of the Highlands' resources.

The intent of the recognition is to launch a coordinated regional planning effort, which includes local community leaders, state and federal agencies, as well as interest groups, and members of the public.

"The future of the Highlands will be determined in a cooperative, collaborative and inclusive process that brings community leaders and citizens together. For the planning process to succeed, we must have everyone at the table," said PDC Chairman Charles Kuperus. "It is important to note that this is not a state regulatory effort at all. Rather, it is a cooperative planning process."

More information about the Highlands is available by calling the Office of State Planning at 609-292-7156 or on the web site. The address is <http://www.state.nj.us/osp/>

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GOV. WHITMAN continued

program of grants for acquisition and cleanup of contaminated sites.

Another effort cited was the governor's creation of the Office of Sustainable Business, through an executive order issued on Earth Day in 1997, to promote environmental business growth. This was a first in the nation.

As a result, local markets for recyclables and the identification of "green technologies" for public projects are being expanded. A new, Sustainable Development Loan Fund helps companies reduce pollution, use recycled materials and conserve energy while creating jobs with over \$1.8 million having already been approved towards these efforts.

"The comprehensive nature of Governor Whitman's groundbreaking approach serves as a

guide to other states. It also illustrates the importance of regional and statewide planning to address the issues central to sustainable development - economic progress, improved quality of life, and respect for the environment," according to Renew America.

Renew America, a non-profit organization founded in 1989, coordinates a network of community and environmental groups, businesses, government leaders and civic activists to exchange ideas and expertise for improving the environment. By finding and promoting programs that work, Renew America helps inspire communities and businesses to meet today's environmental challenges.

In honor of Earth Day 2000, and in keeping with the White House

Millennium Council theme, "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future," Renew America and the National Awards Council for Environmental Sustainability reviewed a pool of nearly 200 programs that were honored over the past 10 years of award winners. Sixteen programs were chosen as exemplary models. For more information visit these web sites:

*American Planning Association -*  
<http://www.planning.org>  
*Renew America -*  
[http://www.crest.org/renew\\_america](http://www.crest.org/renew_america)  
*New Jersey Office of State Planning -*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/osp>  
*State of New Jersey*  
<http://www.state.nj.us>

said.

Seven, or a third of New Jersey's counties, were awarded grants for multi-jurisdictional projects. The Sussex County proposal involves all 24 of its municipalities. The other counties and the number of municipalities involved in county-led cooperative planning projects are: Mercer, 13; Middlesex, 12, Monmouth, seven; Hudson, seven; Atlantic, six; and Salem, five.

## Lovable and Livable

"I'm proud of the level of commitment to smart growth that we are seeing around the state," said Governor Whitman.

"Communities are serious about fighting sprawl, and I'm pleased to say that they are crossing municipal borders to work together on regional solutions. These citizens want to make sure that the New Jersey we know and love is not only lovable but also livable for their children, grandchildren, and generations to come."

The event included a check presentation to Salem County, which will receive \$125,000 to prepare a strategic plan for five communities along the Delaware River and the I-295/New Jersey Turnpike corridor. The study area is comprised of Oldmans, Carneys Point, Pilesgrove and Pennsville townships, and Penns Grove Borough.

For instance, Salem County's proposal for its strategic plan identified needs and issues in the region, particularly with respect to economic development, urban revitalization, housing, roads, sewer, water, transit, open space and recreation. The plan will pro-

file existing conditions, analyze trends, create a vision for the region, and develop an action strategy.

Once completed, the plan will serve as a guide for participating municipalities in updating their master plans and local ordinances. The plan will also go to the New Jersey State Planning Commission for endorsement. Communities that have been designated as centers under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, or have endorsed plans, are eligible for greater priority to receive certain state funding, permit approvals, and technical assistance.

## Sound Planning

"These smart growth planning grants provide funds for our communities to carry out sound and integrated planning," said Commissioner Jane M. Kenny of the Department of Community Affairs, which is administering the new program.

"I am looking forward to reviewing more proposals by counties and municipalities that work as partners to create an economically prosperous and environmentally sound New Jersey," said Commissioner Kenny.

The Department of Community Affairs is already receiving proposals for a second round of funding to continue the smart growth grants, expected later this year if the Legislature approves in the fiscal year 2001 budget the \$3 million appropriation proposed by the Governor.

Sussex County is the recipient of the largest award.

Commissioner Kenny presented a check for \$300,000 to Sussex County on April 7, at an event in Lafayette. State Sen. Robert Littell was on hand, along with members of the Sussex County Strategic Growth Committee. The committee is working on a regional plan that will find a balance between development and environmental protection in a way that recognizes property owners' rights as well as the need to insure the public good.

The largest awards announced by the Governor, in addition to Sussex County's, are:

- \$250,000 to Atlantic County for a growth management plan;
- \$250,000 to Monmouth County for its Route 9 corridor project;
- \$225,000 to the City of Trenton for its Canal Banks/West End community schools planning; and
- \$200,000 for the Hudson County Riverfront Walkway.

Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., Chairman of the State Planning Commission, applauded the Governor and Legislature for including the money in this year's state budget.

"Municipalities appreciate having additional tools that will allow them to grow smart. This grant program provides localities with extra help to promote comprehensive urban redevelopment that is sensitive to community needs, as well as efficient investment in and use of public infrastructure like roads, bridges and sewers; affordable housing; environmental, natural, historic and cultural resource protection; and farmland preservation," Maraziti said.

# Smart Growth Grants Summary

Here is a short list of each of the smart growth planning grants. The grants are administered by Commissioner Jane M. Kenny of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in consultation with the New Jersey Office of State Planning. Longer summaries of each of the projects being funded are available from the Office of State Planning by calling 609-292-7156 or on the web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/osp>

## County Proposals (alphabetically)

1. Atlantic County - Regional Strategic Growth Management Plan, \$250,000
2. Hudson County - Hudson River Waterfront Walkway, \$200,000
3. Mercer County - Enhanced Implementation of the Mercer County Access Management Plan, \$100,000
4. Middlesex County - Strategic Corridor Plans, \$160,000
5. Monmouth County - Route 9/Western Monmouth Corridor Region Development Plan, \$250,000
6. Salem County — Strategic Plan Proposal for the Urban/Suburbanizing Region Along the Delaware River, \$125,000
7. Sussex County - Regional Strategic Growth Management Plan, \$300,000

## Municipal Proposals (alphabetically)

1. Borough of Carteret (Middlesex County), Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan - \$57,000
2. Township of Clark (Union County), Essex Felt Mills Redevelopment Plan - \$27,760
3. Township of Cranford (Union County) Downtown

- Business District (Special Improvement District) Vision Plan - \$45,000
4. City of Millville (Cumberland County), Two Neighborhood Empowerment Strategic Plans - \$60,000
5. City of Newark/Township of Irvington (Essex/Union), Springfield Avenue Corridor - \$50,000
6. City of North Wildwood Regional Center Plan (Cape May County) (Wildwood, North Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and Borough of West Wildwood) - \$100,000
7. Phillipsburg (Warren County), Gateway Redevelopment Plan - \$44,500
8. City of Plainfield (Union County), Industrial Corridor Redevelopment Plan - \$100,000
9. Plumsted Township (Ocean County), Digital Mapping and Open Space Plan - \$6,725
10. South Amboy (Middlesex County), Comprehensive Revitalization and Redevelopment Plan - \$69,600
11. City of Trenton, (Mercer County), Planning for the Revitalization of the Canal Banks/West End Area - \$225,000
12. Township of Washington (Warren County), Farmland Preservation Plan Element - \$1,500
13. West Milford (Passaic County), Growth Management in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Highlands, Watershed) - \$125,000
14. Township of West Orange (Essex County), Tory Corner Redevelopment Plan/Edison National Historic Site - \$108,000

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## NOTES

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Governor Christine Todd Whitman  
Commissioner Jane M. Kenny  
Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr.  
Executive Director Herbert Simmens

New Jersey Office of State Planning  
Department of Community Affairs  
P.O. Box 204  
33 West State St.  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204  
609-292-7156  
609-292-3292 (fax)

Meeting information line:  
1-800-522-0129  
<http://www.state.nj.us/osp/>  
Editor: Kathleen Bird-Maurice  
Graphics Coordinator: Diane Chepega  
Layout: Steven Karp

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New Jersey Office of State Planning  
Department of Community Affairs  
P.O. Box 204  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204

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## Designing New Jersey Will Be Available Soon

*Designing New Jersey*, a new handbook soon to be published by the New Jersey Office of State Planning, is a celebration of the many examples of enduring community design found in the state and of the design principles that guided their development.

The design and physical planning of our communities and their environs - the way in which buildings, streets, activities and open space and physically organized and related - is critically important to all of us.

Quality design is indispensable to a sustainable future and to long-term environmental quality, economic vitality, and community stability of New Jersey. Design matters considerably, for both functional and aesthetic reasons. Design can be a powerful influence on human behavior

*Designing New Jersey* is authored by Carlos Rodrigues, manager, Special Projects. Expected to be available in June, this essential guide will be available from:

*New Jersey Office of State Planning  
Department of Community Affairs  
PO Box 204*

*Trenton, New Jersey 08625*

*(609) 292-7156 <http://www.state.nj.us/osp>*

### *Designated Centers*

Seventy-four communities are now designated by the State Planning Commission as centers, or are included in an endorsed regional plan.

The following center petitions were approved recently by the State Planning Commission:  
Atlantic Highlands (Monmouth County)—town center  
Dorchester, Leesburg,  
Heislerville, Port Elizabeth,  
Delmont and Bricksboro  
(Maurice River Township,  
Cumberland County)—village  
centers  
Mauricetown Station (Maurice  
River Township)—planned hamlet