



State of New Jersey

Housing Strategy & Progress Report

Executive Summary

Governor Sherrill's Blueprint to Build More Homes,
Lower Costs, and Protect New Jerseyans



September 2026



Fellow New Jerseyans:

Housing is the foundation of opportunity. Two generations ago, my grandparents moved into a home built through President Roosevelt's New Deal programs. That home built their American Dream and showed me how government can transform people's lives. I believe every New Jerseyan deserves a safe and affordable place to call home and the chance to live near the people, schools, jobs, and places that matter to them.

In conversations across our state, from cities and shore communities to suburbs and small towns, I continue to hear the same concerns: people are struggling to keep up with rising housing costs. Young people wonder whether they can afford to stay in the state they love. Parents like me worry that our children will have to move away. Seniors fear they will be priced out of the communities they helped build. Rents and home values alike are increasing faster than New Jerseyans' paychecks. That is why housing is central to my Affordability Agenda. You can't make New Jersey more affordable without making housing more affordable. As the country's most densely populated state, we need smart, environmentally conscious development near transit and opportunity so that our residents can stay and thrive here.

New Jerseyans know housing is too expensive. They don't have the patience for a ten-year study. In eight months, New Jersey did what other states have taken years to do: brought government together, examined our major housing tools, acted on immediate opportunities, and produced a statewide housing strategy.

Within my first 100 days, I signed Executive Order 17 and created the Housing Governing Council. Many agencies across state government are responsible for elements of the housing portfolio. For the first time, the agencies acted from a common mandate and a collaborative structure to review their land, programs, regulations, budgets, and processes to address the housing affordability crisis. Under the leadership of the Chief Operating Officer and the Co-Chairs of the Council, agency staff moved quickly to identify solutions and launch new, cross-functional initiatives.

This Strategy is the public result of that intensive effort, informed by conversations with hundreds of stakeholders from across the state. It establishes a statewide direction for building and preserving more homes, making government faster and easier to navigate, supporting municipalities, expanding access to rental housing and homeownership, and fighting to lower costs, stop unfair housing practices, and keep people housed.

We have already hit the ground sprinting. We advanced new developments near transit in Red Bank, Bayonne, and Linden under NJ TRANSIT's effort to build more housing; launched a permitting dashboard with six housing projects representing more than 3,700 potential homes and cleared major permitting backlogs; opened a new pipeline of housing investment through the State's tax-credit initiative; equipped 41 municipalities with hands-on development assistance; fully funded our homelessness response system for veterans; and cracked down on unfair practices that lead to egregious rent increases.

The work ahead is significant – largely due to failed leadership in Washington. Every day, the Trump Administration is making America less affordable, from tariffs and war that drive up construction costs to assaults on the social safety nets that make it harder for New Jerseyans to meet their needs.

With your help, New Jersey will chart a different path that drives down costs and expands opportunity. Consider this Housing Strategy a call to action and a canvas for the collaboration ahead—with legislators, mayors and local officials, builders, labor, advocates, lenders, service providers, and, most of all, residents of the State of New Jersey.

My Administration looks forward to continued partnership, as we get more shovels in the ground and stand up for New Jersey families.

A blue ink signature of Mikie Sherrill, the Governor of New Jersey, is located below the text. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mikie Sherrill
Governor, State of New Jersey

Executive Summary

Governor Sherrill immediately took decisive action to bring down housing costs. Within her first 100 days, she issued Executive Order 17, which established the Housing Governing Council and brought together agencies from across state government to address New Jersey's housing shortage and affordability crisis. She marked six months in office by signing the Forbidding Algorithmic Inflation of Rent (FAIR) Act to further regulate rent-setting algorithms and prevent collusion in the rental housing market.

The Governor gave the Council dual mandates: develop a long-term strategy and take immediate action to address housing costs. New Jersey's first-ever Housing Strategy turns that mandate into action. The Strategy presents a bold new plan to drive down housing costs, expand opportunities for New Jersey families, and take on harmful conduct.

The plan is organized around five pillars:



Pillar 1: Deliver more homes where New Jerseyans want to live, work, and stay



Deliver more homes where New Jerseyans want to live, work, and stay, by accelerating development near transit, transforming struggling office buildings and strip malls into vibrant communities, revitalizing New Jersey's historic main streets, building the affordable homes New Jersey needs across the State, and protecting the open spaces and environment that make New Jersey the Garden State.

Early progress:

- ✓ **Doubled the plan to build housing on state-owned land.** The plan estimates that state land can deliver between 37,200 and 42,800 homes, from Atlantic City to Jersey City. The Administration has quickly highlighted 15 new sites for housing and economic development.
- ✓ **Announced major progress on Transit Oriented Development.** The Sherrill Administration moved quickly to advance 15 high-quality sites for housing and economic development across New Jersey.
- ✓ **Launched New Jersey's first housing tax credit auction.** The auction authorizes the sale of up to \$500 million in tax credits to fund affordable and workforce housing.



Pillar 2: Increase New Jersey's speed to shovel



Increase New Jersey's speed to shovel

by accelerating New Jersey's State and local permitting and approval timelines, simplifying affordable housing finance application processes, streamlining housing regulations, and making it easier to navigate public sector tools and processes.

Early progress:

- ✓ **Issued Executive Orders to establish a whole-of-government approach to permitting and housing priorities**, emphasizing coordination, transparency, and accountability.
- ✓ **Launched a State permitting dashboard.** The pilot dashboard provides the public a real-time view of the permit status for 10 complex projects. Overtime the dashboard will become a broader tracking and accountability tool.
- ✓ **Announced early progress on key permitting processes** at DEP and DOT that are required for many housing projects.



Pillar 3: Partner with municipalities to build and preserve housing



Partner with municipalities to build and preserve housing

by providing incentives, shared services, and practical tools to help municipalities unlock housing opportunities, modernize and accelerate permitting and approval processes, meet their affordable housing responsibilities, and build the rental and for-sale housing that meet their communities' needs.

Early progress:

- ✓ **Signed legislation to create incentives for municipalities** that advance land use reforms, pro-housing policy, and new construction.
- ✓ **Tripled capacity in the NJ HOMES Program**, which provides technical assistance and planning grants to help municipalities build lifecycle housing.
- ✓ **Developed new tools to support municipalities with compliance**, including the ROAD to Housing Act and affordable housing obligations.





Pillar 4: Expand access to housing opportunities for New Jersey families



Expand access to housing opportunities for New Jersey families by investing in programs to increase access to homeownership, working to close the racial wealth gap, preventing the loss of existing affordable housing, and making the process of finding and applying for affordable housing faster, easier, and more equitable.

Early progress:

- ✓ **Updated the Housing Resource Center** to improve the housing search interface for low-income renters and launched a plan to build towards a common application for affordable housing.
- ✓ **Increased funding for Down Payment Assistance** to help 3,000 first-time and first-generation homebuyers achieve the American Dream of homeownership.
- ✓ **Sustained the State Rental Assistance Program** in the face of a major federal cutback of resources for low-income renters.



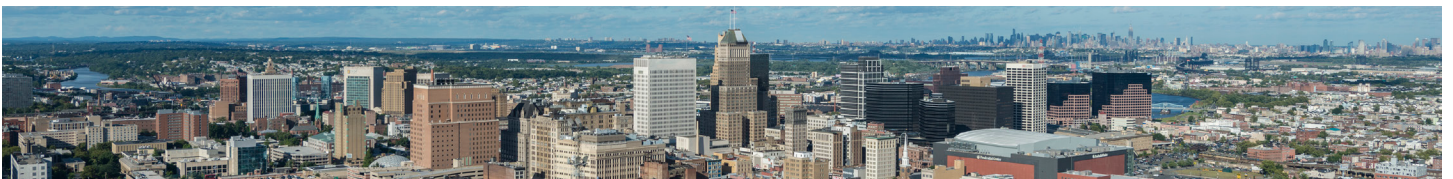
Pillar 5: Lower costs, fight unfair housing practices, and keep New Jerseyans housed



Lower costs, fight unfair housing practices, and keep New Jerseyans housed by taking on junk fees and high costs, cracking down on predatory activity and unfair pricing, challenging federal program cuts, preventing displacement and homelessness before it occurs, and quickly and safely housing unhoused New Jerseyans.

Early progress:

- ✓ **Signed the Forbidding Algorithmic Inflation of Rent Act** to further regulate rent-setting algorithms and prevent collusion in the rental housing market.
- ✓ **Announced renewed effort against housing discrimination** through the Attorney General's Office and the Division on Civil Rights.
- ✓ **Sued the Trump Administration** for attempting to add unlawful conditions to funding intended to address homelessness under the Continuum of Care (CoC) program.



This Housing Strategy is intended to frame the Administration's direction and offer a framework for collaboration and action. It does not dictate a single solution or demand a single policy approach. In partnership with State and local leaders, advocates, builders, labor, and other key stakeholders, Governor Sherrill looks forward to delivering more homes, lower prices, and stronger protections.