

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 17**

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 1, signed on January 20, 2026, made clear that the top priority of this Administration is affordability for all New Jersey residents and families; and

WHEREAS, creating housing opportunities for all New Jerseyans is a central part of this Administration's affordability agenda; and

WHEREAS, every New Jerseyan deserves access to a safe and affordable place to call home and the chance to live the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, a safe and affordable home can be central to the stability of New Jersey families and, for homeowners, a critical vehicle for generational wealth creation; and

WHEREAS, more than one-third of households, and more than one-half of renters, pay over thirty percent of their income for housing in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, housing costs have risen dramatically for New Jersey residents in recent years, with data showing that housing costs rose by thirty percent between 2021 and 2023, which is far faster than wage growth; and

WHEREAS, the median home price in New Jersey is above \$500,000, the median monthly rent is more than \$1,800, and average rents have reached over \$3,000 in some parts of the State; and

WHEREAS, cost burdens disproportionately fall on New Jerseyans of color, seniors, and families; and

WHEREAS, a major driver of increasing housing costs is a lack of supply of housing that is affordable to New Jersey residents; and

WHEREAS, while New Jersey has made progress building new housing compared to neighboring states, New Jersey has also seen the second largest decline in for-sale housing inventory of any state over the last five years; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey needs to build and preserve tens of thousands of homes over the next ten years in order to address housing needs in the State; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey must build and preserve tens of thousands of affordable units to meet the State's affordable housing obligations under the New Jersey Supreme Court's *Mount Laurel* Doctrine and the State's Fair Housing Act; and

WHEREAS, increasing the supply of housing of all types, from affordable and workforce housing to mixed-income and market rate housing, from rental housing to for-sale housing, is an essential part of this Administration's plan to make New Jersey more affordable; and

WHEREAS, as the country's most densely populated state, it is imperative to expedite the conversion of stranded assets into housing and build smart, environmentally conscious housing with access to jobs and transit while maintaining the Garden State's green spaces; and

WHEREAS, meeting the State's housing needs depends on not only investing in new homes and preserving existing homes, but also making it easier, faster, and less expensive to build in the State; and

WHEREAS, a critical component of meeting the State's housing needs is to ensure that all New Jerseyans can fairly and easily access our existing housing opportunities; and

WHEREAS, this Administration is committed to ensuring State government processes are efficient, accountable, and affordable, and that taxpayer dollars are invested wisely; and

WHEREAS, both rapid action and long-term planning are needed to accelerate the State's efforts to build new housing and lower costs across our communities as soon as possible;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MIKIE SHERRILL, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. For purposes of this Order, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. "Executive Branch departments and agencies" shall mean any of the principal departments of the Executive Branch of State government and any agency, authority, board, bureau, commission, division, institution, office, or other instrumentality within or created by any such department, and any independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or agency over which the Governor exercises executive authority, as determined by the Attorney General.
- b. "Affordable housing" shall mean housing affordable according to federal Department of Housing and Urban Development or other recognized standards for home ownership and rental costs and occupied or reserved for occupancy by households with a gross household income equal to eighty percent or less of the median gross household income for households of the same size within the housing region in which the housing is located.
- c. "Workforce housing" shall mean housing that is affordable to households with a gross housing income greater than eighty percent and equal to one hundred twenty percent or less of the median gross household income for households of the same

size within the housing region in which the housing is located.

- d. "Mixed-income housing" shall mean housing that includes a variety of housing units priced at different levels of affordability that encompasses at least two categories of housing defined herein as affordable housing, workforce housing, and market rate housing.
- e. "Mixed-use development" shall mean any development that includes both a non-residential development component and a residential development component.
- f. "Unutilized property" shall mean a parcel of real property owned by an Executive Branch department or agency that does not provide employee housing, does not generate revenue for the Executive Branch department or agency through a lease or other agreement, is not a single-family (one to four unit) residential property held as a Real Estate Owned property that is offered for sale, and does not serve a public purpose.
- g. "Underutilized asset" shall mean an asset that is:
  - i. substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent;
  - ii. abandoned, in whole or in part;
  - iii. partially undeveloped; and/or
  - iv. not properly utilized, in whole or in part.
- h. "Surplus property" shall mean:
  - i. Executive Branch department or agency property that the head or principal executive of any Executive Branch department or agency, with the written

approval of the Governor, is authorized to sell or convey; and/or

- ii. Property of an independent authority, commission, instrumentality, or agency over which the Governor exercises executive authority, where the applicable Executive Branch department or agency shall find that it does not require such property or interest for any public purpose and that such sale or conveyance is in the best interests of the State.

2. Within forty-five days following the issuance of this Order, the Chief Operating Officer ("COO") in the Governor's Office shall convene a Housing Governing Council ("Governing Council") comprised of representatives of Executive Branch departments and agencies selected by the COO, including but not limited to the Department of Community Affairs ("DCA"), the New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("EDA"), the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency ("HMFA"), the Department of Law and Public Safety, the Department of the Treasury, and New Jersey Transit ("NJT").

3. The COO shall chair the Governing Council, and the Commissioner of the DCA, the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") of the New Jersey EDA, the Executive Director of New Jersey HMFA, and the CEO of NJT shall co-chair the Governing Council.

4. Within sixty days following the issuance of this Order, each Executive Branch department and agency shall submit a report to the Governing Council that addresses the following issues, to the extent applicable to the relevant department or agency:

- a. Ongoing investments and initiatives to reduce red tape and accelerate the production of affordable,

- workforce, and mixed-income housing, including initiatives that could be replicated by other Executive Branch departments or agencies;
- b. An inventory of land owned by the Executive Branch department or agency;
  - c. Unutilized property, underutilized assets, and/or surplus property of the Executive Branch department or agency that may be suitable for housing development, mixed-use development, or another use;
  - d. Existing and planned projects for housing development on Executive Branch department- or agency-owned land reasonably known to the Executive Branch department or agency;
  - e. Duplicative, outdated, obsolete, or conflicting rules, regulations, and requirements that slow or hinder housing development, or otherwise limit or prevent the delivery of housing assistance programs;
  - f. Proposals for new or updated programs, legislation, or regulations that would streamline housing production, reduce or stabilize costs, increase access to housing as a tool for wealth creation, and otherwise boost housing affordability;
  - g. Recommendations to improve processes and coordination among Executive Branch departments and agencies to accelerate housing development and between State and municipal governments, including the process for accessing Executive Branch

department or agency subsidy or financing programs; and

- h. Expertise, resource, or technology gaps within the Executive Branch department or agency that, if addressed, would accelerate housing production or improve customer experience in Executive Branch department or agency housing programs.

5. Consistent with applicable law, until an Executive Branch department or agency has complied with the directives in Paragraph 4, the Executive Branch department or agency shall not dispose of property it owns without the approval of the COO.

6. The Governing Council is charged with formulating and presenting recommendations, which may rely upon reports and information obtained pursuant to Paragraphs 4 and 7, to the Office of the Governor to accelerate construction of housing across the affordability spectrum, preserve existing units, and improve access to housing and homeownership opportunities in New Jersey. The Governing Council shall issue its initial recommendations not later than one hundred fifty days following the effective date of this Order. The initial recommendations shall address, but not be limited to, the following priority areas:

- a. Proposing housing goals for this Administration to guide long-term planning and implementation efforts;
- b. Tracking and accelerating housing production, taking into consideration the goals and directives in Executive Order No. 5 (2026), and in consultation with the Cross-Agency Permitting Team identified in that Order;

- c. Developing Executive Branch department- or agency-owned unutilized property, surplus property, and/or underutilized assets into housing;
- d. Coordinating and developing funding and financing processes for housing development across Executive Branch departments and agencies; and
- e. Inventorying and increasing access to existing affordable and workforce housing units across the State.

7. Consistent with applicable law, the Governing Council is authorized to establish appropriate rules of procedure for its meetings and sharing of information, and to call upon any Executive Branch department or agency to supply it with data and any other information or assistance available to such Executive Branch department or agency as the Governing Council deems necessary to execute its duties under this Order. Each Executive Branch department and agency is hereby required, to the extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate fully with the Governing Council within the limits of its statutory authority and to furnish it with such assistance on as timely a basis as is necessary to accomplish the purpose of this Order.

8. Any reports, records, recommendations, or other information created pursuant to this Order shall constitute advisory, consultative, and deliberative materials for the Governor's review and shall be deemed to be confidential, non-public, and not subject to the Open Public Records Act, P.L.1963, c.73, as amended and supplemented.

9. To support the Governing Council's mission, the COO is authorized to expedite procurement processes to the maximum extent permitted by law, including by waiving competitive bidding requirements where authorized by statute to build, update, or

acquire technology systems, consulting services, and other resources necessary to meet inventory and affordable housing goals and implement the recommendations and processes required by this Order.

10. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to create a private right of action to enforce any provision of this Order or any rule, guidance, recommendation, or Executive Branch department or agency action developed pursuant thereto.

11. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to alter or limit any statutory authority of any Executive Branch department or agency, or to require the disclosure of information that is confidential, privileged, or protected from disclosure by law. This Order shall be implemented in a manner consistent with all applicable State and federal law.

12. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this  
27<sup>th</sup> day of April,  
Two Thousand and Twenty-Six,  
and of the Independence of  
the United States, the Two  
Hundred and Fiftieth.

[seal]

/s/ Mikie Sherrill

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Timothy P. Lydon

Chief Counsel to the Governor