



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 820
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0820

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

LT. GOVERNOR TAHESHA L. WAY
SECRETARY OF STATE

THOMAS K. WRIGHT
CHAIRMAN

WALTER C. LANE
Executive Director/Secretary

**New Jersey State Planning Commission
Minutes of the Meeting Held on December 17, 2025
Zoom Video Conference**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wright called the December 17, 2025, video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 10:32 a.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

It was announced that notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting had been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority
Joe Grillo, Designee for President Christine Guhl-Sadovy, Board of Public Utilities (joined at 10:38 a.m.)
Susan Weber, Designee for Francis K. O'Connor, Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Bruce Harris, Municipal Member
Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection (joined 10:37 a.m.)
Edward J. McKenna, Vice Chair, Public Member
Keith Henderson, Designee for Jacquelyn Suarez, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs
Shanel Robinson, County Commissioner Executive Director, County Member
Elizabeth Terenik, Public Member
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Lt. Governor Tahesha Way, Secretary of State, Department of State
Stephen Santola, Public Member
Julia Somers, Public Member
Jeffrey Oakman, Public Member
Thomas Wright, Chairman

Others Present through Video conference

See Attachment A

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Wright asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Jeffrey Oakman nominated Edward McKenna to be the Vice-Chair of the State Planning Commission. Stephen Santola seconded the nomination. Julia Somers made the motion, and Bruce Harris seconded it. Chairman Wright thanked Mr. McKenna for his extraordinary leadership given to the Commission.

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (11) Danielle Esser, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (1) Edward McKenna. The motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 5, 2025, with no changes. The motion was made by Edward McKenna and seconded by Danielle Esser. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0) The November 5, 2025, minutes were approved.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Wright highlighted the significance of adopting a new State Development and Redevelopment Plan after over two decades, acknowledging the efforts of the Commission, staff, state agencies, local and county representatives, and citizens of New Jersey in shaping the final document.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Lane noted that all comments received in the chat feature will be read into the meeting record. He proceeded to provide a brief overview of the Office's work since the November 5, 2025 State Planning Commission meeting, with the exception of State Plan updates, which would be covered later in the meeting.

Executive Director Lane stated the Commission will be taking action on Ocean Township's and Red Bank's plan endorsement petitions. Woodstown's petition will be rescheduled for a later meeting. Executive Director Lane also introduced Laura Gould as the new Assistant Planner.

Staff continues to attend various meetings including:

The Route 29 Study, South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization TAC Meeting, NJ Coastal Coalition Meeting, New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference, the GIS Coordinators Roundtable, the Plan4Health NJ Advisory Committee Meeting, New Jersey One Health Stakeholder Workshop, Interagency Council on Extreme Heat Coordinated Communications Workgroup Meeting, NJ County Planner State/Smart Growth Committee Meeting, and the OPA/DEP Mapping Managers Meeting, OPA/DEP Staff Level Mapping Meeting.

Executive Director Lane also attended the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association's recent awards ceremony, at which Commissioner Somers received the Distinguished Civic Leadership Award for her

efforts with the Highlands Coalition. Executive Director Lane recognized Commissioner Somers for her great achievement.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2025-13 Adopting the Plan Endorsement Petition for the Borough of Red Bank, Monmouth County, and Designating a Regional Center

Chairman Wright introduced Assistant Planner Felix Zamora to present the Borough's Plan Endorsement Petition to the Commission. Before Mr. Zamora began his presentation, Executive Director Lane thanked Commissioner Angarone and the NJDEP team for working with staff to bring these petitions to the Commission, especially Dave Dumont, for assisting the office with the mapping related to plan endorsement.

Mr. Zamora proceeded to present the Borough of Red Bank Plan Endorsement petition. The presentation can be found at: https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/meeting-materials/12.17.25.spc_red.bank.presentation.pdf

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_13.pdf

Chairman Wright commented that Red Bank exemplifies the State Plan's dual objectives; creating a historic, walkable, compact center while clearly identifying environmental sensitive areas. Their planning demonstrates that these goals can support and mutually benefit one another. Commissioner Somers stated that she attended the Plan Implementation Committee meeting, where representatives from Red Bank were present. As the Commission celebrates an update to the State Plan, she noted that Red Bank has transformed since the previous plan. She commended Red Bank for its considerable efforts and achievements.

Chairman Wright asked the Commission members if they had any questions or comments. With no comments or questions from the Commission, Chairman Wright asked if any members of public had any questions or comments. There were no questions or comments from the public.

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-13. The motion was made by Julia Somers and seconded by Jeffrey Oakman. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (13) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright Nays: (0). Abstains: (1) Edward McKenna. Resolution 2025-13 was approved.

Resolution 2025-14 Adopting the Plan Endorsement Petition for the Township of Ocean, Ocean County, and Designating One Town Center

Chairman Wright introduced Senior Planner Lisa Avichal to present the Township's Plan Endorsement Petition to the Commission. Before Ms. Avichal began her presentation, Ms. Avichal welcomed representatives from Ocean Township: Diane Ambrosio, Business Administrator, and Jason Worth, Township Engineer. Ms. Avichal proceeded to present the Township of Ocean Plan Endorsement petition.

The presentation can be found at: https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/meeting-materials/12.17.25.spc_ocean.twp.presentation.pdf

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_14.pdf

Diane Ambrosio, Business Administrator for the Township of Ocean, thanked Executive Director Lane and Ms. Avichal for their diligent work. She also wanted to recognize Donna Rendeiro for all her efforts in assisting the Township of Ocean.

Chairman Wright asked the Commission members if they had any questions or comments. With no comments or questions from the Commission, Chairman Wright asked if any members of public had any questions or comments. There were no questions or comments from the public.

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-14. The motion was made by Danielle Esser and seconded by Keith Henderson. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-14 was approved.

Resolution 2025-15 Adopting the Plan Endorsement Petition for the Borough of Woodstown, Salem County, and Designating One Town Center

Executive Director Walter Lane provided a brief overview of the status the Borough's Plan Endorsement Petition. He stated that in an effort to be able to act upon their petition before the new plan's potential adoption later this morning, he had added this item to today's agenda in anticipation of receiving two outstanding items from the Borough. These items were the resolution approving the map and documentation of the Borough's visioning efforts. We received the resolution. Due to staffing changes over the past two years at both OPA and at the Borough, neither party has been able to locate the documentation of the visioning efforts that were held in 2023. Executive Director Lane stated he hoped to resolve this matter shortly and to bring Woodstown's petition to the Plan Implementation Committee in the next month or two.

Chairman Wright asked for a formal motion to table Resolution 2025-15. The motion was made by Keith Henderson and seconded by Bruce Harris. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-15 was tabled.

Resolution 2025-16 Approving the 2026 State Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Executive Director Lane provided a brief overview of the annual meeting schedule, noting that the Commission meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of every month and will be held virtually.

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_16.pdf

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-16. The motion was made by Edward McKenna and seconded by Julia Somers. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-16 was approved.

Resolution 2025-17 Approving the 2026 Plan Implementation Committee Meeting Schedule

Executive Director Lane provided a brief overview of the annual meeting schedule, noting that the Plan Implementation Committee meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of every month except for November's meeting which will be held on Monday, November 16. All meetings will be held virtually.

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_17.pdf

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-17. The motion was made by Edward McKenna and seconded by Jeffrey Oakman. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-17 was approved.

Resolution 2025-18 Designation of Official Newspapers

Executive Director Lane stated that this resolution designates the Star Ledger, Asbury Park Press, Bergen Record, South Jersey Times and Press of Atlantic City as the Commission's official newspapers.

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_18.pdf

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-18. The motion was made by Danielle Esser and seconded by Shanel Robinson. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-18 was approved.

STATE PLAN UPDATE

Adoption of the Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) and the Final Infrastructure Needs Assessment (INA)

Executive Director Lane provided an update on the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, noting that the public comment period ended on December 3.

Impact Assessment (IA)

Executive Director Lane gave a brief overview of the status of the Impact Assessment (IA). The Commission adopted the Impact Assessment (IA) in August. He stated the comments received on the IA after its adoption were shared with Rowan for feedback. Since the IA was adopted and the contract with Rowan has ended, Executive Director Lane recommended that any decisions on addressing the requested changes should be postponed until the plan is adopted. He noted many of the comments received could inform the development of future IAs while some cannot be addressed due to data availability issues.

Infrastructure Needs Assessment (INA)

Executive Director Lane provided an update on the Infrastructure Needs Assessment (INA). The public comment period for the INA concluded on December 3, 2025. The Office received several comments on the draft INA, which were shared the Commission and Rutgers. Rutgers has addressed most comments; a subset could not be addressed due to data availability issues. The final INA was submitted to the SPC for review and comment on December 10, 2025.

State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP)

Executive Director Lane stated the Commission received numerous public comments on the draft Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The public comment period for the draft Final State Development and

Redevelopment Plan ended on December 3, 2025. Staff reviewed the proposed changes with the Plan Development Committee on December 10, and the Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan was distributed to the Commission for review and comment on December 12. Staff made efforts to improve readability and clarity, as well as to correct remaining grammatical and formatting errors, while striving to keep the plan as 'evergreen' as possible.

Executive Director Lane presented a comprehensive overview of the modifications made to the Plan, emphasizing improvements in readability, clarity, and the integration of public feedback. Chairman Wright acknowledged the leadership and support of Governor Murphy in making the plan possible, noting its potential as a policy tool for future governors. Executive Director Lane stated once the Commission approves the Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Infrastructure Needs Assessment, staff will publish the final documents within the next few weeks.

Chairman Wright asked the Commission members if they had any questions or comments. Commissioner Harris, Somers, and Santola thanked Executive Director Lane, Donna Rendeiro, and OPA staff for all of their efforts.

Commissioner Henderson asked for clarification on the State Plan Policy Map as it relates to the Highlands Regional Master Plan. Executive Director Lane explained that, according to the MOU, the State Planning Commission does not have jurisdiction over the Preservation Area, but does have authority over land preservation capabilities, zoning, and planning within the Highlands Planning Area. He emphasized that the Highlands Land Use Capability Zones are distinct, and that efforts are ongoing to ensure all mapped areas are aligned and accurately reflect current conditions. He also noted that the version of the State Plan Policy Map included in the final State Plan is a snapshot as of August, based on the best available data at that time. The office will be working on additional mapping changes after adoption.

With no additional questions or comments from the Commission, Chairman Wright asked if any members of the public had any questions or comments.

Joseph Maraziti provided comments in the chat congratulating and thanking all for their hard work. He acknowledged from his experience in the adoption of the 2001 Plan how critical the staff is to this success. He thanked Chairman Wright, Vice-Chair McKenna, all the members of the Commission, Donna Rendeiro, and Executive Director Walter Lane. He also recognized with appreciation the commitment of Governor Murphy to this work.

Donna Rendeiro congratulated the Governor's Office, State Planning Commission, Executive Director Lane, and staff for all their hard work and efforts.

Tom Dallessio, Vice President of Policy, American Planning Association – NJ Chapter, highlighted the plan's significance in coordinating state and local planning actions. (See Attachment B)

Chuck Latini, President, American Planning Association – NJ Chapter, thanked the staff for all of their efforts. He stated that this Plan serves as a roadmap for the next Governor, and hope remains for continued state-level coordination and leveraging of resources to bring about local action and implementation.

Sheena Collum, Executive Director, American Planning Association – NJ Chapter, acknowledged that this effort kicked off two years ago, and recognized the extensive public engagement process. Ms. Collum discussed her experience with local planning, highlighting the importance of community engagement, transparency, and the need for an updated plan. Ms. Collum emphasized the significance of public input, the challenges of administrative processes, and real need for planning to benefit the community, particularly in New Jersey. Ms. Collum thanked the Commission, Donna Rendeiro, Walter Lane, and OPA staff for all of their efforts.

Glen Van Older, NJ Farmer Bureau, expressed thanks to the Commission, Executive Director Lane, and OPA staff for all of their efforts.

Resolution 2025-19 Approval of the Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Final Infrastructure Needs Assessment

Executive Director Lane provided a brief summary of the resolution to adopt the Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan as well as the Final Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

The Resolution can be found at:

https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/documents/resolutions/12.17.25_certified_resolution_2025_19.pdf

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-19. The motion was made by Edward McKenna and seconded by Julia Somers. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (14) Danielle Esser, Joe Grillo, Susan Weber, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2025-19 was approved.

Executive Director Lane expressed gratitude to the Commission, staff, counties, municipalities, the Governor's Office and consultants for their collaboration in completing this complex process.

Commissioner Oakman highlighted the efforts of several individuals in the Governor's Office who played key roles in advancing the Plan.

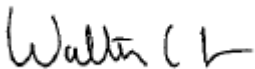
PUBLIC COMMENTS

Matt Williams introduced himself and stated he was looking for more information about the Plan. Executive Director Lane asked Mr. Williams to contact him to set up a time to discuss the Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Edward McKenna and seconded by Julia Somers. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Walter C. Lane
Secretary and Executive Director
Date: January 7, 2026

ATTACHMENT A
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES
DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2025 TIME: 10:32 AM

Adriana Zarza, NJDOT
Allison Bittner, Highlands Council
Andras Holzmann, Passaic County
Andy Jackson
Angela Knowles, APA-NJ
Anthony Soriano, Morris County
Barry Ableman
Barbara Woolley-Dillon, NJDEP
Bob Kull
Brendan Lamb, Hunterdon County
Brianna Keys
Charles Latini, PP, AICP
Charles Shadle
Colleen McGurk, PP/AICP
Dave DuMont, NJDEP
David Schley
Diane Ambrosio, Ocean Twp.
Dillon McNamara
Donna Rendeiro
Elizabeth
Elliot L. Godwin
Gabriela Duncan
Glen Van Olden, NJ Farm Bureau
Grant Lucking
Heyer, Gruel & Associates
H.Knight
Jacob Moffatt
James Humphries, Highland Council
Jason Kasler, AICP, PP - NJPO
Jason Miranda
Jason Worth, Ocean Twp.
Jelena Lasko, NJDOT
Joseph A. Brosnan
Joseph Maraziti
Kamal Saleh, Union County
Katherine Fullerton, Hunterdon County

Langley Oudemans
Lauren Staiger
Matt Baumgardner
Matt Williams
Maura Fennessy
Max Carlson, Warren County
Melanie Rodrigo
Michael Davis, Planner
Mike Manzella, Jersey City
Miranda Alperstein
Oriana
Ruth Foster, NJDEP
Ryan Conklin, Warren County
Ryan Gleason
Shamar White, NJEJA
Sheena Collumn
Steven Karp
Tom Dallessio, FAICP, PP
Tom Strowe
Wendy McVicker

ATTACHMENT B

Remarks On Adoption of 2025 NJ State Development & Redevelopment Plan
Thomas G. Dallessio FAICP/PP/CPM/FRSA
Vice President of Policy, American Planning Association – NJ Chapter
December 17, 2025

Good Morning! I am Tom Dallessio, a licensed professional planner and a lecturer at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers University. I'm proud to have been a part of the drafting of all three State Development & Redevelopment Plans, and come today to support adoption of the draft Final Plan before you today.

As the plan notes in its introduction, New Jersey has a long and proud history of statewide planning, dating back over 100 years. Today's plan reflects both the constraints and promises of planning rooted in that history. My brief remarks today will touch on the challenges and opportunities before us, ending with an optimistic note if we have the leadership we so richly deserve.

Because as the late architect Phillip Johnson said, "One cannot not know history," it's important to recognize that much of the planning in New Jersey is directly a result of the Zoning Act of 1926, a precursor of the Municipal Land Use Law and a reminder that zoning came before planning. In many ways, we are stuck with the implications of that thinking. The State Plan holds the promise that we can truly achieve the desired goal to "make New Jersey an attractive place to live, work, and raise a family" by using enlightened thinking and forging collaborations that benefit all.

It's also important to remember that the State Planning Act and the Fair Housing Act were inextricably linked, and a result of the Mt. Laurel II decision, that not only called for each municipality to provide opportunities for affordable housing, but also to respect and improve the environment and create a new State Plan to guide all planning actions, especially those of State Government.

Indeed, the State Plan was conceived in the 1980's when in Montgomery Township, on a single section of town, the municipality zoned for commercial development while Somerset County planned for a resource recovery plant, the State Agriculture Development Committee wanted the land preserved as farmland, the N.J. Department of Community Affairs planned for affordable housing, the N.J. Department of Transportation wanted to widen State Route 206 and install cloverleaves, and New Jersey Transit considered expansion of the existing train station, which was historic and deserved recognition by the State Historic Preservation Office. This lack of communication let alone planning was a recipe for disaster, costing tax payers millions of dollars and providing no certainty to landowners, developers or residents.

It's hard for me to believe that was forty years ago, but it's a reminder that without a State Plan and active leadership to coordinate planning actions on all levels, we're just as likely to see that situation occur today, because in many cases, local zoning that was created decades ago continues to override plans and visions. So, today, we celebrate the adoption of New Jersey's third State Development and Redevelopment Plan, borne of cooperation and good will, and hopefully implemented with promise and intention. Taxpayers need and deserve this plan, as evidenced by the State Plan's Impact Assessment and Infrastructure Needs Assessment, which are incorporated into the State Plan. Every State, county and local official should read and consider the State Plan, Impact Assessment and Infrastructure Needs Assessment because they provide the rationale and metrics for success.

The Impact and Infrastructure Needs Assessments provide quantitative and qualitative data to show that when used properly, the State Plan works! Smart growth produces better development and conserves our natural resources while saving money. It really is that simple, and the Impact Assessment shows graphically how

development patterns have changed over the last 40 years while providing recommendations on how to wisely invest in our future.

According to the Impact Assessment, “Between 1986 and 2020, developed land in New Jersey expanded from 1.2 million to 1.6 million acres—a net gain of approximately 445,534 acres, equivalent to adding 27 football fields of new development every day for 34 years. This growth came primarily at the expense of farmland, forests, and wetlands throughout all of New Jersey as figure 1.1 depicts an area of Mercer County.”

The assessment provides both good and bad news: “The Smart Growth Planning Areas (PA1-PA3) cumulatively absorbed 63% of the development acres, indicating that $\frac{2}{3}$ of New Jersey’s development growth occurred in smart growth planning areas during 2007-2020 consistent with smart growth principles, a positive indicator of PLAN-ALIGNED growth. Conversely, that also indicates a substantial 37% of the development footprint took place in PA4 and PA5—rural and environmentally sensitive areas— signaling PLAN-ADVERSE growth that diverges from the State Plan’s core objectives.”

It continues: “This locational assessment of growth underscores the importance of aligning future development with the planning areas of the SDRP2024 to better protect New Jersey’s natural resources and steer growth toward appropriate, infrastructure-ready areas.”

The conclusion is both striking and evident: “By 2050, New Jersey is likely to be functionally built out, and nearly all future growth will need to occur through redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill development, making the guidance of the State Plan paramount for a vibrant social, economic and environmental landscape.”

Thus, when Senator Gerry Stockman (a Democrat) and Governor Kean’s Chief of Staff Cary Edwards (a Republican) -- the “fathers” of the State Planning Act conceived of an update to the State Development Guide Plan, they included the term “Redevelopment” in the title. Current and future leaders can take a page out of this lesson of bipartisanship and visionary thinking.

These “fathers” also recognized the importance of planning for infrastructure and the role State agencies play in this regard. It was a common refrain that the State Plan was “the State Agency get your act together” plan, and the latest data prove the efficacy of this point.

Here are just a few examples of the infrastructure needs of New Jersey identified in the State Plan’s September draft INA through 2030:

- Transportation: \$65.6 Billion
- Energy: \$194 Billion
- Farmland Preservation: \$1 Billion
- Shore Protection: \$1 Billion
- Wastewater Treatment: \$11.75 Billion
- Stormwater Management: \$2.9 Billion
- Public Education: \$1.9 Billion
- Higher Education: \$13 Billion

And that’s just in the Billions! As the late Senate Minority Leader Everitt Dirksen once said, “A Billion here and a billion there, pretty soon you’re talking about real money.”

I would like to call to your attention an important omission in the draft Infrastructure Needs Assessment regarding Public Recreation and Open Space. “Table 1 Total Infrastructure Needs By Sector” lacks any data for 2025-2030. “With an asterisk, it notes, “* There has been no comprehensive statewide needs assessment performed for this sector. To compile the data necessary to document present needs for each sector is out of

the scope of this report. For Open Space, please refer to Table 17 for more information on the definition, scope, and timeframe of each County's OSTF.”

This is critical because the INA says, “To date, New Jersey has protected over 1.6 million acres for preserved open space and public recreation. Estimates for future infrastructure needs were not available.”

I urge the State Planning Commission to work with NJDEP to incorporate the “Nature For All” Report recommendation of 50 X 50 to preserve 50% of the best lands in New Jersey by 2050, and to incorporate that data into the State Plan and its Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

I’d like to conclude with a few recommendations.

It is essential that State Agencies use the State Plan, and I thank Governor Murphy for his leadership and urge the Governor and Governor-Elect to sign an Executive Order to ensure that State Agencies use the State Development and Redevelopment Plan in their planning, regulatory and investment decisions. I’m encouraged by the recent appointment by Governor-Elect Mikie Sherrill to create a new Chief Operating Officer to coordinate State agency actions, and I urge the State Planning Commission to work with Kellie Ducette to ensure the Governor and her Administration are successful.

I also respectfully request that the State Legislature and their staff read and use the Plan when determining State policy through laws and administrative oversight. Billions of dollars are expended every year on decisions that will affect current and future generations, and the State Plan provides the vision by which these decisions can be grounded. Each Agency should create a scorecard based on the metrics of the State Plan, and provide timely and transparent reporting on these metrics. The State Planning Commission and its Plan Implementation Committee have a unique opportunity here.

And, I urge municipalities and counties to use the State Plan as the visionary document that it is and update Master Plans, ordinances and capital improvement programs to ensure efficient, effective and equitable governance. Mayors are my heroes, and I’ve seen first-hand how true leaders use the State Plan to improve their communities. I say, “Go for it!”

Last, I commend the State Planning Commission, its amazing staff and consultants, and all of the local, county and State officials, stakeholders and citizens who contributed through the Cross-Acceptance process to create this Plan. In my opinion, the State Plan and Cross-Acceptance are signature elements of our democracy, and a tribute to the people of our State who care so much for current and future generations.

I conclude with a quote from my favorite philosopher, Yogi Berra. “You can see a lot by looking.” Take a look around New Jersey. It’s a beautiful state to live, work and raise a family. The State Plan will ensure this vision becomes a reality.

Thank you and best wishes for continued success!