



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION
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DONNA A. RENDEIRO
Executive Director/Secretary

Resolution No. 2020-12
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Date: November 4, 2020
Patron: Thomas Wright

RESOLUTION

**APPROVING THE PETITION FOR PLAN ENDORSEMENT
SUBMITTED BY THE HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, the State Planning Commission (Commission), pursuant to its responsibilities under the State Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 52:18A-196 et seq., has prepared and adopted a State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) which includes a State Plan Policy Map; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to its authority under N.J.S.A. 52:18A-203, the Commission has adopted regulations that establish procedures for filing of Petitions for Plan Endorsement with the Commission, N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.1 et seq., and amending the State Plan Policy Map, N.J.A.C. 5:85-8.3 et seq., for the purpose of encouraging consistency of submitted plans with the goals and policies of the State Plan, in order to foster (1) sound and comprehensive planning and (2) cooperation and coordination of planning activities between State agencies, county and local governments, and regional planning entities; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature, in 2004, enacted the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq. (Highlands Act), recognizing that the Highlands Region is an essential source of drinking water; that it provides clean and plentiful drinking water for over one-half of the State's population; contains other exceptional natural resources, such as clean air, contiguous forest lands, wetlands, pristine watersheds, and habitat for fauna and flora; includes many sites of historic significance; and provides abundant recreational opportunities for the citizens of the State; and

WHEREAS, the Highlands Act created the Highlands Council (Council), a regional planning and protection entity, to develop, adopt and periodically revise a Regional Master Plan (RMP) after consulting with the Commission and other governmental entities, with the primary goal of protecting and enhancing the significant resources of the Highlands Region; and

WHEREAS, on June 3, 2020, the Commission approved execution of a Memorandum of Understanding among the Council, the Commission and the Office of Planning Advocacy whereby the Parties agree to coordinate planning processes, among other things; and

WHEREAS, the Memorandum of Understanding requires the Commission to consider Endorsement of the Highlands Master Plan (HMP); and

WHEREAS, Office of Planning Advocacy staff thoroughly reviewed the HMP, and the Executive Director recommends that the Commission approve the HMP with the understanding that the Council will abide by the Plan Implementation Agreement included in the attachment; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Implementation Agreement commits the Council to update the HMP to include compliance with State Resiliency Planning and Equity goals upon the next update of the HMP.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Planning Commission hereby endorses the Highlands Master Plan, subject to the completion of the Plan Implementation Agreement presented to the State Planning Commission on November 4th, 2020.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State Planning Commission authorizes the Executive Director to take all actions that may be necessary to effect the endorsement of the Highlands Master Plan.