



## CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

### A GUIDE FOR DEVELOPERS AND COMMUNITIES

## ENHANCED LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

While updating basic planning tools, completing capacity and build out analyses, and promoting compact development will provide your municipality with the solid basis for environmental and capacity-based planning, municipalities should consider adopting ordinances addressing specific natural resource, environmental protection and/or public health issues that should, or are required to, be addressed.

State regulatory, planning, and incentive programs establish many mandatory local environmental protection requirements. These local requirements provide regulations that are important for the protection of natural resources, capacity-based planning, and public health concerns. The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) grants municipalities the authority and responsibility to go beyond statewide minimum requirements to protect our natural resources and the quality of life.

Some examples of voluntary and mandatory actions are provided below as guidance. In addition, numerous model ordinances and plans have been developed for local implementation, some of which are also listed below in the actions and strategies section.

## APPLICABLE NEW JERSEY GOALS

- Transforming places into healthy and sustainable communities.
- Clean and plentiful water for all New Jersey residents.
- Enhance stewardship of and access to existing lands, natural resources and historic structures, and expand the acquisition of open space.

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Work with your county on updating the areawide Water Quality Management Plan and appropriate Wastewater Management Plan.
- Apply the findings and recommendations of the State Water Supply Master Plan to your plans and ordinances. Establish policies planning for and promoting public water supply to areas outside of environmentally constrained land where wastewater infrastructure is also provided.
- Update your Master Plan, zoning ordinances and development regulations to be consistent with NJ environmental program objectives and regional planning entities, where applicable.
- Adopt resource-specific protection ordinances and complete environmental and capacity plans.
- Adopt policies and ordinances that promote smart growth and provide appropriate protections to the natural resources in the undeveloped areas of your community.
- Generate an educational campaign that clearly illustrates the benefits of smart growth and environs protections. Utilize the NJ Natural Capital Report<sup>1</sup> results and sustainable community tools.

1 Valuing New Jersey's Natural Capital: An Assessment of the Economic Value of the State's Natural Resources, NJDEP, April 2007 - [www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/naturalcap/](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/naturalcap/)



## STATE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Planning assistance and grants for Water Quality Management Plan updates. Contact the NJDEP Bureau of Watershed Planning at (609) 633-3812.
- NJDEP Office of Planning and Sustainable Communities - Sample Ordinances and Plans:  
[www.nj.gov/dep/opsc/envcbp.html#model](http://www.nj.gov/dep/opsc/envcbp.html#model)

Authors - Nick Angarone,  
Jennifer Feltis, Liz Semple  
September 2007

