

Atlantic County Preliminary 3rd Round Cross Acceptance Report
February 2005

Introduction to Atlantic County Third Round Cross Acceptance Project

In May of 2004 Atlantic County Freeholders accepted a grant to act as the negotiating entity and Cross Acceptance facilitator for the County's 23 municipalities. In June the County's Department of Regional Planning and Economic Development distributed the State Cross Acceptance Map to each municipality with the most recent zoning information on file to each municipality soliciting revisions and comments and to begin review of the Cross Acceptance Materials. The information distributed was disaggregated from the overall County Map and broken down to the individual municipal information by the GIS staff.

On July 1, 2004 the County and the State's Office of Smart Growth held a joint kick-off meeting at the Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township to familiarize local officials and residents about the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Cross Acceptance Process. The Meeting was attended by official representatives of 13 municipalities, several residents of the County, and a representative from Cumberland County. As part of the agenda the County and the Office of Smart Growth solicited questions and comments on the Plan, the process and relevant local issues. Several policy issues were raised as well as mapping issues that were thought to have been resolved in past rounds of Cross Acceptance. These issues are identified and addressed further on in this report.

On August 5, 2004 the Department of Regional Planning and Economic Development distributed an analysis of the State Plan Map and local zoning to each municipality for their review and comment. The Office of GIS outlined areas that have been in question with an overlay of the local zoning information. On August 26, 2004 the Department of Regional Planning held a public hearing at the Canale Training Center to discuss the map findings with the municipal representatives and the public. Again the County solicited comments questions and issues related to the mapping and policy issues. This meeting was attended by multiple municipalities and local residents. Meetings were then requested by several municipalities for planning board, council, or with selected officials. Subsequent to the August meeting the County has met with representatives of Corbin City, Hammonton, Hamilton, Egg Harbor City, Galloway, Egg Harbor Township, Absecon, Brigantine, Buena, Somers Point, Longport, Ventnor, Pleasantville, Mullica, Weymouth and had conversations and correspondence with other municipalities as well. These meetings and discussions are documented in this report as appendix "A", " Public Participation".

On October 19, 2004 the Planning Department sent out requests for resolutions of participation to all 23 municipalities. To date we have received five and which will be included in appendix "A" of this report. All of the resolutions the County receives will be included in the final report.

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Additional opportunity for public participation is available via a link on the County's web site at www.aclink.org on the Planning Department page. The County also provides a public participation opportunity at every Planning Advisory Board meeting. The State Plan and Cross Acceptance Process is an agenda item at every PAB meeting held in the Freeholders Conference Room on the third Wednesday of every month.

Planning staff and all of these sources noted have contributed to the content of this preliminary cross acceptance report. The draft of this report was distributed to every municipality and is available on the County web site prior to the public hearing that occurred on December 7, 2004 at the Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township. The final report will likewise be made available on the county's homepage and copies in paper format will be available on request from the Department of Regional Planning and Economic Development offices in Northfield. Requests may be phoned to Greg Seher, at 645-5898 or faxed to Greg at 645-5836. A final report meeting is currently being scheduled and the exact time, date, and location will be announced in the local papers and posted on the county's homepage as well as the State Office of Smart Growth's Cross Acceptance page.

Problem Statement

Atlantic County is unique in all of the State of New Jersey since 1975 when Atlantic City was selected by referendum in 1975 to be the host for Casino Gambling. This experiment in redevelopment and economic development of a city and a region has been wildly successful, producing over 60,000 direct jobs and pouring millions of dollars of tax revenues into the State coffers. Along with the Casino Gaming the County is heavily regulated by two environmental agencies, NJDEP CAFRA and the Pinelands Commission. The combination of these forces of economic growth and environmentally sensitive regulation have created both benefits and burdens unique at both the County and Municipal levels. Unfortunately this has made comprehensive planning as a County region difficult in many ways. It is this unique perspective that must be recognized in order to assess the additional impact of State Plan Policies. This report is an attempt to begin that task.

Consistency with State Plan

Atlantic County and its municipalities have, in general, a strong level of consistency with the State Plan. The county is primarily divided into a Pinelands regulated region and a CAFRA regulated region there is little room for inconsistency with the State Plan. The Pinelands region is, by default, in compliance with the State Plan due to the Pinelands' Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). The Pinelands legislation mandates that municipal

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zoning and development ordinances in the Pinelands region be in compliance with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan and be approved by the Pinelands Commission.

In the CAFRA region most municipalities are near built-out status. Between the close to built-out status and CAFRA regulations these municipalities will experience very little added development. These municipalities are now considering redevelopment projects to revitalize the community. Many of these redevelopment plans feature several smart growth strategies advocated by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

General Policy Issues

Section One: Changes to “The Role of the State Plan” section

“The Purpose of Plan Endorsement

The goals of Plan Endorsement are to:

- 1. Encourage municipal, county, regional, and state agency plans to be coordinated and support each other to achieve the goals of the State Plan;*
- 2. Encourage counties and municipalities to plan on a regional basis while recognizing the fundamental role of municipal master plan and development regulations.”*

Often the municipal master plans and the short and long-term goals of the municipalities are ignored in favor of broad regional development and growth strategies. This aids municipalities that match the vision of the State Plan but often inhibits positive development in municipalities that do not fit in the cookie cutter vision of the plan.

“... The purpose of the Plan Endorsement process is to reach these goals by increasing the consistency among municipal, county, regional and State Agency plans with each other as well as with the State Plan and to facilitate the achievement of mutual goals.”

Achieving this goal would be ideal, however, the State Plan policies conflict with both Pinelands and CAFRA regulations in Atlantic County. It appears likely to have conflicts with the new Highlands region as well. There must be closer coordination and integration of these regulations in the SDRP.

“Benefits of Plan Endorsement

Once the State Planning Commission has endorsed a plan as consistent with the State Plan, State agencies will be providing benefits to the county or municipality that will assist in implementing the endorsed plan.”

The State Plan will ultimately endorse a vision for growth in the state that promotes a denser more urban paradigm. This vision may be ideal for some, but

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not all, of the counties and constituent municipalities. Based on the State policy of priority funding for “endorsed” areas state funds would go only to those counties and municipalities that fit this long term vision. Counties and municipalities that require a different planning and growth strategy would be left out. The SDRP *must* recognize the need for flexibility to deal with the unique circumstances not just in Atlantic County but also throughout the state.

“Relationship of the State Plan to the Council on Affordable Housing”

The County endorses the current concept that COAH will utilize the demographic projections of the final cross accepted SDRP provided that the Counties and municipalities are involved in the final process.

Section Two: Indicators and Targets

“Statewide Goal-Oriented Indicators

Goal 1: Revitalize the State’s Cities and Towns

Proposed Indicators Related to Goal 1:

B. Percent of Brownfield Sites Redeveloped”

Included in the Percent of Brownfield Sites Redeveloped indicator should be an analysis of the cost of the redevelopment of the brownfield site. The State should monitor the cost benefits of redeveloping some of these areas. Brownfields are often much more expensive to redevelop and the construction process can often cause unwanted impact on traffic and commerce in the area of the brownfield site.

“Goal 2: Conserve the State’s Natural Resources and Systems

Current Indicators related to Goal 2 that should be eliminated:

Additional Indicator 8 – The Generation of Solid Waste. There is no connection to the State Plan or land use.”

The generation of solid waste does have an impact on land use. High population density regions would create more solid waste and thus require more land fill and dump usage. The usage of these land fill sites should have some impact in determining the location of the sites. Regions that produce larger amounts of solid waste should have a proportionately equal burden with lesser generation regions.

“Additional Indicator 10 – Green House Gas Emissions. The only component of green house gas emissions related to the State Plan and land use is mobile sources. Unless work can be done to isolate this component of energy efficiency the indicator should be dropped.”

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While monitoring mobile sources of green house gas emissions is very important and difficult to determine, the emission of green house gases from industrial and commercial sites is equally important. Development around these sites, as well as placement of these sites in previously developed area is of concern to residential and commercial planning. If this indicator is not kept it Goal 2 it should be moved to Goal 4, but not dropped.

“Additional Indicator 19 – Percent of Development on Individual Septic Systems. This indicator is related to land use, however its implementation is entirely in the purview of the DEP. Therefore it fails to meet selection criteria number 2. However, it could be considered as an indicator for Goal 8, Ensure Integrated Planning, or as an indicator for Implementation section below.”

The use of individual septic systems is clearly related to the goal of conserving the State’s natural resources and systems. Individual septic systems put less pressure on public utilities and municipal and county systems. Individual systems may be cheaper and more efficient than public system. This State Plan should continue to monitor this to help determine if individual septic systems have a substantial positive or negative impact.

“Goal 3: Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for All Residents of New Jersey

Proposed Indicators Related to Goal 3:

B. Percent of Brownfield Sites (or numbers of acres) Redeveloped”

Once again the State Plan should also monitor the cost impact of the development of these sites, especially when largely funded by the State. Certain redevelopment may not be in the best interest of “All Residents of New Jersey” if the redevelopment only benefits a small minority of residents while being paid for by a large majority of residents.

“Current Indicators related to Goal 3 that should be eliminated:

Additional Indicator 1 – Average Annual Disposable Income Among New Jerseyans. Does not satisfy selection criteria 2.”

Determining areas in which larger amounts of disposable income among residents exists would be helpful in commercial planning. The location of certain retail sites would ideally be closer to residential areas with higher amounts of disposable income than to areas with low amounts of disposable income.

“Additional Indicator 2 – Unemployment. Does not satisfy selection criteria 2.”

Determining unemployment figures would be in the best interests of properly promoting economic growth. Analysis of unemployment would be important to understanding why the economies in some regions begin to fail and also to determine where some types of aid are needed.

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“Goal 4: Protect the Environment

Current Indicators related to Goal 4 that should be eliminated:

Additional Indicator 8 – The Generation of Solid Waste. There is no connection to the State Plan of land use.”

See comment on Solid Waste under Goal 2.

“Additional Indicator 13 – Changes in Toxic Chemical Use and Waste Generation by New Jersey’s Manufacturing Sector. This indicator has no link to land use or the State Plan.”

The changes in toxic chemical output by manufacturers would have an impact on the availability of surrounding lands. Also as new research is done to determine potential impacts of toxic chemicals it is important to maintain information on manufacturers that produce these chemicals.

“Goal 5: Provide Public Services at Reasonable Cost

Proposed Indicators Related to Goal 5:

A. Progress in Socio Economic Revitalization for the Urban Aid Municipalities”

Monitoring this process is key to determining the wide ranging benefits of urban revitalization. If the renewal in these urban areas is not going according to plan or not providing benefits to the State as a whole then the amount of public funds to redevelop these areas should be considered for adjustment.

“B. The degree to which the rate of increase or decrease in Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) targets, defined by State Planning Area and New Jersey Transit’s Transit Score Area, is attained throughout the State...”

C. Vehicle Miles Traveled Per Capita and Per Household...”

While promoting public transportation for areas when it is available and reasonable is important, vilifying motor vehicles is illogical because they are, and will continue to be the only efficient mode of transportation in many parts of the state.

“Goal 6: Provide Housing at Reasonable Cost

Proposed Indicators Related to Goal 6...

Other Potential New Indicators...”

The numbers in the Proposed and the Potential Indicators are important to monitor. However the housing market and the interest in affordable homes in certain regions should naturally provide adequate housing opportunities and not require large amounts of government involvement.

“Goal 8: Ensure Integrated Planning Statewide

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Proposed Indicators Related to Goal 8:

B. The Degree to Which Local Plans and State Agency Plans are Consistent With the State Plan

- ◇ *Consider two distinct indicators: State Agency Plans and Local Plans*
- ◇ *Local Plans should become percent of Municipalities, or percent of land area, with an Endorsed Plan”*

When examining the consistency of plans through out all levels of government in the State close attention must be paid to the impact that Pinelands, CAFRA, and Highlands have on the ability of regional (county and municipal) plans to relate with the State Plan.

Section Three: Changes to the Structure of the “Statewide Goals, Strategies and Policies” Section

If the State Plan were to consider a broader reorganization of its Goal structure it should consider combining Goal 2 (Conserve the State’s Natural Resources) and Goal 4 (Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean up Pollution). Goal 2 lists its indicators as:

- ◇ Policies on Coastal Resources
- ◇ Policies on Water Resources
- ◇ Policies on Special Resource Areas
- ◇ Policies on Open Lands and Natural Systems

While Goal 4 indicators are:

- ◇ Policies on Energy Resources
- ◇ Policies on Air Resources
- ◇ Policies on Waste Management, Recycling, & Brownfields

By moving policies on brownfields to Goal 1 (Revitalize the State’s Cities and Towns), the remaining indicators could be brought together under one goal of Conserving and Protecting the State’s Natural Resources and Environment.

Section Four: Changes to the Content of the “State-wide Goals, Strategies and Policies” Section

“Statewide Policy #2: Comprehensive Planning

Revised Policy #25: State Agency Plan, Regulations and Programs (page 114)

Coordinate the development, revision and implementation of state agency functional plans, regulations, and funding programs, to the maximum extent permitted by law, so that they are consistent with and promote the goals, strategies and policies of the State Plan.”

This would enable better consistency between the State Plan and other State regulatory agencies (CAFRA, Pinelands)

“Statewide Policy #4: Infrastructure Investments”

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Schools must be included under infrastructure to maintain positive development throughout the state. The State must realize that school must be treated in many ways the same as roads and utilities. An adequate school system should be created while the municipality is growing, not after the municipality has outgrown its school system. This requires additional State investment especially in areas designated by State mandate for economic growth and residential growth i.e. Casino Gaming and Pinelands Growth Areas that Atlantic County municipalities must deal with. Rethinking school funding is the only way the State can adequately address the ratables chase and reduce over dependence on municipal property tax.

“Statewide Policy #5: Economic Development

Policy #__ : Community-based Economic Development

Generate local capacity for economic development by promoting economic growth that maintains and enhances the entire community by locating job opportunities in mixed-use places where infrastructure is available or can be expanded or upgraded, or that are accessible by public transportation.”

Mixed-use facilities are strong promoters of economic development, however attempting to use the mix-use concept as the exclusive model for all economic development discourages those who prefer suburban or rural lifestyles.

“Statewide Policy #19: Design

New Policy #__ : Public Health Benefits of Smart Growth Design

Planning that reduces reliance upon the automobile by providing opportunities for people to walk or bicycle to community destinations, such as neighborhoods, shops, work places, school, parks, and transit stations, as a part of their daily routines, should be encouraged.”

Walking and bicycling do promote better health, however the State Plan continues to vilify the automobile. While decreasing congestion on roads, reducing air pollution, and promoting the health benefits of walking or bicycling to destinations are all important where applicable, many existing communities are dependant on automobiles where other means of transportation are inefficient.

Municipal Map Change Requests

Each map change request has a coinciding GIS map showing the geographical characteristics of the request. All of the maps are in digital format on CD-ROM Media.

Absecon

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Area Between New Jersey Ave and Route 30 is no longer Parks & Natural Area, has been sold for development (PA 1)

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- ◇ Pitney Field area already marked off on map should all be changed to Parks & Natural Area. Area to the north of Pitney Field to also should be changed to Parks & Natural Area.
- ◇ Wetlands areas in question are all acceptable, except for small area along end of Lisbon Ave, might be developed into a park in the future.
- ◇ Small area long Mill Rd to be changed from wetlands to PA 1
- ◇ Old school area, along Church St, has been sold for redevelopment and should be changed to PA 1
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ The city is looking to added Age Restricted housing projects in the near future
 - ◇ The area north of Pitney Field is to remain Parks & Natural Area for future use as a community recreation area, to include basketball courts, swimming pools, etc.

Brigantine

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ While the CAFRA Coastal Center designation does not expire for Brigantine the city would still prefer a designation similar to the other barrier islands in the county.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Inconsistency of Brigantine's designation with that of other barrier islands in Atlantic County.
 - ◇ Complete disregard of the Center Petition process that we participated in during previous Cross Acceptance.
 - ◇ Complete disregard of the Coastal Town designation by the New Jersey Dept of Environmental Protection.

Buena Boro

- Map Change Request:

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- ◇ Change in designation in area along Route 40 and Weymouth Rd from Agricultural Production Area to Pinelands Town.
- Policy Issues:
 - The town would like to Increase in sewer capacity, allowing for increase in commercial development in town.
 - The town is in process of changing its Town Center boundary. Assessing the benefits and problems of increasing the boundary to a large portion of the town.

Corbin City

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ The existing Coastal Center needs to be made permanent, in addition Corbin City is requesting an extension of permanent Coastal Center from its current boundary at Carl Road and Route 50 north to the City boundary on the east side of Route 50 only. Further it is requested that the eastern boundary of the extension be 1500 ft. from route 50
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ The State owns 86% of Corbin City's land mass, payments in lieu of taxes does not provide significant relief.
 - ◇ Growth rate is a concern, with school aid capped at 2000 level taxes must be raised to pay expanded education cost
 - ◇ The tax rate increase is excessive in Corbin City because a 1 cent per \$100.00 assessment only raises \$2,500.00. For this reason the tax rate has tripled in the last 5 years.
 - ◇ CAFRA regulations, after February 2005 regulations will be set back to 3% impervious coverage is a major problem.
 - ◇ Extend the 50% Coastal Centers coverage rule for all of CAFRA effected municipalities until a final solution can be made at a later time.
 - ◇ Make the 50% coverage permanent or some other form relief for development because of Corbin City's unusual situation.

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Egg Harbor City

- Map Change Request: IN PROGRESS
- Policy Issues: IN PROGRESS

Egg Harbor Twp

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ West Atlantic City is P.A. I, CAFRA permit approved, no longer barrier island corridor
 - ◇ Seaview Harbor consists of single family development lots, not affected by CAFRA. Area should be remapped from environmentally sensitive to P.A. I or P.A. II.
 - ◇ Need to recognize where development has already occurred along causeways.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Stormwater management aquifer recharge requirements and regional basins requirements do not fit with more logical growth patterns (one 100-acre lot in place of several 20-acre lots).
 - ◇ Municipalities need better control over corridors, similar to the County's ability.
 - ◇ Too much resident taxing on open space, state needs to better fund open space.
 - ◇ Schools need to be looked at as infrastructure; they should be built as the population is growing, not after the growth has already occurred.
 - ◇ Considering state school development program (similar schools built throughout the state at once to reduce the cost).
 - ◇ Problems with PDC:
 - ◆ Price of relocating housing is too high, the state wants to sell maximum possible amount of PDCs

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- ◆ Growth and development rate does not have a clear correlation to PDCs.
- ◇ Transit issues:
 - ◆ Bus routes, additional or modified.
 - ◆ Rail development.

Galloway Twp

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Twp wishes to have developer friendly designations along Route 9.
 - ◇ All areas in question not along Route 9 should be designated as per the surrounding lands.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ CAFRA Center designation may be an issue.

Hamilton Twp

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Two locations in Mays Landing along Route 40 that are already developed be changed from Sewer Service Area in Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area, to Regional Growth Area to match the rest of the area.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

Hammonton

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Only slight zoning changes. There is no request for designation changes.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ See Appendix A for detailed report in Master Plan Re-Examination.
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

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Longport

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Designation of beach as Parks & Natural Area should conform to actual form of beach property.
 - ◇ Area at 24th and Atlantic Ave is a municipal complex with facilities such as the Town Hall and Lifeguard Maintenance Building, it should be changed from Parks & Natural Area to PA 1.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

Margate

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Change designation of Critical Environmental Site (bordered by Burk Ave, Freemont Ave, Clarendon Ave, and Ventnor City) to Parks and Natural Areas as to conform closer to the new city Zoning Map.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

Mullica

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Area along Woodland Ave near Pleasant Mills Rd changed from Pinelands Village to Agricultural Production Area.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Projected numbers for population growth and employment figures. These numbers will effect the township's COAH requirements. The township would like to better research these numbers to more accurately reflect growth in the township.

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Pleasantville

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ City is willing to designate areas in question as environmentally sensitive, except for the Gateway site, which should be PA-1 (per agreement in 2000)
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ CAFRA Coastal Center designation expiration is a primary concern.

Somers Point

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ The City has no designation change requests, only zoning changes.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Areas stressed in Redevelopment Plan:
 - ◆ Providing adequate parking for existing and proposed development without relying on multiple large surface parking lots.
 - ◆ Avoid creation of new strip highway development.
 - ◆ Assemble underutilized parcels to provide for large scale mixed use redevelopment opportunities.
 - ◆ Provide for Somers Point Gateway identity and to increase marina area vitality.
 - ◆ Provide for Somers Mansion and the County Historical Society museum as attractive centerpieces.
 - ◆ Preclude low intensity inefficient uses such as storage and warehousing.

Ventnor

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Correctly assign Environmentally Sensitive and Parks & Natural Areas to the beachfront area in accordance with attached map.
 - ◇ Change to PA 1 along inside thoroughfare.

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- ◇ Change to PA 1 at corner of Little Rock and Wellington Ave.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

Weymouth Twp

- Map Change Request:
 - ◇ Weymouth is requesting that the Planning Area 5 designation in the Belcoville Section, along Lowell Street and West Riverside Drive of the Township be changed for the following reasons:
 - ◆ Public Water and sewer is available in the Belcoville Section and the area has been predominantly developed.
 - ◆ The lots on the north side of Lowell Street have been developed and the lots along West Riverside Drive have been developed.
 - ◆ The Planning Area 5 designation could remain for Block 120 (with the exception of Lots 1.05, 1.06 & 1.07 which are at the terminus of West Riverside Drive), Block 121 and Block 119, Lot 102.
 - ◇ In addition the Pinelands Commission has designated the West side of Route 50 as Pinelands Village Commercial, which is separated from the Belcoville Section only by State Route 50. The County may want to discuss with Hamilton Township changing the PA 5 designation in Mays Landing.
- Policy Issues:
 - ◇ Basic countywide concerns: school funding, infrastructure, roads, utilities, etc.

County Policy Issues

- Division of County by Regulatory Agencies – As previously mentioned in this report Atlantic County is bifurcated by two environmental regulatory agencies, the Pinelands Commission and The NJDEP Coastal Zone or CAFRA. Both of these agencies regulate land use beyond the norm for

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non-Pinelands or non-CAFRA communities. Unfortunately the two regulatory programs do not match nor compliment each other. This effectively creates two Counties and often two municipalities where a town has significant portions in both areas. Add to this the policies proposed by the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and Atlantic County experiences a serious disconnect between the needs to mitigate the negative impacts of growth and the regulatory structure that is set up to maintain non-growth areas. For the State Development and Redevelopment Plan to truly be a statewide plan it must first recognize the disconnect, recognize unique and varied needs throughout the State, and take the lead in putting the regulations into a coherent comprehensive framework.

- ◇ School Costs as a Land Use Issue – As previously stated Atlantic County has the unique benefits and burdens of being in the heart of both an enormous economic engine and environmental preservation and growth areas. The combination of development pressure from the growth in Atlantic City, the mandate of high density development in Pinelands Regional Growth areas and the regulatory suppression of growth in non-RGA areas creates an unbalanced situation relative to infrastructure costs. This is particularly acute as it pertains to school costs. While the benefits of the preservation of Pinelands open space is statewide; the costs of that preservation fall squarely on the shoulders of the taxpayers in the Pinelands Regional Growth areas. Atlantic County has the highest percentage of regional growth area in the Pinelands and the highest number of mandated units. The state must recognize the need for increased aid for schools for these RGA's. The same goes for all of the increased infrastructure needs within the County.
- ◇ Recognition of Growth Areas by Regulatory Agencies – Both Pinelands and CAFRA treat the recognized growth areas under their jurisdiction as if they were pristine preservation areas that are not supposed to

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have development. There is no flexibility to advance the development of needed infrastructure to support the “mandated” growth in these areas. The County and the municipalities are held solely accountable by the citizens to widen roads, improve intersections and provide other quality of life amenities such as the bikeway when there is clearly compelling need that should allow fast track approvals of these facilities. There needs to be recognition of this by both agencies and the State in general.

- ◇ Over Dependence on Property Tax for Funding – This is primarily a school cost issue but can be more broadly interpreted. This issue drives the ratables chase and does not allow towns to have more balanced approaches to zoning and land use. Until this issue is addressed the State will never be able to adequately address comprehensive land use issues on a more regional basis.
- ◇ Economic Development in Pinelands Non-Growth Areas – While growth areas have been over burdened by development they at least have some hope of commercial ratables offsetting some of the costs of residential development. The non-growth Pinelands Towns often have the same residential growth problem on a smaller scale. The difference is they have no reasonable expectation of commercial development to help offset those costs. This is another aspect of the over dependence on property tax for funding public infrastructure and operating costs.

While this is the county’s final report additional documentation shall be added as municipalities are able to update and review material within their own specific time constraints.

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Appendix A

**Public Participation
& Municipal Reports**

Appendix A is available in hard copy upon request by contacting Greg Seher of the Atlantic County Planning Dept at 645-5898