

Take steps to keep workers

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What's the key to keeping New Jersey's high-wages workers in the state? Better land use planning.

Developers say it's not uncommon for a project to take years to win the necessary approvals, while in neighboring states it may only take months. A top pharmaceutical company recently told our nonprofit that they would "never" build again in New Jersey.

What's the problem? Endless red tape and excessive regulations that must be streamlined if Gov. Corzine hopes to keep top-paying employers in the state.

Another critical issue: We need planning that connects workers' incomes to housing they can afford in locations that are transit-friendly and close to their jobs. This would help to reduce auto-dependency and protect the environment--while keeping middle-class taxpayers happy with a better quality of life.

This is not rocket science. We have the tools and the strategies to turn this vision into a reality. But if we don't act now, it may soon be too late.

Noelle Reeve

Vice President, Planning PlanSmart NJ

EDITOR'S NOTE: PlanSmart NJ is a land use research and advocacy nonprofit, nonpartisan organization based in Trenton.