

DCA releases future affordable housing requirements

TRENTON — The state Department of Community Affairs (DCA) published non-binding calculations of municipalities' present

and prospective need for affordable housing from 2025 to 2035.

The state currently needs 65,410 units, includ-

ing 3,401 needed in Region Six, which includes Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties.

The report states Lower

Township needs 75 units, Cape May needs 46, Cape May Point six and West Cape May none.

Over the next 10 years, the state will need 84,698 units, the report states.

On March 20, 2024, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a law establishing a new framework for determining and enforcing municipalities' obligations under the New Jersey Supreme Court's Mount Laurel doctrine and the state's Fair Housing Act. The law requires the DCA perform a calculation of regional need and municipal present and prospective obligations in accordance with the formulas established in the law.

The DCA calculations serve as guidance for municipalities as they plan for development during the next decade.

The department's publication of the calculations reflects its commitment to providing all 564 municipalities with the data, information and support they need to meet their affordable housing responsibilities under the law.

The calculations give municipalities and developers more certainty, which enables smarter planning around where housing should be built.

To calculate prospective need for each municipality, DCA averaged the equalized nonresidential valuation factor, land capacity factor, and income capacity factor for each municipality into an average allocation factor.

The Land Capacity Factor is computed pursuant to statutory edict by determining, for each municipality, the total acreage that is developable utilizing the most recent land use/land cover (LULC) data from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the most recently available (released in 2024) MOD-IV Property Tax List data from the Division of Taxation in the Department of the Treasury, and construction permit data from the Department of Community Affairs.

"I am grateful to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for their timeliness in calculating this data and their partnership in advancing our

shared goal of expanding access to affordable housing," Murphy said. "We look forward to seeing this law implemented and benefiting families across the Garden State."

"The calculations help address New Jersey's housing shortage by equipping municipalities with clear numbers so they can better plan on how to provide affordable housing options in their communities," said DCA Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez. "The new law provides a unique opportunity to develop 'missing middle' housing—options like townhouses, duplexes, and other types of multi-family units that bridge the gap between single-family homes and large apartment complexes, offering the diverse housing choices that New Jersey families desire and need."

The law establishes a new, streamlined framework for determining and enforcing municipalities' affordable housing responsibilities under the New Jersey Supreme Court's Mount Laurel doctrine and the State's Fair Housing Act. The New Jersey Judiciary will resolve disputes about municipalities' affordable housing responsibilities with assistance from a new dispute resolution program called the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program.

The law outlines how municipalities may receive "bonus credits" that allow affordable housing units to be credited as 1.5 or 2 units in certain circumstances. This bonus credit system incentivizes age-restricted housing, housing set aside for individuals with special needs, and other location or purpose-specific housing projects, such as housing near mass transit stations. The law limits bonus credit units to 25% of a municipality's prospective need. It establishes related parameters for how much of a municipality's responsibilities must be satisfied through housing available to families with children and rental housing.

The DCA will support municipalities by appointing housing liaisons to streamline affordable

housing efforts, helping cities meet their obligations, utilize affordable housing trust funds, and track project completion. Ongoing training for these liaisons and administrative agents will further strengthen local housing initiatives.

These efforts demonstrate the administration's continued commitment to affordable housing, with over \$108 million invested through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) across 44 projects, supplemented by funding from the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME). Future AHTF funding will be prioritized for municipal obligations, with additional NHTF and HOME grants directed toward projects serving vulnerable populations, including veterans, survivors of domestic violence, and individuals with special needs.

Launching in early 2025, NJ Housing Opportunities for Municipal Equity and Success (NJHOMES) will offer comprehensive support for municipalities to develop affordable housing that aligns with community needs. NJHOMES will emphasize diverse models like single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units to create walkable, vibrant communities that serve residents at all life stages—from young professionals to seniors and caregivers. This initiative will provide financial resources, technical assistance, and tools to address opposition and promote sustainable development. NJHOMES will also introduce an Affordable Housing Playbook & Toolkit, featuring best practices, zoning guidance, case studies, and outreach materials to assist municipalities in developing affordable housing that meets their communities' individual needs. Additionally, the NJHOMES Institute will offer virtual and in-person training, fostering partnerships and community engagement, while planning grants and technical assistance will help municipalities develop effective housing strategies.



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Lightning

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aged equipment that was not functioning and not eligible

for public use or auction. The destroyed equipment in City Hall and the police station included numerous ethernet ports, phones, printers, a Keurig coffeemaker, a Xerox machine, two-way radios and two air conditioners in the neighboring Colonial House.

City Hall was also struck

by lightning in July 2021 destroying the police department's radio dispatching equipment. Following the incident, the city signed a contract with the county to provide 9-1-1 dispatching services and the city installed uninterruptible power supplies on most of its computers.

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Comfort Bob Tip:
Make sure your heater works before it gets too cold.

1. Turn the thermostat to heat.
2. Turn the temperature up 5 degrees above room temperature.
3. Wait for the heater to come on—could take 10 minutes.
4. Feel warm air coming out of the vents or the radiators start to get warm.
5. Turn thermostat back to where you want it.

You should be ready for the first cold snap. Annual maintenance is recommended by all manufacturers!

*Single family dwellings. Homeowners only, no tenants. Includes arriving at the home, discussing issues related to heater or air conditioner with owner, and making recommendations. Does not include any adjustments, maintenance, repairs or replacement parts as all of these will incur charges requiring payment at the time services rendered.



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