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****PRESS RELEASE****

CRDA ROLLS OUT THREE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AFTER GOVERNOR SIGNS “AC RIGHT” EXECUTIVE ORDER

ATLANTIC CITY – New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine today signed an executive order that creates the Atlantic City Regional Implementation Group for Housing and Transportation (AC RIGHT) to facilitate the coordination and implementation of transportation and workforce housing initiatives in the Atlantic City region. Governor Corzine signed the executive order at the South Jersey Economic Development Forum, held at the Atlantic City Convention Center.

“We are very appreciative of the Governor’s support of the work of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and all of our regional partners. We must plan, and work, together to continue to promote regional economic growth,” said Thomas D. Carver, Executive Director of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority.

The Urban Land Institute and the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority rolled out the Atlantic City Regional Transportation and Land Use Plan at the Forum which also featured two strategic initiatives that are important to promoting regional economic growth: the development of a new Workforce Housing Program and of the Aviation Research and Technology Park.

CRDA presented these issues in part by highlighting two major work products that it has produced: the Atlantic City Regional Transportation Plan (ACRTP) and a Workforce Housing Investment/Development Program. To provide a more comprehensive view of the South Jersey economic development landscape, the forum included a presentation of developments at the Federal Aviation Administration’s William J. Hughes Technical Center. South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) Executive Director Bart Mueller described the developments at the Atlantic City International Airport (ACY) and also the key role that the SJTA plays in providing the links that promote economic development and workforce housing.

Two members of Governor Corzine’s cabinet also provided the state perspective on CRDA’s role in generating economic growth for the region. Jerold L. Zaro, Chief of the

Governor's Office of Economic Growth, Stephen Dilts, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, both spoke on behalf of the Administration and the role they will continue to play with CRDA in transportation and economic development.

Atlantic City Regional Transportation Plan (ACRTP)

The ACRTP Project has been undertaken with the philosophy that if we do not plan transportation and land use together, then we will fail at both. Again, this speaks directly to the Urban Land Institute's core mission and that is why CRDA chose to partner with them in making the first public presentation of elements of the ACRTP.

The ACRTP is the culmination of over two years of work analyzing the Atlantic City region's transportation infrastructure and how existing and planned development will impact the transportation system. Based upon this rigorous analysis, a program of transportation improvements is prescribed that is linked to the progress of anticipated economic development. This phased approach to transportation planning in the ACRTP is critical in that it:

1. Ties transportation and land use together;
2. Ensures that improvements will only be implemented if they are needed and will be in place before demand causes the transportation system to fail; and,
3. Facilitates a flexible "pay as you grow" financing approach that invites creative approaches to funding capital-intensive transportation projects.

Beyond physical improvements to the region's transportation system, one of the most significant recommendations of the ACRTP is the formation of AC RIGHT to oversee the execution of ACRTP projects. Envisioned as an interagency team comprised of commissioners and designated technical staff from implementing agencies (i.e., DOT, SJTA, NJT) as well as non-transportation agencies with a stake in implementation (i.e., Pinelands, DEP), AC RIGHT will develop an execution strategy and lead the coordination of ACRTP projects with the capital plans of the implementing agencies. AC RIGHT is described in the Executive Order that Governor Corzine signed today. The formation of this Team is essential to implementing the improvements prescribed by the ACRTP.

Workforce Housing Investment/Development Program

CRDA has led an effort to create housing that is affordable to the casino industry workforce as well as workers earning comparable wages through the establishment of a Workforce Housing Investment/Development Program. This initiative is linked directly to the ACRTP, a constituent component of which is "Linking Workforce Housing to Transportation".

The CRDA Board will be considering a new loan fund for workforce housing investments that will be targeted within a specific geographic radius identified through

the analysis that serves as the supporting rationale for the Program. A key proposed selection criterion in determining what projects will be funded under the Program will be a project's proximity to existing or planned transit nodes (rail stations, bus terminals, etc.). This approach responds to the "affordability gap" uncovered by the analysis which indicates that commuting costs raise the barriers that lower wage workers face in accessing affordable housing; since many of the workers in this category do not have automobiles, they need housing that is proximate to low cost transit as well as job centers. As such, CRDA's focus on investing in housing that is close to transit (Transit Oriented Development) not only responds to Smart Growth land use principles but also to the public policy and social issues that surround affordable housing in New Jersey.

Atlantic City International Airport (ACY) Aviation Research and Technology Park (ARTP)

CRDA views Atlantic City International Airport (ACY) as an integral component to Atlantic City's expansion and ultimate evolution to a true destination resort. In light of ACY's expansion plans and capabilities and capacity constraints at other airports in the region—namely Philadelphia International and Newark Liberty International—the airport is well-positioned to become a greater player in aviation service. CRDA's transportation blueprint acknowledges ACY's importance to the region and the State as a whole by recommending significant improvements that create more direct access to the airport by car and by rail. Along with the expansion of the casino industry in Atlantic City, ACY's expansion is the major driver of improvements to the regional transportation system proposed in the ACRTP.

The proposed Aviation Research and Technology Park will cement New Jersey's already established reputation as a center for cutting-edge research and technology commercialization in the world of avionics. The William J. Hughes Technical Center at Atlantic City International Airport is mandated to provide the laboratory where the Next Generation Air Traffic Control System (NextGen) is developed, which would translate into significant research dollars from the Federal Government and the possibility of a major corporate and university academic presence at the Technology Park. With NextGen as the catalyst, a 400,000 square foot research park will be developed that could bring significant private investment, tax ratables and the potential for approximately 2,000 high-skilled, high paying jobs to New Jersey.

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