



COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE  
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

*For Immediate Release*

## **NAIOP Public Policy Symposium: N.J. Legislative Leaders Emphasize the Importance of Collaboration**

### ***Making the State Attractive for Businesses and Residents a Shared Priority***

**EDISON, N.J. (March 31, 2023)** – When it comes to making the Garden State more attractive to businesses and residents, the message from key decision-makers who spoke at [NAIOP New Jersey's](#) recent Public Policy Symposium is clear: it starts with taking a collaborative approach that is rich with communication on every level – from community stakeholders, to developers, to state legislators. The annual event was held at Northeast Carpenters Apprentice Training Center in Edison.

“Our panelists offered real transparency in addressing a range of pressing topics, and there is tremendous energy and enthusiasm around moving forward,” said NAIOP NJ CEO Michael McGuinness, who joined Chapter President Mark Shearer in leading a conversation on legislative priorities. Participating in the discussion and pictured here were (L-R) Shearer; Senate Minority Leader Steven Oroho; Assembly Budget Chair Eliana Pintor Marin; Assembly Minority Leader John DiMaio; N.J. Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari; and McGuinness.

They identified several key focus areas, including:

- Building buy-in for business tax incentive programs, and creating balance between new jobs and affordable places to live.
- Moving forward in a post-apocalyptic economy, including understanding the evolving workforce and its future impact on downtowns.
- Repurposing strategies for the state’s glut of vacant office space.
- Attracting both monetary and human capital to a state that has much to offer, but is too expensive for many.

The importance of collaboration and innovation emerged as a common theme throughout the program, which also included a panel discussion on the realities of doing business in New Jersey today. Advance Realty Investors’ Principal Peter J. Coccoziello, Jr. moderated the conversation among Karen Reif, PSE&G’s vice president of Renewables and Energy Solutions; Dean Dafis, Maplewood Township mayor; Nick Angarone, New Jersey chief climate resilience officer; and Dennis Toft, member, CSG Law. Topics ranged from building the state’s energy infrastructure, to thinking differently

about suburban development opportunities, to establishing common-sense environmental standards that are protective without thwarting progress.

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