



For Immediate Release:
October 19, 2011

Contact:
Lucy Vandenberg
609-393-9434 (office)
609-273-7170 (mobile)
lvandenberg@plansmartnj.org

PLANSMART NJ IS “BULLISH” ON NEW STATE STRATEGIC JOB GROWTH PLAN

TRENTON, October 19, 2011 – PlanSmart NJ announces its support for the State of New Jersey’s new State Strategic Job Growth Plan, released today. Lucy Vandenberg, PlanSmart NJ Executive Director, noted, “We are pleased to see this Plan incorporate PlanSmart NJ’s principles of targeted geographic industry growth clusters and alignment of state agency regulations and resources to foster targeted smart growth areas.”

“PlanSmart NJ is poised to work with Governor Christie to refine and implement the new State Strategic Plan.” commented Ray Ferrara, Ph.D., Chair of PlanSmart NJ. He continued, “We are bullish on this Plan.”

PlanSmart NJ lauded the Plan’s inclusion of proposed geographic industry growth clusters based on employment sectors with high growth potential. This concept was first proposed by PlanSmart NJ in its spring planning and economic growth conference of industry leaders and then put forth in comments made to the OPA during its spring public comment period.

The Plan also recognizes the need to locate housing near geographic employment clusters to improve employee attraction and retention and create livable communities, a principle PlanSmart NJ has long endorsed.

PlanSmart NJ strongly supports the Plan’s steps to foster alignment of state agency regulations, policies, and funding with the State Strategic Plan. “We’ve all experienced first-hand how communities suffer when state agencies send conflicting messages,” said PlanSmart NJ Vice Chair Richard Goldman. “If this Plan does nothing else, it must end state government’s practice of operating in silos when it comes to land-use decision-making.”

The Plan establishes through Executive Order a State Strategic Plan Steering Committee to be headed by the Governor's Office. For the first time, the Plan requires state agencies to create functional plans to align state regulations, policies, and resources with the State Strategic Plan.

PlanSmart NJ also supports language in the State Strategic Plan calling for a long-term funding source for open space preservation, farmland protection, and historic preservation. State Green Acres funding is set to expire.

PlanSmart NJ encourages the State to focus on implementation through changes to laws, regulations and policies to foster alignment with the State Strategic Plan. Executive Director Lucy Vandenberg noted, "We want to ensure that the policies put in place today are not undone tomorrow. Predictability and transparency with regard to where growth should take place and where it shouldn't are key to fostering both growth and conservation."

* * * * *

Founded in 1968, PlanSmart NJ is an independent non-profit planning and research organization based in Trenton. PlanSmart NJ's mission is to improve the quality of community life in New Jersey through the advancement of sound land use planning and regional cooperation.

More information about PlanSmart NJ, please visit www.plansmartnj.org; follow us on facebook <http://www.facebook.com/plansmartnj> and twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/@PlanSmartNJ>

EDITOR'S NOTE: PlanSmart NJ Executive Director Lucy Vandenberg is available to answer questions, 609-393-9434.