

PRESS RELEASE

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PLANSMART NJ IS MEMBER OF CONSORTIUM AWARDED \$5 MILLION HUD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES REGIONAL PLANNING GRANT

*Grant to develop a plan for 13 New Jersey counties
awarded to a consortium of NJ organizations*

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – The North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium today was awarded a \$5 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant award. PlanSmart NJ is a partner in the North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium, a project administered by the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

PlanSmart NJ will play a key role in providing expertise related to housing and community development, state and regional planning, redevelopment, land preservation, and consensus-building. PlanSmart NJ is committed to engaging the public and stakeholders in the region to increase participation in the planning and visioning process.

“This project will bring together leaders and visionaries in the state to work toward comprehensive solutions for regional land use planning. PlanSmart NJ looks forward to working with the Consortium to develop a truly equitable and sustainable plan that will serve as a beacon for our northern New Jersey communities.” said Raymond Ferrara, Ph.D., Chairman of the Board of Directors, PlanSmart NJ. “It is clear that the status quo is no longer sustainable in NJ. This grant will provide an impetus to jumpstart our economy, invest in our infrastructure, and align our local planning efforts for a better future for all New Jersey residents.”

The highly competitive national grant was announced by HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan and U.S. Senator Robert Menendez on Monday, November 21 at a press conference at the New Brunswick Wellness Plaza. The goal of the program is to help communities and regions improve their economic competitiveness by connecting housing with good jobs, quality schools and transportation.

Lucy Vandenberg, PlanSmart NJ's Executive Director noted, "PlanSmart NJ has long been a leader in making connections between transportation, housing, and economic development to foster vibrant communities. Through this grant, we will have the opportunity to substantially broaden our impact, working to build healthy communities through genuine community engagement and outreach."

The North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium grant will fund a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) for the 13-county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) region. The plan will use sustainability, transit system connectivity, and transit-oriented-development as the central framework for integrating plans, regulations, investments and incentive programs at all levels of government to bring jobs and create additional economic development opportunities in the area. The 13 counties in the NJTPA region include Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren.

More information about the grant announcement and HUD's Sustainable Communities Awards may be found at www.hud.gov/news/. The consortium is led by the [Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers](#), The State University of New Jersey, with a diverse core group of consortium members to provide the organizational capacity and expertise necessary to complete the project. The team includes the [North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority \(NJTPA\)](#), [NJ TRANSIT](#), the [New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy \(NJOPA\)](#), the [Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey \(HCDN-NJ\)](#), the [Municipal Land Use Center at The College of New Jersey \(MLUC\)](#), [NJ Future](#), the [New Jersey Regional Coalition \(NJRC\)](#), [PlanSmart NJ](#), and the [Regional Plan Association \(RPA\)](#).

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