

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
November 13, 2012

Contact:  
Lucy Vandenberg  
PlanSmart NJ  
609-393-9434  
[lvandenberg@plansmartnj.org](mailto:lvandenberg@plansmartnj.org)

### **STATE PLANNING COMMISSION TABLES ADOPTION OF NEW STATE PLAN *PlanSmart NJ Supports Short-Term Delay, Encourages State to Act Quickly to Adopt State Plan***

TRENTON, November 13, 2012 – PlanSmart NJ supports the State Planning Commission’s decision today to temporarily delay adoption of the new State Strategic Plan to allow more public comment and to incorporate disaster planning goals. PlanSmart NJ, however, encourages the State Planning Commission to move quickly to incorporate necessary changes and then put the State Plan forward for final adoption.

Lucy Vandenberg, PlanSmart NJ Executive Director, remarked, “Time is of the essence. In the aftermath of the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy, State leadership on issues of regional planning, infrastructure investment, and economic growth is simply vital.

PlanSmart NJ Board Chairman Richard Goldman commented, “The State Plan provides a critical framework to help us move forward. Adoption of the new State Plan is vital to the future prosperity of New Jersey.”

The last time New Jersey adopted a State Plan was in 2001. The State Planning Commission posted a revised version of the State Strategic Plan on its website on Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, after incorporating public comment, including comment from PlanSmart NJ. PlanSmart NJ applauds key concepts in the revised Plan:

- ***Promotion of geographic industry growth clusters based on employment sectors with high growth potential.*** These sectors include: pharma/life sciences; transportation, logistics, and distribution; finance; manufacturing; technology; and health care. PlanSmart NJ and the NJ Chamber of Commerce have formed a Regional Innovation Cluster Working Group composed of leaders in these core industries to support the State Plan’s economic growth goals.
- ***Commitment to long-term source of funding for open space, farmland, and historic preservation.*** PlanSmart NJ has long advocated for a stable source of funding to protect New Jersey’s open spaces and agricultural lands. Without state leadership, this funding will soon run out.

- **Alignment of state agency regulations, policies, and funding with the State Strategic Plan.** For the first time, the Plan requires state agencies to create Agency Implementation Plans to carry out the goals in the State Strategic Plan. “We’ve all experienced first-hand how communities suffer when state agencies send conflicting messages,” said PlanSmart NJ 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 and investment decisions.”

PlanSmart NJ also makes some recommendations for improvement in the following areas:

- **Future flooding and disasters.** In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, it is evident that decisions about how and where to rebuild and what areas to protect need to be part of our planning framework. PlanSmart NJ recommends that the State Plan include planning for climate impacts such as storms and flooding.
- **Housing as an economic driver.** The new State Plan makes little mention of the importance of the housing sector in revitalizing the State’s economy or the importance of changing zoning policies to permit housing near jobs. A variety of housing options must be available near employment centers if the State is to reduce household commutes, lessen congestion on the roads, and improve the quality of life in local communities. PlanSmart NJ recommends that the State Plan recognize the role of the housing sector in sound regional planning and economic growth.
- **Creating access to opportunity.** The State Plan does not discuss the role of zoning and planning in creating access to opportunity for households at all income levels. PlanSmart NJ recommends that the State Plan include consideration of access to opportunity for all New Jersey residents.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Founded in 1968, PlanSmart NJ is an independent non-profit planning, education, 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](http://www.plansmartnj.org); follow us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/plansmartnj> and Twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/@PlanSmartNJ>