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## **PlanSmart NJ Supports Port Authority of NY/NJ Investments in Regional Infrastructure**

PlanSmart NJ, a statewide planning and research non-profit organization, today issued a statement commending the Port Authority of NY/NJ for its decision to raise the Bayonne Bridge and make other needed investments in northern New Jersey's infrastructure. PlanSmart NJ recognizes that the Port Authority of NY/NJ needs to raise new sources of revenue in order to create new jobs and make our region economically competitive.

Lucy Vandenberg, PlanSmart NJ's Executive Director, stated, "Now is the time for the Port Authority of NY/NJ to make the investments in our regional infrastructure that will create jobs, improve New Jersey residents' safety and security, and foster economic growth. PlanSmart NJ recognizes that increased revenues are essential to making these critical infrastructure investments in our region's transportation system."

Ms. Vandenberg further noted, "In fact, we are presenting the Port Authority of NY/NJ with our prestigious statewide Economic Development Achievement Award at our November 2011 Annual Dinner for their investment in the Bayonne Bridge, a project which is expected to generate \$3.3 billion in economic benefit nationally."

The Port Authority of NY/NJ is proposing a \$33 billion capital program, which will create 185,633 jobs, \$10.8 billion in wages and \$42.7 billion in sales in the affected 17-county New York/New Jersey Port District. In addition to the Bayonne Bridge project, the capital program will make possible the following critical transportation projects:

- Replacement of the Lincoln Tunnel circular roadway entering the tunnel (known as the "helix") to prevent long-term lane closures and delays and ensure safe conditions. This improvement will shorten commutes by up to 45 minutes during peak hours.
- Addition of staging capacity and parking spaces to the Port Authority Bus terminal to decrease congestion and reduce customer delays.
- Replacement of The George Washington Bridge Suspender ropes to improve bridge safety. These have never been replaced in the bridge's 80-year life.

- Strengthening security of Port Authority facilities to keep them protected from threats.

*PlanSmart NJ is an independent, non-profit civic planning and research organization committed to improving the quality of community life through the advancement of sound land use planning and regional cooperation.*

*Drawing on over 40 years experience, PlanSmart NJ concentrates on land use, transportation, housing, environmental conservation, and related issues throughout the state of NJ. PlanSmart NJ is the state's premier source of cutting edge and pragmatic ways to transform the forces behind suburban sprawl and urban deterioration into laws and actions that foster natural resource conservation, economic vitality, and improved quality of life for all citizens, and the optimal use of private and public resources.*