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**New Jersey's Economic Stimulus Package:
Will Mega-Investments Produce Mega-Results?**
*State Leaders Discuss How New Jersey Can
Leverage This Huge Public Investment*

PRINCETON, NJ—The proposed ARC Tunnel will cost as much as \$8.3 billion and will double the capacity of New Jersey's transit system, accessible to three quarters of the State's population. This new transit capacity **could** set us on the path toward sustainability, including meeting New Jersey's ambitious 2050 Greenhouse Gas emissions reduction targets by reducing auto trips.

PlanSmart NJ believes this is one of the most strategic projects that could be advanced right now. The Tunnel will have the power to transform hundreds of communities and change how thousands of people travel throughout the State.

It could add economic growth capacity, which is currently limited by auto-dependency and congested highways. And it could encourage housing investment in "smart" locations, turning the tide of sprawl which had carried much of New Jersey's labor force to Pennsylvania and other cheaper locations.

Furthermore, the doubling of New Jersey's transit capacity could stimulate the regeneration of countless communities that have been abandoned or neglected in favor of suburban sprawl for decades.

If the construction of the ARC Tunnel achieves these results, it will truly be worth this huge public investment.

BUT, what will the enormous public investment in the ARC Tunnel do for the neighborhoods in Newark and other north and central Jersey cities and older suburbs? How significantly can the ARC Tunnel advance the regional planning, affordable housing and local transit service

prospects of the region? What can the tunnel do for the Smart Growth goal of reducing the concentration of poverty and promoting regional equity?

For an investment of this size, the answer to each of these questions should be “a great deal.” We know, however, that the questions have not even been raised in connection to the ARC Project.

Dianne Brake, President of PlanSmart NJ, says “It can provide growth capacity in places stymied by gridlock and new vitality in places plagued by poverty. It can clean up polluted skies, reduce fossil fuel dependence and improve the quality of life for thousands of people throughout the State.”

The construction of the ARC Tunnel will create thousands of jobs for its planning and construction, and could - if leveraged as PlanSmart NJ advocates - put New Jersey on the path to a more sustainable future.

None of these benefits, however, will be achieved for communities in northern and central New Jersey unless they are demanded by residents and consciously planned for by all levels of government to prepare the many existing and potential station areas for making the best use of the new capacity that will be added to the system and promote regional planning – the two areas that are lacking in the current system and yet needed to capitalize on the strategic investment of the ARC/Mass Transit Tunnel.

Without the State taking action to reform its land use decision-making system, any new economic development planned for these new transit-friendly locations will be mired in New Jersey’s regulatory morass and obstructed by out-dated ideas about growth, housing and transportation.

“As the most transit-friendly state in the nation, New Jersey could be the first to demonstrate how proximity, extensive new service (commuter trains and BRT to local shuttles and jitneys), carbon-trading and other strategies can make New Jersey more sustainable,” states Jack Lettiere, former Commissioner of New Jersey’s Department of Transportation.

Until now, no one has considered the potential for redevelopment that the proposed ARC Tunnel will provide.

PlanSmart NJ’s June 11, 2009 conference, to be held at Princeton University Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, will focus on how the Mega-Investment of the ARC Tunnel can be the catalyst to a road map of Mega-Results.