

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2010

CONTACT:

Rachaele Raynoff (DCP) (212) 720-3471

Stu Loeser / Jason Post (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES NEW YORK CITY RECEIVES
U.S. EPA NATIONAL SMART GROWTH AWARD FOR PLANYC PROGRAMS**

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced today that New York City has received the 2010 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in the category of "Overall Excellence" from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the implementation of its PlaNYC programs. Released on Earth Day in 2007, PlaNYC is Mayor Bloomberg's comprehensive sustainability plan to build a greener, greater New York City. PlaNYC endeavors to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the City's infrastructure, create open space, and improve air and water quality. The EPA also cited the City's landmark Street Design Manual, a guide to creating high-quality streets to promote walking; the Zoning for Bike Parking program, which requires new developments to provide secure indoor bike parking; the City's Active Design Guidelines, which promote the use of active transportation; and the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program, which incentivizes grocery stores in neighborhoods in need of more healthy food stores. EPA presented the award at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. to Department of Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan and Department of City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden, who represented the City at the awards ceremony.

"PlaNYC continues to be recognized as a comprehensive strategy that has changed the way we are going to effectively meet the challenges of a growing population and create a greener, greater city – now and for future generations," said Mayor Bloomberg. "We will continue to seek input from New Yorkers as we regularly update the plan, so it continues to evolve with new technology, new innovations and new community needs."

"PlaNYC puts all the pieces together – open space, better transportation, cleaner air and water, and healthier living," said David Bragdon, Director of the Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability. "It is the multi-disciplinary approach that makes the plan so effective."

"We've demonstrated that smart growth principles can work in an older city, retrofitting New York with world class streets, accessible public spaces and a more sustainable and diversified transportation network that gives more commuting options," said Department of Transportation Commissioner Sadik-Khan. "This award is a credit to Mayor Bloomberg's leadership, defying the status quo and preparing New York City for the certainty of a growing population and the uncertainty of our economic and environmental future."

"By supporting the Mayor's goals for increased mobility, equity and quality of life, the FRESH program and Zoning for Bike Parking contribute to making our city healthier and more sustainable," said Department of City Planning Commissioner Burden. "I am proud to be part of a team of agencies that are working to ensure that New York City continues to be a model of Smart Growth for generations to come."

"We are excited that EPA recognizes the City's collaborative and synergistic approach to addressing our leading health and environmental concerns," said Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Thomas A. Farley. "We have been working in partnership across City government on initiatives that can simultaneously promote health and environmental sustainability through measures such as increasing opportunities for active transportation and increasing fresh and healthy food options over highly processed and packaged foods."

"Design of the built environment can have a crucial and positive influence on improving our environment and public health," said Department of Design and Construction Commissioner David J. Burney, FAIA. "Since the City's Active Design Guidelines were issued, they have been downloaded thousands of times by people from across the nation and around the world. As cities grow, 'active design' will help make cities healthier and more sustainable places to live and work."

PlaNYC established 127 sustainability initiatives to create a greener, greater New York by creating more green space, reducing congestion and improving air and water quality. New York is one of the oldest and most densely populated cities in the country and smart growth requires retrofitting the existing infrastructure to operate more efficiently and facilitate healthier lifestyles. PlaNYC was developed with input from New York City residents about what they saw as the priorities for a sustainable future and the plan is updated regularly. The Administration is currently conducting

community conversations in locations across the five boroughs to gather input for the 2011 update PlaNYC, which is the first update to the plan and will be released on Earth Day 2011.

One of the goals of PlaNYC was to create a more sustainable transportation network by providing more commuting options for New Yorkers, while improving accessibility in underserved neighborhoods. Since PlaNYC's launch, more than 250 lane-miles of bicycle lanes have been installed, making cycling a safer, more appealing way to commute and leading to an estimated 88 percent growth in commuter cycling since 2006. PlaNYC also promised to initiate Bus Rapid Transit service to improve commutes along some of the City's busiest streets, and the service has been established along Fordham Road in the Bronx and on First and Second Avenues in Manhattan, with travel times improving by as much as 20 percent.

PlaNYC laid the foundation for new partnerships among City agencies to develop a comprehensive smart growth strategy that incorporates feedback from community groups and the private sector, and has practical applications in New York City's neighborhoods. The Department of Transportation's Street Design Manual provides guidance to both the public and private sectors on all aspects of street design, with the goal of creating world-class streets. The manual details engineering materials that can be used in design to make streets safer, while also facilitating sustainable modes of transportation and was published in 2009 based on the findings of an inter-agency task force convened to address needs and opportunities in a broad range of street conditions.

The City's Active Design Guidelines were unveiled in 2010 and developed among several agencies including the Departments of City Planning, Design and Construction, Health and Mental Hygiene, and Transportation. The guidelines provide evidence-based and best practice strategies for supporting active, healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyles in communities across the city with the ultimate goal of combating obesity and diabetes, two of the city's most rapidly growing public health concerns. These documents are among the multi-agency initiatives launched to integrate smart growth concepts into City policies and projects, and simultaneously improve health, environmental sustainability and universal accessibility.

The City's Zoning for Bike Parking program, developed by the Department of City Planning, will facilitate a more active lifestyle by requiring enclosed and secure bicycle parking for new multi-family residential, community facility, and commercial buildings. Providing bike parking in the home and workplace will increase the transportation options available to New Yorkers, help people bike to work, move around the city and keep fit. The program will help alleviate traffic congestion and pollution, and yield long term health benefits for New Yorkers. This is the most comprehensive bike parking zoning requirement of any dense U.S. city and will cultivate a greener and healthier urban environment. The program is part of a coordinated multi-agency effort with the Department of Transportation to promote New Yorkers' use of bicycles, which is a key component of Mayor Bloomberg's strategy for a cleaner, healthier city.

Developed in close coordination with the City Council, the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program is the City's effort to aid development of new supermarkets and the expansion of current stores to provide fresh produce in neighborhoods that lack healthy food options. The initiative provides and promotes zoning and financial incentives to property owners, developers and grocery store operators and is the first program in the nation to combine zoning and financial incentives for stores that sell healthy food options and to offer them in multiple neighborhoods.

EPA created the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in 2002 to recognize exceptional approaches to development that protect the environment, foster economic vitality, and enhance quality of life. Over the past nine years, almost 700 communities in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have applied to EPA for consideration for this award. In addition to presenting the annual awards, EPA's Smart Growth Program helps America's communities turn their visions of the future into reality through research, tools, partnerships, case studies, grants, and technical assistance. The EPA bestows awards recognizing outstanding examples of sustainable communities across the country.