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**ENVISION LANCASTER COUNTY WINS
OVERALL EXCELLENCE AWARD, THE TOP AWARD
FROM THE U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

LANCASTER COUNTY, PA (Dec. 1, 2009) – The Lancaster County Planning Commission (LCPC) won the Overall Excellence Award for ***Envision Lancaster County, the County's Comprehensive Plan and Implementation***, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

“U.S. EPA Smart Growth award is really a great honor for Lancaster County's citizens and business leaders,” said James R. Cowhey, AICP, executive director of the LCPC. “The award recognizes the community's commitment to ensuring a continued high quality of life through a truly comprehensive approach to Smart Growth,” he said. “Lancastrians are working hard to preserve a working agricultural landscape, a distinct culture and heritage, sustain a strong local and regional economy, and deliver a smart transportation system.”

The EPA recognized four diverse communities for their comprehensive approach to improving access to affordable housing, providing more transportation options and protecting the local environment for residents.

“It's great to be chosen as a national leader in planning and growth management,” said Cowhey, as he accepted the top award on behalf of Lancaster County for Overall Excellence. Winning this award sets the bar for our ongoing efforts in planning for a great future for Lancaster County.

The four recipients of the 2009 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement are as follows:

Overall Excellence: Lancaster County Planning Commission for Envision Lancaster County

Policies and Regulations: City of Charlotte for Urban Street Design Guidelines

Built Projects: Chicago Housing Authority, FitzGerald Associates Architects, and its Partners

Smart Growth and Green Building: City of Tempe for the Tempe Transportation Center

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Recognizing Lancaster County, the EPA indicated in a news release that Lancaster County, is known for its historic towns and villages, and its fertile farmland. To maintain the county's character, its diverse economy, and its natural resources for future generations, the Lancaster County Planning Commission established a countywide comprehensive growth management plan, which protects valuable farmland and historic landscapes by directing development to established towns and cities in the county.

According to the EPA, all four winners demonstrate the community benefits of aligning housing, transportation, and environmental objectives.

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 eight years, 623 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.

More information on the winners and EPA's Smart Growth Program:
<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/>

More information on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities:
<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/partnership>

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