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Press Release

For Immediate Release
Contact: Patty Sly (908) 879-6737 ext 104
March 29, 2007

South Korean Officials Visit Highlands Council

Chester, NJ- Officials from the South Korean Province of GyeongGi visited the Highlands Council today on the first stop of a North American business tour that will also include Toronto and San Francisco.

The Transportation Department in GyeongGi-Do has been interested in creating an effective government information system for the public. Recently they have shown interest in utilizing Open Source GIS concepts, such as Google maps, for building a transportation information system. The officials are interested in understanding how governmental agencies use these sources for purposes of developing web-based applications that convey and share essential information to the public. Specifically, the Highlands Council has utilized this cutting edge technology, coupled with GIS layers developed by the Council, to allow property owners and stake holders in the Highlands Region to search retrieve and share information at the parcel level. The Highlands Council plans to continue to build these applications for use by municipal and county officials. Additional components of these applications will allow for interactive exchange of information.

Several government officials from the GyeongGi Province, led by Traffic Improvement Division Director Kim, Dae-Ho, PhD, PE, visited along with representatives from other Korean cities and universities. GyeongGi Province is located in the northwestern part of South Korea. It surrounds the metropolis of Seoul and city of Incheon. The Seoul-GyeongGi metropolitan area is home to 22 million people, accounting for 46% of the total population of South Korea. GyeongGi Province itself had a population exceeding 9.28 million people in 2000, 87% of who live in urban areas.

In August 2004, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the Highland Water Protection and Planning Act in order to protect nearly 860,000 acres which supply drinking water for more than sixty-five percent of New Jersey's residents. The Highlands Act created the Highlands Council as a regional planning entity charged with protecting the water resources and natural beauty of the New Jersey Highlands while allowing for planned, sustainable development and redevelopment of the region. The Council members include a broad and representative range of elected officials from Highlands municipalities and counties, as well as individuals with diverse backgrounds and area perspectives.