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President Obama's FY 2011 Budget Will Help Create Jobs, Cut Transportation Costs for Families, and Improve Access to Affordable Housing

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Washington, DC – President Obama's budget for the 2011 fiscal year, released this morning, contains more than \$1 billion in programs and grants that will help create and support livable, sustainable communities and neighborhoods across the country.

"This is good news for anyone looking to cut their transportation costs, find an affordable home in a walkable neighborhood, or live in a community with a multitude of transportation options," said SGA President Geoff Anderson.

"It's worth noting that in such difficult economic times and in a budget with extensive cuts in other areas, the Administration is emphasizing the importance of improving sustainability and livability in our neighborhoods large and small, meeting numerous goals by saving taxpayer money and improving sustainability while enhancing the quality of life for Americans in communities across the country," Anderson continued.

"At its core, sustainability is about making sure that we use resources responsibly and wisely, and livability means creating communities where people can find an affordable place to live, a good job, and options for getting where they need to go each day," he added.

"In today's economic climate, with millions of Americans out of work, facing foreclosure or mounting transportation expenses due to rising oil prices or cuts in public transportation, it is imperative that the federal government be a strong partner for local governments, working with them to ensure that our future growth is sustainable, equitable, livable and affordable. This budget moves those important priorities forward."

The administration blazed a path toward improving livability and sustainability with last year's creation of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a joint effort between the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Transportation. In the FY 2011 budget, that Partnership would receive more than \$830 million (between the

three agencies) to help American families in rural, suburban and urban communities have better options for getting where they need to go and better access to affordable housing.

DOT will also get an additional \$1 billion in high-speed rail funding, in addition to \$2.5 billion in the current year's budget, and \$8 billion in grants from the 2009 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act awarded last week. All told, the administration could be spending more than \$11.5 billion to lay the groundwork for a national high-speed rail system over the course of just a few short years.

"Investing in our transportation system and high speed rail travel are smart bets for the future. Not only will we create jobs in the short and long term, but we will be building the kind of infrastructure that can connect the people in our metro areas, giving them more options for travel, and creating opportunity and long-term economic success from coast to coast," said Geoff Anderson.

We will have a deeper analysis of the President's budget coming hopefully later this week.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transit or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information, please visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

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