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### **RECONNECTING AMERICA RELEASES JUMPSTARTING THE TRANSIT SPACE RACE: 2011**

(April 13, 2011) Reconnecting America today released its latest analysis of planned transit projects across the United States. The report found the projects in the construction and final engineering stages alone would connect 3.5 million more jobs to transit, an increase of 25 percent, and nearly 4 million households would gain enhanced transit access, with almost half of those being lower-income households.

Unfortunately, just as Reconnecting America found in its first analysis back in 2008, these projects are starved for funding.

Reconnecting America's "Jumpstarting the Transit Space Race: 2011" examines current transit plans from the 100 largest regions, as well as some projects from smaller regions. Reconnecting America's cataloging effort found 643 transit projects in 106 regions, many of which are competing for the approximately \$1.6 billion annually available in the federal New Starts funding program.

"The sheer scale of the projects being proposed is immense, especially when compared to the 45 projects currently in the federal New Starts/Small Starts process," said Reconnecting America's President and CEO John Robert Smith.

The total cost for completing just the 413 projects where cost estimates exist today is \$233 billion. If all of those projects were to go through the federal New Starts/Small Starts process seeking a 50 percent share it would take 73 years to clear this backlog at current federal funding levels. The Obama Administration's initial proposal to increase New Starts funding to \$2.8 billion in FY2012 could reduce this backlog to 41 years.

Reconnecting America also found the New Starts Program is not well suited to support the rapid system build out called for in regions such as Los Angeles, Seattle, and Denver.

Beyond the lack of money, Reconnecting America's report found that many regions with no fixed-guideway transit today are looking to expand the transportation

options in their communities. Over 30 percent of the individual projects identified in the study are in regions that currently have no fixed-guideway transit.

"The transit projects that have been proposed across the country have the potential to transform regions," said Jeff Wood, principal author of the report and Reconnecting America's chief cartographer and new media director.

"Jumpstarting the Transit Space Race: 2011" is available for download at <http://reconnectingamerica.org/assets/2011TransitSpaceRaceIIFinal.pdf>

The 2008 report can be found at <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/books-and-reports/2009/jumpstarting-the-transit-space-race/>

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*Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that is helping to transform promising ideas into thriving communities – where transportation choices make it easy to get from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit. Reconnecting America is the managing partner of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, the only national nonprofit effort funded by Congress to promote best practices in transit-oriented development. Reconnecting America is also a founding partner of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of housing, environmental, equal opportunity, public health, urban planning, transportation and other organizations focused on creating a 21st century national transportation program. For more information visit our website, [www.reconnectingamerica.org](http://www.reconnectingamerica.org).*