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(May 21, 2012) Los Angeles Affordable Housing Preservation Study released by the Los Angeles Housing Department and Reconnecting America

Los Angeles' massive transit infrastructure investment promises benefits across the city and the region over the next decade and beyond, but it could also have unfortunate side effects if efforts aren't made to preserve affordable housing in transit-rich neighborhoods, according to a report commissioned by the City of Los Angeles Housing Department and written by Reconnecting America. The report was funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, through the Awards for State & Local Housing Preservation Leaders of the Foundation's Window of Opportunity Initiative (WOI).

The report “Preservation in Transit-Oriented Districts: A Study on the Need, Priorities, and Tools in Protecting Assisted and Unassisted Housing in the City of Los Angeles,” was unveiled at the Second Annual Affordable Housing Preservation Summit in Los Angeles on May 16, 2012.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa told conference attendees: “The employees of the future will need housing options, and they will need transit options. If our housing market is to work, it has to work for everyone. From housekeepers to hedge-fund managers, we need housing linked to transit for all Angelenos."

Los Angeles has been working to match its transit expansion in recent years with transit-oriented district planning. At the Los Angeles Housing Department, the goal of ensuring that all families and workers are able to continue to live and work in the city's transit-rich neighborhoods is a key priority. The report provides a framework for prioritizing areas for preservation of existing affordable housing based on the anticipated change in market and demographic characteristics resulting from transit investments.
“We’re continuing to deal with challenges to the preservation and creation of affordable housing units,” said LAHD Interim General Manager Rushmore Cervantes. “Preservation strategies protect past federal and local investments. With new resources increasingly threatened, preservation is key to addressing the affordable housing needs of all Angelenos.”

In the report, Reconnecting America provides empirical evidence showing the need for affordable housing preservation near transit. The report authors then use a data-driven analysis reflected in 16 maps to create a framework for preservation of different types of income restricted housing near transit.

Abigail Thorne-Lyman, the Director of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development at Reconnecting America, notes that “preservation of affordable housing is the best way to accommodate the economic growth and revitalization that comes with the major transit investment being built in Los Angeles, while ensuring that low and moderate income workers are able to continue to rely on transit and support ridership on the system.”

Copies of the report may be downloaded at http://ractod.org/MB0hUY.

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About the Los Angeles Housing Department
The Los Angeles Housing Department’s mission is to provide safe and livable neighborhoods through the promotion, development and preservation of decent and affordable housing utilizing federal capital resources, tax-exempt bonding authority, tax credits and leveraging from other funds from the public and private sector, complaint-based and routine periodic inspection of all rental housing except single-family homes.

About Reconnecting America
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.