FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 25, 2001

Smart Growth America Applauds the Introduction of the National Housing Trust Fund Act

CONTACT: Alex Goldschmidt, Smart Growth America, (202) 207-3355 x112, agoldschmidt@smartgrowthamerica.org

Washington, DC – Smart Growth America today commends Senator John Kerry on the introduction of the National Housing Trust Fund Act. The availability of quality, affordable housing is critical to regional efforts to effectively manage growth and development.

Across the nation, Americans are struggling with the harmful impacts of urban sprawl, including the loss of open space and farmland, worsening traffic congestion, and neglected older communities. Smart Growth America believes that the lack of housing choices is driving many of these problems.

The establishment of a permanent source of funding to provide Americans with more affordable housing choices is essential to helping communities fight urban sprawl,” said Don Chen, Director of Smart Growth America.

According to the National Housing Conference, 3.7 million American families spend at least 50 percent of their income on housing or live in severely inadequate housing. To reduce these costs, many families seek homes that are located very far from job centers, educational opportunities, health care services, and other opportunities. Furthermore, many families trade off housing costs for added transportation costs, which further saddles them with expenses. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, American families now spend as much of their family budget on transportation as they do on shelter. And the poorest fifth of America’s households spend nearly 40 percent of their income on transportation.

“The absence of a good mix of housing and jobs, ensures that communities will face severe traffic problems, continued sprawling development, and the concentration of poverty in neglected neighborhoods,” noted Chen.

We thank Senator Kerry and the other original co-sponsors for their leadership. We look forward to working with them to see the timely passage of the National Housing Trust Fund Act.

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.

# # #