



# Issue Brief

The American Institute of Architects • Government Advocacy • Federal Issue Position and Analysis

## Key Points

- *Congress should provide incentives to designers and builders for constructing energy efficient commercial and residential buildings that are located near public transportation*
- *The design and construction industries lost nearly one million jobs in the past year. Congress should pursue legislative action to stimulate these industries.*
- *Energy efficiency provides direct benefits to the economy, the environment, and our nation's energy security.*
- *The 2008 Moving Communities Forward study authored by the AIA and the University of Minnesota shows that well-designed transportation projects that spur transit-oriented development benefit a community by facilitating economic development, creating jobs, increasing productivity, and easing the movement of traffic. For more information visit [www.movingcommunitiesforward.org](http://www.movingcommunitiesforward.org).*

## REBUILD AND RENEW

### Promote Green Transit-Oriented Design and Construction

#### AIA Position

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) believes that governmental policies, programs, and incentives should encourage energy efficiency and walkable, livable communities. The AIA believes that Congress should enact incentives for the design and construction of energy efficient buildings that are located near public transportation.

#### Action Sought

The AIA urges Congress to enact incentives for the design and construction of energy efficient buildings located near public transportation. Specifically, we encourage Congress to pass H.R. 2016, legislation that will provide a tax credit for buildings that meet the following criteria:

- Energy efficient: projects must be 50% more efficient than ASHRAE 90.1 2004
- Transit-oriented: projects must be located within a half mile of public transportation.

#### Explanation and Justification

The ongoing economic crisis has decimated the commercial construction market. Increasingly tight credit markets have put financing for construction projects in jeopardy and forced businesses to layoff workers. By creating this tax incentive for commercial construction and development, Congress can help stimulate the market, in turn creating jobs, sparking economic activity, and encouraging green buildings and smart growth.

By incentivizing energy efficient construction and development, Congress has the power to help both the environment and the economy. Energy-efficient buildings cost less to operate, use less energy, reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, improve comfort, and protect the energy security of our nation.

Transit-oriented development provides numerous benefits to the surrounding community. Constructing large-scale, mixed use projects near transit will foster economic growth, reduce congestion, preserve urban centers, promote managed growth, enhance neighborhood identity, and improve health and quality of life.