



NATIONAL AWARD FOR

Smart  Growth

ACHIEVEMENT

2002



**EPA**

United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

## A Message from Administrator Whitman

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**C**ongratulations to the winners of the first National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement! The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proud to sponsor these awards to honor communities that are working for a cleaner environment and a higher quality of life for their citizens.

EPA's support for smart growth is right in line with our goals to achieve cleaner air, purer water and better protected land. Smart growth is an important tool in realizing these benefits. By making use of existing infrastructure and redeveloping brownfields, economic development and renewal is resulting in the transformation of community eyesores into community assets. Smart growth makes sense for our environment, our economy and our communities.

Smart growth also advances an important priority for the Bush Administration, that of building a more collaborative, results-based government. EPA is committed to working in partnership with federal agencies, tribes, corporations, preservationists, and citizens to achieve smarter growth across the nation. We understand that land use decisions are a local matter, and that our role in smart growth is to provide assistance to help with those decisions. To that end, EPA offers regulatory flexibility, information, and technical support.

The National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement are intended to recognize communities for innovative approaches to smart growth and to continue spreading the word about how smart growth can be achieved. Indeed, each winner serves as a model for other communities and shows that we can preserve open space, save money on roads and sewers, keep homes affordable, and boost prosperity for this and future generations.

Christine Todd Whitman  
EPA Administrator



## smart growth

*noun* \ smärt grōth \

1. growth that serves the economy, the community and the environment

# Environmental Protection and Smart Growth

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**T**he built environment — the developments where we live, work, shop, and play — has both direct and indirect effects on the natural environment. Smart growth development approaches have clear environmental benefits, including: improved air and water quality, greater wetlands and open space preservation, and more clean up and re-use of brownfield sites. Below are examples of how the location and design of growth impacts the natural environment:

- ❖ Between 1954 and 1997, developed land area almost quadrupled from 18.6 million acres to about 74 million acres in the contiguous 48 states. The consequences of this land consumption include habitat loss and fragmentation, wetland destruction, and degradation of water quality.
- ❖ *The National Water Quality Inventory: 1998 Report to Congress* identified runoff from development as one of the leading sources of water quality impairment. Runoff from development was ranked as the sixth leading source of impairment in rivers, fourth in lakes, and second in estuaries.
- ❖ As development moves away from existing communities, contaminated or blighted land is often left behind. EPA estimates that between 500,000 and one million brownfields tarnish the landscapes of communities across America. Brownfields are abandoned or underutilized properties where redevelopment is hindered by possible environmental contamination.

Smart Growth promotes practices that can lessen the environmental impacts of development, including: redevelopment of brownfields, creation of compact walkable neighborhoods, reduced impervious surfaces, safeguarding of environmentally sensitive areas, mixing of land uses (e.g., residential, office, and retail), transit accessibility, and support for pedestrian and bicycle activity.

A New Jersey study found that compact development would produce 40 percent less water pollution than more dispersed development patterns. In a Seattle study, authors found that by mixing land uses and enhancing the relative convenience of non-auto travel, 12.2 percent of all trips were nonmotorized, compared to 3.9 percent in single-use residential neighborhoods. While individually, smart growth methods can yield significant environmental improvements, a synergistic approach combining a number of policies and programs can deliver even greater environmental benefits.

For more information on the benefits of smart growth, see “Our Built and Natural Environments, A Technical Review of the Interactions between Land Use, Transportation, and Environmental Quality.” This document is available from the EPA by calling 513-891-6561 or on the Internet at: [www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/publications.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/publications.htm)

# National Award for Smart Growth Achievement Winners

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Winner: **Arlington County, Virginia**

Category: Overall Excellence in Smart Growth

Project: Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor

Winner: **Town of Breckenridge Planning  
Department, Colorado**

Category: Built Projects

Project: Wellington Neighborhood

Winner: **City/County Association of  
Governments of San Mateo  
County, California**

Category: Policies and Regulations

Project: Transit-Oriented Development  
Incentive Program

Winner: **Massachusetts Executive  
Office of Environmental Affairs**

Category: Community Outreach and Education

Project: Community Preservation Initiative



# About the Award

This national recognition program was created by EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman in 2002 and is sponsored by EPA's Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation. In this inaugural year, the call for entries resulted in over 100 applications from across the country.

Each award recipient has incorporated the principles of smart growth to create places that respect community culture and the environment, foster economic development, and enhance quality of life. The winning entries were selected based on their replicability and effectiveness in advancing smart growth and also reflect appropriate citizen and stakeholder participation or partnerships.

The award recipients were chosen through a multi-step process. Advice on the entries was provided by a panel of external experts representing a broad range of constituencies with interest and expertise in the built environment and smart growth. An internal EPA review panel then provided additional comments on the entries. EPA's Associate Administrator for Policy, Economics and Innovation made the final award determinations.



## The principles of smart growth include:

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create housing opportunities and choices for a range of household types, family sizes and incomes.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
7. Reinvest in and strengthen existing communities and achieve more balanced regional development.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.
10. Encourage citizen and stakeholder participation in development decisions.

# Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor

Arlington County, Virginia

Arlington's planning approach places dense, mixed-use, infill development at five Metro stations and tapers it down to residential neighborhoods. The result? Over 21 million square feet of office/retail/commercial space, 3,000+ hotel rooms, and 22,500 residential units creating vibrant "urban villages" where people live, shop, work and play using transit, pedestrian walkways, bicycles or cars.



**A**rlington County uses smart growth principles to generate residential, retail and recreational development around the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor of Metro stations. The corridor includes five stations: Rosslyn, Court House, Clarendon, Virginia Square, and Ballston. Arlington adopted a General Land Use Plan (GLUP) to concentrate dense, mixed-use development at the stations and developed sector plans to ensure that each station maintained a distinct sense of community. Incentive zoning is used to attract private sector transit-oriented development.

The sector plans set goals for type of use, open space, infrastructure and design. Each plan focuses growth within a walkable radius of the stations, and preserves established neighborhoods and natural areas. Arlington's urban villages emphasize pedestrian access and safety, and incorporate public art, "pocket" parks, wide sidewalks with restaurant seating, bike lanes, street trees, traffic calming, and street-level retail. A site plan review links goals in the GLUP with details of each proposed project.

Metro station locations and the GLUP continue to guide development. Between 1999 and 2002, the corridor gained 2,500 apartments and condos, 1.5 million square feet of office space, 379,000 square feet of retail space, and five miles of bike lanes. The corridor is so popular that preserving affordable housing is a challenge. In 2001, Arlington adopted an expanded bonus density provision for development of affordable housing, allowing up to 25 percent more density.

The transit successes and corresponding environmental performance are impressive. Metro ridership doubled in the corridor between 1991 and 2002. Nearly 50 percent of corridor residents use transit to commute. As of the end of 2001, the corridor has over 18.3 million square feet of office space, 3.4 million square feet of retail/commercial space, over 3,000 hotel rooms, and 22,500 residential units — with much more under construction. Creating this development at typical suburban densities could consume over 14 square miles of open space compared to the roughly two square mile Rosslyn-Ballston corridor.

## Highlights

### The Corridor as a Model

Many of Arlington's policies and procedures could be implemented in other communities. Planning density around Metro stops is a model for directing growth to new or existing transit corridors while protecting older neighborhoods and natural areas. When residents are involved in developing plans, they are more likely to support density at the stations and the amenities it can provide for the neighborhood.

### Developing Community

Community partnerships such as the Ballston Partnership, Clarendon Alliance, and Rosslyn Renaissance ensure full and active participation by citizens and businesses in nearly all public and private development and policy decisions. The County solicits citizen input through over 40 Board-appointed County Commissions and nearly 60 neighborhood civic associations. Arlington uses a comprehensive site plan review process including public meetings with staff, citizens, County Commissions, and developers.

### For More Information

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## Rosslyn-Ballston Metro Corridor • Overall Excellence in Smart Growth Winner



Stuart Park, located across the street from the Ballston Metro Station and flanked by offices and apartment buildings with street level retail, is popular with area residents and employees.

“Arlington County has maintained its political and economic commitment to transit-oriented redevelopment for three decades. Residents support the smart growth program because they participate in developing plans and reviewing projects, pay low taxes thanks to the strong commercial tax base, and enjoy the convenient shops, services and transit.”

Carrie Johnson,  
Member of Arlington County  
Planning Commission  
and long-time resident

This aerial photo demonstrates the effectiveness of Arlington's approach around the Rosslyn and Court House stations. It also shows that smart growth results in a wide range of housing types from apartments and condos to townhouses and single-family detached homes.



# Wellington Neighborhood

Breckenridge, Colorado

The Wellington Neighborhood in Breckenridge, Colorado provides affordable and market-rate housing on a site that was once dredge-mined. The project recycles land, creates housing for working families, provides a free transit shuttle to the nearby downtown, and helps the region avoid “mountain sprawl.”



Locals who work in the historic resort town of Breckenridge were being squeezed out of the area by median costs of \$725,000 for a single-family home. For many workers, the American Dream was only available across Hoosier Pass, a 45-minute commute over treacherous mountain roads. Meanwhile, an 85-acre site in French Gulch on the town’s outskirts sat amid hundreds of acres spoiled by mining, and the zoning allowed only four homes.

Breckenridge has reclaimed 22 acres of this brownfield site to develop the Wellington Neighborhood, a compact community built in the style of traditional neighborhoods with attractive and affordable homes. Fifty-eight of 122 approved homes have been constructed. Another 20 acres is preserved as open space or community parks. The project was planned in two stages: first, the French Gulch Remediation Opportunities Group (FROG), composed of citizens, property owners, the Colorado Department of Public Health, and EPA officials, worked for several years with the Keystone Center, a non-profit environmental mediation group, to prioritize clean-up actions and funding. Second, Breckenridge officials and residents worked together over four years to plan and design the neighborhood.

The Breckenridge Planning Department encouraged Wellington’s traditional neighborhood design through flexible zoning for housing setbacks (closer to the street), road widths (narrower), and lot sizes (smaller). Housing affordability is ensured through covenants to keep homes affordable for future generations. Streamlined purchaser qualification standards facilitate transactions and reduce administrative requirements. The project was funded in part with public sector incentives worth more than \$1 million, as well as a U.S. EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment “Prospective Purchaser Agreement” that partially funded the clean-up and wetland reclamation.

Using smart growth principles, Wellington has increased the supply of affordable housing, cleaned a contaminated site, and created a compact, walkable neighborhood with access to trails and open space. Eighty percent of homes are reserved for purchase by people who work in Summit County, at about one-third (or less) the cost of the median purchase price in Breckenridge. Wellington’s location near downtown Breckenridge places housing near job centers, reducing commute times and related emissions. New homeowners include the town manager, government employees, shop owners, teachers and police officers.



## Highlights

### A Good Model

The Wellington Neighborhood serves as a model for design, planning, development, construction, and community participation. This project has particular relevance to communities in resort or “gateway” towns where affordable housing for permanent residents is scarce. Wellington’s design/planning team also used this model for a low-income housing community in Boulder and hopes to expand the concept into other mountain communities in Colorado.

### Community and Access

Wellington residents enjoy the strong community that has developed in a short time. Fostering this sense of place is architecture that complements both human scale and historic setting. Wellington’s compact plan includes public greens and connections that create a safe and appealing environment for outdoor play, bicycling, and pedestrians. Free public transportation links Wellington to downtown and ski areas. Residents enjoy easy access to trails and thousands of acres of open space.

### For More Information

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## Wellington Neighborhood • Built Projects Winner



Wellington’s houses are clustered together in groups of ten and feature front porches and rear alleys. Clustering of homes allows the neighborhood to preserve public open space and trails.

“You’ve got to find ways to keep the police officers, the teachers, the managers in the community. . . . These people are both the economic engine and the soul of the town. There’s nothing else like the Wellington Neighborhood in the county and not much else like it in the whole country.”

Sam Mamula, Mayor of Breckenridge



The Wellington Neighborhood sits atop land reclaimed from the Wellington-Oro Mine, which produced gold, silver, and lead until 1972. The site contained 30-foot high piles of river rock.

# San Mateo County Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Incentive Program

San Mateo County, California



San Mateo's TOD Incentive Program uses transportation funds to help build more housing near rail stations. It spurs construction of needed housing and creates environmental benefits by giving people the

option of commuting and running errands by rail. This program directly links land use with efficient use of the existing transportation system.

In California and in local governments across the country, land use decisions often focus on maximizing sales tax revenue to balance budgets. This creates a greater incentive to build office and retail space but creates a disincentive to construct housing. As jobs and housing spread out, the transportation system can become overburdened. Modeling showed that San Mateo County could reduce congestion by locating more housing near transit stations, giving people easy access to rail.

To address a housing shortfall, reduce congestion, and improve environmental quality, the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) provides incentives for land use agencies (20 constituent cities as well as the county) to create housing near transit stations. C/CAG allocates up to 10 percent of State Transportation Improvement Program funds for the San Mateo County TOD Incentive Program. The program provides a financial incentive for local land use authorities to develop housing near transit stations.

Under the program, a jurisdiction receives incentive funds based on the number of bedrooms in the housing units. Typically,

eligible projects receive up to \$2,000 per bedroom. In order to be eligible for the program, housing must be within one-third of a mile of a rail transit station, and density must be at least 40 units per acre. In the event that the program is oversubscribed, C/CAG may reduce the funding per bedroom or provide additional funding to the program. Land use agencies only get the funding once the units are built or are under construction. Funds are then used to support improvements either on- or off-site as determined by the land use agency. In addition to direct transportation improvements, some general improvements such as landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, plazas, and recreational projects are allowed.

For the first cycle, October 1999 to September 2001, C/CAG programmed \$2.3 million to the TOD Incentive Program to support development of 1,282 bedrooms in five projects. The second cycle, February 2002 to February 2004, has programmed over \$2.9 million for 10 projects to facilitate the creation of 2,407 bedrooms.

## Highlights

### Interest from Other Jurisdictions

The success of C/CAG's TOD Incentive Program has encouraged other jurisdictions to implement similar programs. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the metropolitan planning organization for the San Francisco Bay Area, adopted a Housing Incentive Program based on C/CAG's model. Legislation being considered at the state level would create a similar program. Sacramento, Fresno, and Monterey Counties (in California) are also considering similar programs.

### Integration with Transportation Planning

The TOD Incentive Program recognizes that coordinating land use and transportation is critical to achieving an efficient transportation system and making the best use of tax dollars. C/CAG's approach is an innovative use of transportation funds that provides incentives to land use decision-makers to achieve transit-oriented development.

### For More Information

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## San Mateo County TOD Incentive Program • Policies and Regulations Winner



Construction underway on Phase I of the Franklin Street project, which will provide 206 residential units at the Redwood City Caltrain Station.



Phase I of the Franklin Street Project, near completion. The project received \$1.2 million in TOD Incentive Program funds.

“Redwood City is proud to have received the first-ever TOD Incentive grant from C/CAG for Franklin Project Phase I. This project has been well received by the community and will provide 206 new residential units, including 31 affordable units, and convenient retail — all within walking distance to the Caltrain Station and Downtown District employment/services.”

Maureen Riordan,  
Senior Planner,  
City of Redwood City

# Massachusetts Community Preservation Initiative

State of Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Community Preservation Initiative is a statewide smart growth program that helps municipal officials and community leaders understand the potential effects of future growth. It provides tools, technical assistance and outreach to encourage informed and balanced growth decisions.



The Community Preservation Initiative (CPI) was developed by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs to create a constituency of residents and elected officials who support and implement smart growth. CPI's philosophy is that planning is not just for professionals and that all residents should play a role in shaping their collective future. CPI encourages communities to grow where infrastructure already exists, redevelop urban areas, and utilize density to offset pressures on open space.

Under CPI, the state provides tools to help communities see the effects of growth and make more informed choices. CPI created 351 buildout maps, one for each community in the state, to illustrate how a community is currently zoned and the quantity and location of land available for development. CPI has presented buildout maps in three venues: to every community's Board of Selectmen or City Council; at 20 Summits of up to 150 people from up to 20 communities, and at six "SuperSummits" of up to 300 people each. The buildout maps have inspired many communities to change their bylaws and zoning to better support the type of growth they want in their communities and to enhance environmental protection.

An innovative aspect of CPI is the release of two software tools to help communities make informed choices. The Fiscal Impact Tool analyzes financial implications of development scenarios and the Alternative Futures Tool enables a user to analyze a variety of buildout scenarios by altering zoning. Other highlights of CPI's outreach efforts include making over 120 presentations about the state-wide Community Preservation Act (CPA), under which communities can adopt a surcharge on local property levies and receive up to a 100 percent state match, and creating a high quality web site.

Partners in CPI include about 60 organizations representing affordable housing, historic preservation and open space interests, who help educate the public about the CPA through workshops, conferences, and the web. CPI also partners with state agencies, including the Department of Housing and Community Development, Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, and Department of Economic Development.



*“A hundred years after we  
are gone and forgotten,  
those who never heard of  
us will be living with the  
results of our actions.”*

Oliver Wendell Holmes



*“First we shape our  
buildings, and  
then they shape us.”*

Winston Churchill



## Acknowledgements

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### Review Panel

Joel Hirschhorn, *National Governors Association*

Deron Lovaas, *Natural Resources Defense Council*

Joe Molinaro, *National Association of REALTORS®*

Nadejda Mishkovsky, *International City/County  
Management Association*

Mike Watkins, *Duany Plater-Zyberk*

Betty Weiss, *National Neighborhood Coalition*

Felicia Young, *Federal Highway Administration*

### Photos

Front Cover: *Bethesda Row, Bethesda, MD. Photo courtesy of Federal Realty Investment Trust.*

Winners page: *Lincoln Road, Miami Beach, FL. Photo courtesy of Liisa Ecola.*

About the Award, top: *Transit Mall, Portland, OR. Photo courtesy of Liisa Ecola.*

About the Award, bottom: *Charrette for grayfield mall reconstruction. Photo courtesy of Chuck Bohl.*

Case study photos courtesy of award winners.

### National Building Museum

The 2002 National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement were presented at a ceremony at the **National Building Museum** in Washington, DC on November 18. The National Building Museum, created by an act of Congress in 1980, is America's premier cultural institution dedicated to exploring and celebrating architecture, design, engineering, construction and urban planning. Since opening its doors in 1985, the Museum has become a vital forum for exchanging ideas and information about such topical issues as managing suburban growth, preserving landmarks and communities, and revitalizing urban centers. The Museum's engaging exhibitions and education programs, including innovative curricula for school children and stimulating programs for adults, annually attract nearly 400,000 people.

Opposite, top: *Hoyt Street Yards redevelopment project, Portland, OR. Photo courtesy of Liisa Ecola.*

Opposite, bottom: *Denver, CO. Photodisc, Scenics of America/PhotoLink.*

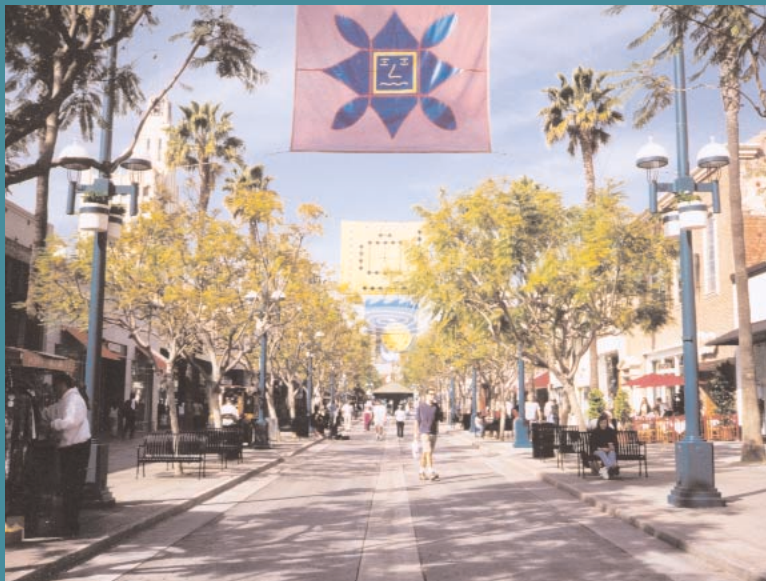
This Page: *Cache Valley, Newton, UT. Photo used with permission of Alex S. MacLean/Landslides Aerial Photography.*

Back Cover: *Third Street Promenade, Santa Monica, CA. Photo courtesy of Liisa Ecola.*

Support for the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement program was provided by ICF Consulting under contract to the EPA.



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**Smart Growth**  
ACHIEVEMENT



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For more information about the  
National Awards for Smart Growth  
Achievement and EPA's other  
smart growth activities, see:  
[www.epa.gov/smartgrowth](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth)



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