

A Message from EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson

I would like to extend my congratulations to the 2008 recipients of EPA's National Award for Smart Growth Achievement.

Over my 28 years of public service, I've witnessed what can be achieved when partners come together to address our nation's environmental challenges. And today, we see those amazing results all around us. Our air is cleaner, our water is purer, and our land is better protected than just a generation ago.

EPA recognizes that the environmental challenges of the 21st Century cannot be addressed by federal regulations alone. Fortunately, communities across the country have begun to embrace the fact that environmental responsibility is everyone's responsibility.

By adopting smart growth approaches, these communities are helping improve residents' quality of life and the quality of the environment. Thanks to forward-thinking community leaders, historic buildings have been preserved, open spaces have been protected, transportation choices have been provided and green building practices have been incorporated in municipal buildings and town parks alike. With some forethought and planning, we can make certain more communities are healthy places to live, learn and work.

This year's award winners are responsibly building toward a greener, cleaner future, and I encourage other communities to follow their fine example. Smart growth is smart for our environment and smart for our economy.

Stephen L. Johnson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



How Smart Growth Protects the Environment



In the center of Atlanta's Atlantic Station community, this two-acre lake manages stormwater but is also an attractive amenity. The park around the lake includes public art made from refurbished steel presses, a 60-foot smokestack, and other recycled materials from the former Atlantic Steel Mill, providing a reminder of the site's history.

Smart growth approaches locate and design development efficiently, which can help reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. By incorporating green building techniques, smart growth can be even more environmentally friendly. The trends towards smart growth and green building in America can promote energy efficiency and reduce fossil fuel consumption. When the two approaches are combined, the results are impressive.



By using land efficiently, the High Point redevelopment preserved 12 acres of open space.

For example:

- As one of the largest urban brownfield redevelopments in the United States, the Atlantic Station community is energy efficient and pedestrian friendly. Because of its central location in the Atlanta metro region, proximity to transit, and walkability, residents of Atlantic Station have shorter trips and more transportation choices. In 2006, residents drove 8 miles per day on average, compared with a 20-county regional average of 32 miles per day.¹ In addition, a central cooling system saved building

owners more than \$35 million in construction costs while operating more than 25 percent more efficiently than traditional building HVAC systems, resulting in lower energy bills for tenants and less emissions.²

- High Point, a HOPE VI redevelopment project in West Seattle, Washington, and a 2007 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement winner, combined smart growth and green building to create a new community that's healthy for

its residents and for the environment. With 1,600 housing units expected at build-out, High Point has double the density of the public housing project that used to occupy the site, but it has also added green space and parks. Its mix of rental and for-sale homes for a variety of income levels is built to Washington's Built Green standards. As a result, the homes use 20 percent less energy than homes the Seattle Housing Authority built just six years earlier.³

¹ Brian Leary. "Sustainable Urban Redevelopment and Climate Change: The Atlantic Station Attempt." Presentation, July 18, 2008. Available: <http://www.nemw.org/AtlanticStationLeary.pdf>. Accessed 10/01/2008.

² Jacoby Development, Inc. 2005 Atlantic Station Project XL Report. Available: http://www.atlanticstation.com/concept_green_projectXL05.php. Accessed 10/01/2008.

³ Walker Wells. "High Point: A Blueprint for Greening Affordable Housing in Seattle." Terrain.org, No. 22: Summer/Fall 2008. Available: <http://www.terrain.org/articles/22/wells.htm>. Accessed 7/31/08.

About The Award

Smart Growth Principles

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
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. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.



This streetscape in Austin, Texas, has generous sidewalks with benches and bike racks, restaurants and other uses at the street level, and trees to provide walkers with shade in the summer—all of these features encourage walking, which reduces air pollution.

EPA created the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in 2002 to recognize outstanding approaches to development that benefit the economy, the community, public health, and the environment. Each award winner has successfully used the principles of smart growth to improve existing communities or to build new communities that expand economic development opportunities, enhance quality of life, and preserve the natural environment. Through innovative ideas and collaboration, the winners crafted policies and projects that foster healthy, vibrant, and diverse communities.

The award winners were chosen through a multi-step process. A panel of experts representing a broad range of constituencies with interest and expertise in the built environment and the principles of

smart growth assessed the entries. An internal EPA review panel provided additional comments. EPA's Associate Administrator for Policy, Economics, and Innovation made the final award determinations.

National Award for **Smart Growth Achievement Winners**

Overall Excellence

Downtown Silver Spring Redevelopment Project

Silver Spring Regional Center
Silver Spring, Maryland

Policies and Regulations

Livable Centers Initiative

Atlanta Regional Commission
Metropolitan Atlanta Region, Georgia

Built Projects

Egleston Crossing

Urban Edge Housing Corporation
Roxbury, Massachusetts

Equitable Development

Mission Creek Senior Community

Mercy Housing California and
San Francisco Housing Authority
San Francisco, California

2008 Winners

Winner

Overall Excellence

Silver Spring Regional Center

Silver Spring, Maryland

One of Washington, D.C.'s first suburban shopping districts, Silver Spring peaked in the 1950s. However, as growth in the region spread ever-outward, the downtown experienced a decades-long decline.

Today, downtown Silver Spring is resurgent as an arts and entertainment destination for the region. A strong community vision, public investments, partnerships with the private sector, a great location, and transportation choices worked together to create this model for inner-ring suburban renaissance.

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Downtown Silver Spring Redevelopment Project

Downtown Silver Spring is a thriving example of what can happen when smart growth is used to rejuvenate a struggling commercial area. Public and private organizations and the community capitalized on a great location and public spaces to revitalize this historic downtown neighborhood.

Downtown Silver Spring was a dynamic retail center in the post-war years but, like many urban centers, it lost businesses to enclosed malls during the 1970s. The Downtown Silver Spring Redevelopment Project employed smart growth principles to turn this underused historic commercial district into a highly desirable destination.

Montgomery County designated Downtown Silver Spring as a Green Tape Zone. This designation provided a county team which gave downtown projects special priority in filing requirements, regulatory reviews, and inspections involved

in the permitting process, making redevelopment faster and more cost effective. When a project within the redevelopment zone submitted an application, Green Tape team members made it a priority.

The market responded by building over 400,000 square feet of retail, 248,000 square feet of office space and 200 hotel rooms. In addition, the office occupancy rate increased from 61 percent in 1995 to 96 percent in 2007, and the tax base has grown by 62 percent. Over 1,200 residential units have been constructed since 2000, with another 4,000 in some stage of

Over



Because of the redevelopment, downtown Silver Spring has become a destination for families to live and play.



The economic downturn of Silver Spring's commercial district presented an opportunity for transit-oriented redevelopment in the heart of the community.



Some street sections are designed to accommodate other uses and can be closed occasionally to auto traffic to allow popular pedestrian-oriented activities such as this farmers market.

construction or planning. A wide variety of national and locally owned restaurants and stores provide additional attractions for visitors and residents alike.

Structured parking garages rather than surface lots efficiently use space and reduce stormwater runoff. Parking structures are ringed by retail and other uses, making the streetscape more pleasant, interesting, and walkable. The project also preserved historic aspects of the area, such as the 1937 Silver Theatre, now restored inside and out, and the adjoining 1937 shopping center, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy the early-20th-century character of the area.

Downtown Silver Spring provides numerous transportation choices. It is within walking distance of a subway station, a commuter rail line, and a regional bus hub. Streetscape and transit improvements encourage people to leave their cars at home, resulting in lower automobile emissions. From 2000 to 2007, transit ridership at the Silver Spring Metro station increased 26 percent. Less vehicle traffic also supports the pedestrian-friendly environment that allows new businesses and downtown life to flourish.

“ In designing our headquarters we did not include on-site amenities such as an employee cafeteria because we believed in Downtown Silver Spring's revitalization approach. When Discovery moved here in 2004 there were only a half a dozen restaurants within walking distance, now there are at least 50. Our employees patronize local establishments—good for our workers, good for the local economy—which all benefits the community and citizenry.”

— David Leavy, Executive Vice President
Discovery Communications, Inc.

Atlanta Regional Commission

Metropolitan Atlanta
Region, Georgia

Created to help the Atlanta region meet air-quality goals, the Livable Centers Initiative uses federal transportation funds to help communities plan transportation improvements in concert with revitalization of existing centers and corridors. The result is less air pollution and stronger towns with more housing, transportation, recreation, and employment options.

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Livable Centers Initiative

How and where federal transportation funds are spent exerts a powerful influence on local and regional land use. The Livable Centers Initiative used these funds to encourage mixed-use, walkable, and transit-accessible development in the Atlanta metropolitan area, covering 18 counties and more than 4.5 million people. This innovative policy regarding the use of federal transportation dollars has revitalized communities and created transportation options, lowering per capita emissions and preserving open space while increasing employment and business growth.

Spurred by alarming growth in air pollution and traffic congestion, loss of jobs to outlying areas, and the decline of town centers throughout the region, the Atlanta Regional Commission created the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) in 1999. Since then, LCI has awarded more than \$1 million annually in planning grants to help communities use transportation improvements to revitalize town centers and key corridors. Once the planning studies funded by LCI are completed, the communities can

apply for implementation funding through the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). LCI and TIP are funded by federal transportation money.

The policy behind LCI is simple: Increase investments in transportation improvements that create sustainable, livable communities. Grants are awarded through a competitive process to local governments and non-profit organizations to link transportation projects with



By using public funds to encourage private development, LCI helps towns attract new stores, offices, homes, and recreational opportunities.



As a result of an LCI-funded study, the city of Duluth revitalized its downtown by adding homes and commercial space and creating a new town green.



Duluth Town Green is a popular gathering place and hosts festivals, concerts, and other events. Families particularly enjoy the interactive fountain.

development strategies. The local plans must include intensive public involvement and support LCI's fundamental concepts: connectivity, enhancing streetscapes and sidewalks, emphasizing the pedestrian, improving transit access, and expanding housing options.

As of 2006, 724 projects had been completed or had broken ground in communities that received LCI funds. These developments include 63,000 residential units, more than 11 million square feet of commercial space, and 40 million square feet of office space. LCI has helped spur not only revitalization, but also policy changes in towns

throughout the Atlanta region. Almost all of the communities that have received funding have revised their comprehensive plans to promote pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development.

As transit connections improve and communities become more walkable, residents will be able to drive less. One analysis of three LCI communities indicated that, while population and employment would increase under the LCI-funded plan, vehicle miles traveled—and the associated air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions—could be reduced by 4 to 24 percent compared to the “business as usual” scenario.¹

“The Livable Centers Initiative has done more to lay the groundwork for metropolitan region-wide smart growth and transportation-efficient land use than any other program in the country of which I am aware. Creative flexing of federal transportation funds has yielded plans, zoning and transportation-efficient development in centers throughout the region.”

— Jim Durrett, Executive Director
Livable Communities Coalition

¹ SMARTRAQ with the Georgia Tech Research Institute. *Before and After Study: Livable Centers Initiative Report*. Submitted to the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority. March 2004.

Winner

Built Projects

Urban Edge Housing Corporation

Roxbury, Massachusetts

Egleston Crossing helped renew a neglected corridor in Boston's Roxbury and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods with two new buildings that used green building techniques and provided new amenities and much-needed affordable housing. The energy-efficient design and materials, combined with the project's proximity to public transit, use less energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and save residents money.

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Egleston Crossing

Located in Boston's Roxbury and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods, Egleston Crossing has brought life back to a neighborhood in need of environmental clean-up and new investment. Two underused parcels of land—a former garage with a history of toxic waste problems and an abandoned theater—were cleaned up and now house new, green, mixed-use structures.

The redevelopment of these two buildings includes 64 new residential units for low-income residents, almost a quarter of which are reserved for disabled and formerly homeless individuals. Recognizing that neighborhood residents were concerned about the effects of this affordable housing, Urban Edge went door to door to talk to neighbors, held public meetings, and convened a working group to make sure the new development addressed these concerns.

Positioned above 8,300 square feet of street-level commercial space, the apartments have easy access to amenities such as a coffee shop, a dental clinic, and a nationally acclaimed youth writing program. More than half of the parking is underground, with a ratio of 0.7 spaces per unit. Reduced parking is possible because the site is a ten-minute walk to the subway and served by four bus routes. Less surface parking can reduce the urban heat island effect, impervious surface, and stormwater runoff.



The once-contaminated auto-body shop now provides a commercial and residential anchor for the neighborhood.



Before redevelopment, the Beethoven Theater sat vacant for more than 30 years.



The redevelopment of Egleston Crossing used green design and energy-efficient materials, which reduce utility costs for residents.

Green building features in Egleston Crossing reduce energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and costs for residents. Low-flow toilets and shower heads and drought-resistant, non-irrigated landscaping with native plants reduce water use. Power for common areas is provided by 64.5 kilowatts of photovoltaic panels. A 30 percent energy savings is expected from the ENERGY STAR® appliances, lights, advanced insulation, high-performance windows, and improved heating systems. Local and recycled materials were used, and 90 percent of

the construction and demolition waste was recycled.

Non-toxic paints, adhesives, and solvents; wood floors in place of carpet; and efficient continuous ventilation enhance indoor air quality and residents' health. Monitoring displays educate residents about energy use and conservation. As further evidence of the project's success in achieving environmental excellence, it won the 2005 ENERGY STAR® Builder Achievement award.

“Egleston Crossing has been a great addition to the neighborhood, and should serve as a model for development across our region. Urban Edge transformed two derelict properties into attractive and environmentally friendly landmarks for Egleston Square. As a neighbor, I appreciate the careful attention to design and maintenance that helps the project fit in with neighboring properties.”

— Tim Reardon, Resident

Built Projects

Winner

Equitable Development

Mercy Housing
California and
San Francisco
Housing Authority

San Francisco, California

Mission Creek Senior Community is a classic example of successful collaboration between nonprofit organizations, local government agencies, for-profit entities, and citizens. The impressive array of partners included: Mercy Housing California, the San Francisco Housing Authority, North and South of Market Adult Day Health Center, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, the San Francisco Library, and the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

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Mission Creek Senior Community

Mission Creek transformed a brownfield into an attractive, mixed-use, low-income senior community. The project focused on creating affordable housing for the elderly while promoting sustainability.

The Mission Creek Senior Community is in the Mission Bay North area of San Francisco. The 303-acre area was formerly used for industrial purposes; historical usage included a sewage pumping station, a section of railroad and interstate highway, a box factory, lumber storage, and mill operations. Remediating this brownfield and returning it to productive use is just one of many environmental achievements of Mission Creek.

To combine service-enriched affordable housing with environmentally healthy living conditions for seniors, Mercy Housing employed

a LEED-certified contractor and architect who used green building techniques and materials. The project features solar panels, providing about 25 percent of the power for common areas. The project also has low-flow fixtures and piping for reclaimed water use for landscaping and toilets. Other green measures include landscaping designed for low water use; energy-efficient lighting; high use of daylight with large windows to increase daylighting; and long-lasting, low-maintenance interior finishes that use rapidly renewable resources and recycled-product content.



Built along a former industrial channel, the Mission Creek Senior Community combines affordable housing options for seniors with the benefits of urban living.



The senior community fosters active aging through scheduled physical activities and improved accessibility to local parks and walking paths.



In response to citizen input on the project, the facility includes a large community gathering room and a branch of the San Francisco Library.

A public library, 5,000 square feet of ground-floor retail, and adult day care present additional benefits to residents and community members. Only 25 feet away from a San Francisco Municipal street car stop, the project places a strong priority on transit options. In addition to the street car, the project is two blocks from a CalTrain station, and a bus stop is less than a block away. These transportation choices not only make for a convenient place to live, they also result in less travel-related emissions.

Mission Creek Senior Community is built to be accessible for everyone, including the disabled and ill. The project includes 139 affordable apartments for low-income elderly residents. Support service programs enable 51 of the building units to serve frail, elderly people. The majority of residents pay a maximum of 30 percent of their income for rent, including utilities—relieving a burden from those particularly affected by housing and energy costs.

“Living at Mission Creek facing the water makes me feel calm and peaceful. The transportation and shopping are very convenient.”

— Carlos Quezada, resident

Continuing Achievements of Past Award Winners



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.

Town of Breckenridge, Colorado

2002 Award Winner

The Wellington neighborhood development is in its second phase with the first dozen units already completed. Income restrictions keep 39 percent of the homes affordable to people making less than 80 percent of annual median income. In addition to continued progress on the Wellington neighborhood, the town completed planning for another 40-acre affordable housing development that will incorporate green elements and is located on a rehabilitated dredge-mining site from the early 1900s. The project, which is near transit, several schools, and a recreation zone, will begin the first phase of construction in April 2009. This project aligns with the town's new annexation policy, and 80 percent of proposed residential units are deed-restricted affordable housing. More affordable development projects are planned.

Town of Davidson, North Carolina

2004 Award Winner

Guided by the town's form-based code and smart growth planning principles, the Exit 30 Master Plan is the basis for a new mixed-use neighborhood in Davidson. It encompasses approximately 130 acres of mixed-use development, including 600,000 square feet of office and retail space, hotels, restaurants, schools, a church, 300 residential units in a variety of styles, and recreational opportunities. Commercial and residential areas are within walking distance of downtown and commuter transit—bus and proposed commuter rail for 2012—into the Charlotte metropolitan area. Pedestrian and cyclist activity and safety are key components of the master plan. Approximately 12.5 percent of all units must meet the town's affordable housing ordinance, a 100-foot undisturbed lakeshore buffer is required, and the 9-acre nature preserve provides learning and entertainment opportunities. Ground had been broken or construction completed on over half of the planned area as of September 2008. This successful implementation of the plan can be attributed to close collaboration among stakeholders.



Using planning tools, Davidson continues to maintain its identity as a small town.



When the city of Orlando transformed a closed Naval Training Center into an exciting new community, 16 extra acres of parkland were created using innovative underground stormwater management systems.



In Philadelphia, the First Oriental Market received a \$500,000 loan from FFFI to help its owners purchase the property they had previously leased.

Sacramento Region, California *2004 Award Winner*

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 (MTP2035) in March 2008. This plan devotes an average of \$1.5 billion per year to promote walking, biking, and transit use in the Sacramento region. MTP2035 also ties transportation investments to the land uses identified in the Blueprint Preferred Growth Scenario to give people more housing and transportation choices while encouraging better land-use practices and design. The plan offers more funding for public transportation and alternative modes, allowing people to drive less and ultimately improving air

quality. These transportation choices will also help meet California's greenhouse gas reduction requirements.

City of Orlando, Florida *2005 Award Winner*

In Baldwin Park, built on the 1,100-acre site of a former Naval Training Center, infrastructure development is now complete, and residential construction has passed the halfway mark. In early 2008, the city of Orlando dedicated Harbor Park and its 3-mile lakefront trail, completing the 200-acre park system. Show homes, built for the 2007 and 2008 International Builders' Shows, keep Baldwin Park in the national spotlight.

Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative *2006 Award Winner*

The Fresh Food Financing Initiative (FFFI) has supported 52 supermarket and grocery store projects in Pennsylvania cities. These projects have created or retained more than 3,000 jobs and more than 1 million square feet of food retail space. The Food Trust, the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition, and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) have formed a public-private partnership to support the FFFI, working with the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The state has appropriated \$30 million for this initiative, and TRF is leveraging this funding with an additional \$90 million. The FFFI is an

Continuing Achievements of Past Award Winners



Using Vermont's Housing and Conservation Board tools and funding, Burlington officials created the Urban Reserve, which includes conservation easements—allowing limited development and improving access to the waterfront.



The town of Barnstable added a walkway in Aselton Park to provide public access to the waterfront.

excellent example of an effective public/private partnership and was a finalist for the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Innovations in American Government Award in 2008.

State of Vermont *2007 Award Winner*

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) continues to support Vermont's nationally recognized nonprofit network and its municipalities as they develop and rehabilitate permanently affordable housing in population centers. VHCB also remains active in conserving agricultural and recreational land, natural areas, and historic properties. In 2007, the board funded more than 500 affordable apartments, including 96 in reconfigured former factory buildings in downtown locations. A maple syrup production facility in St. Albans, a furniture factory in Richford, and a site in Brattleboro that manufactured everything from work shoes and sporting goods to organs and baskets have been transformed to attractive, expansive, family-rental housing. In Enosburg, an infill construction project created 28 apartments and three storefronts to replace two downtown buildings destroyed by fire.

Town of Barnstable, Massachusetts *2007 Award Winner*

With grant assistance, the town is constructing a new building on the harborfront to include a visitor's center, comfort station, and Dockmasters Office. The town is also constructing a new segment of the Walkway to the Sea. This segment is critical to provide pedestrian connectivity and access and will bring the town closer to its goal of creating a Harborwalk along the entire Hyannis Inner Harbor. In addition, a private entity recently purchased a derelict property in the heart of Hyannis Main Street and is renovating the building and site to create an updated, pedestrian-oriented development with significant landscaping and stormwater improvements.

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Aselton Park, Barnstable, MA: Photo courtesy of Kate Kennen.



National
Building
Museum

The 2008 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement ceremony was held at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, on November 19. The National Building Museum, created by an act of Congress in 1980, is America's leading 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 landmark preservation, urban revitalization, sustainable and affordable design, and suburban growth. Its engaging exhibitions and education programs, including innovative curricula for school children and stimulating programs for adults, annually attract nearly 400,000 people, making the museum the most-visited institution of its kind in the world.



United States
Environmental Protection Agency

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NATIONAL AWARD FOR
Smart Growth
ACHIEVEMENT

For more information about the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement and EPA's other smart growth activities, see:

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth



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