

Local Tools for Smart Growth:

*Practical Strategies and Techniques
To Improve Our Communities*



About The National Association of Counties

Founded in 1935, the National Association of Counties (NACo), is the only national organization in the country that represents county governments. With headquarters on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, NACo's primary mission is to

ensure that the county government message is heard and understood in the White House and the halls of Congress. NACo's purpose and objectives are to:

Serve as a liaison with other levels of government;

1. Improve public understanding of counties;
2. Act as a national advocate for counties; and,
3. Help counties find innovative methods for meeting the challenges they face.

Through its research arm, the National Association of Counties Research Foundation, NACo provides county officials with a wealth of expertise and services in a broad range of subject areas, including job training, environmental programs, human services, welfare-to-work initiatives, housing, county governance, and community infrastructure.

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About The Joint Center for Sustainable Communities

The Joint Center for Sustainable Communities represents an important collaboration between the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) on behalf of our nation's communities. Its primary mission is to provide a forum for cities and counties to work together to develop long-term policies and programs that will lead to economic enhancement, environmental stewardship and social well being — the three pillars of sustainable communities. The Center assists local elected officials in finding more cost-effective and comprehensive ways to address such issues as transportation management, brownfields revitalization, environmental protection, energy conservation, job training and public safety. To accomplish its mission, the Joint Center provides technical assistance, training, sustainable development literature and materials, and funding toward community visioning (or collaborative planning). While the Joint Center is not a repository of all relevant information on sustainable development, with its unparalleled access to city halls and county courthouses nationwide, it a catalyst to help local government officials find solutions to problems facing their communities.

The Joint Center Provides the Following Services:

- Technical assistance to cities and counties in their efforts to develop community-based solutions and strategies.
- Best practice publications that detail innovative city/county problem solving.
- An information clearinghouse with examples of self-reliant community initiatives.
- A peer exchange program which matches experienced elected officials who have proven solutions with jurisdictions that need to solve problems.
- Workshops for local elected officials that embrace creative citizen participation.
- Assistance in the development of metropolitan and rural regional compacts (or multi-jurisdictional partnerships) on issues such as urban sprawl and transportation management.
- An awards program recognizing communities and their elected officials who have exhibited the principles of sustainable development.



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Executive Summary

Across America, local governments are facing pressing challenges related to growth. Rapid population change combined with the devolution of responsibilities from the federal to local governments, and the emergence of the technology based “new economy,” has caused communities to reevaluate their growth-related priorities. As a result, local officials are desperately looking for tools, resources, and assistance in developing new approaches to assure the economic, environmental, and social health of their communities. Assuring a high quality of life for citizens in this era of population explosion and diminishing resources has necessitated the creation of entirely new approaches to community growth and development challenges. Collectively, the new community development approaches and strategies discussed in this report are referred to as smart growth.

Smart growth is a series of strategies and initiatives designed to help communities plan for and accommodate growth in ways that help secure their economic prosperity and environmental safety, while preserving the unique aspects of their communities that make them special places to live, work, and raise a family. But what does smart growth mean for your particular community? Since no two streets or neighborhoods are the same, smart growth does not prescribe specific growth patterns. Instead, smart growth offers choices and Smart Growth Principles (see page 2) that reflect the experience of successful communities. Coun-

ties, cities, and towns can learn a great deal from each other’s successes and lessons learned, but ultimately individual communities must make their own smart growth choices. By providing tools, resources, and examples (cases in point), *Local Tools for Smart Growth* is intended to help communities do just that – make their own smart growth decisions.

Each section of the report follows basically the same structure. Each provides a brief “snapshot” of different approaches to addressing a pressing community need. Each describes a specific challenge to be addressed. And each describes the standard tactics and initiatives that have traditionally been implemented to meet them. What is important to note is that although the standard approach often met short-term objectives, over time many of these tactics were shortsighted. They promoted the poor development patterns that gave rise to sprawl, long commutes, decreased family time, environmental degradation, dwindling open space, abandoned urban centers, spotty or stagnant economic development, and the dissolution of community character.

Therefore, each section provides an alternative approach to dealing with the pressing challenge in a manner that preserves and enhances a community over the long term. This is the overarching goal of smart growth: to ensure that vital, flourishing, safe, and clean communities are the legacy that is preserved and passed on to our children, our children’s children, and generations following.

The National Association of Counties (NACo), and the Joint Center for Sustainable Communities (NACo’s partnership with the US Conference of Mayors), with support from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, is pleased to provide this smart growth toolbox as a resource to local officials and interested citizens. It is meant to help them design and implement strategies to assure a higher quality of life for their communities. Readers are encouraged to avail themselves of the resources provided, including contacts who have willingly volunteered their stories and experiences to assist other communities. By sharing these stories, tools, lessons learned, contacts and resources, we hope to help communities develop their own applications of smart growth. And by doing so, we hope to help them secure a brighter future.

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Local Tools for Smart Growth

I believe that “smart growth” at its most basic level is communities making clear, well thought-out decisions concerning what their future will be as opposed to having that future dictated to them. As such, local government – the level of government closest to the people – should maintain control of land-use and development decisions. Only at this level can growth be responsive to a region’s unique economic, political, social and environmental conditions.

— Commissioner Jane Hague, King County (Wash.)
Council and President of the National Association of Counties.
Comments to the National Association of Home Builders, November 11, 2000.

Concisely defined, smart growth is development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment. It is an approach to urban, suburban, and rural growth that encourages local economies to grow and expand while preserving the environment and improving the quality of life for all local residents.

Communities across America are looking to smart growth because they have begun to challenge the traditional assumption that any development is good development. The central question they are facing is not whether to grow, but how. The high cost of new infrastructure, the loss of green space and farmland, and the increase in traffic congestion have caused localities to reassess the benefits of unmanaged rapid growth and to seek out policies that will help them grow “smart.” Smart growth emphasizes planning, mixed land uses, multiple development and housing options, walkable communities, and open space. Smart growth strengthens existing communities, reduces uncertainty for developers, and supports strong citizen participation.

What can local government officials do to ensure continued economic development in their community while preserving its unique character and improving quality of life? Plenty. Smart growth provides viable choices and offers basic Smart Growth Principles (see box) as guides to positive change. But it is not a “one size fits all” solution to local growth issues. Ultimately, specific smart growth decisions at the local level come about

from active local government leadership.

The purpose of *Local Tools for Smart Growth* is to serve as a guide and toolbox of planning practices, techniques and options available to local government officials considering growth strategies for their communities. This document describes thirteen smart growth approaches, including comprehensive planning, zoning, control of local infrastructure, transportation options, open space and farmland protection, finance mechanisms, and development review. Each approach is further described in terms of the “Traditional/Standard Practice” and the “Smart Growth Alternative Practice,” including a “Tool Box” of techniques and strategies. In addition, “Case in Point” examples illustrate how counties, cities, towns, and municipalities across the country have successfully employed smart growth alternative practices and tools. Resource lists of books and publications as well as organizations and contacts are included for each section.

No single tool will achieve smart growth. An appropriate mix is needed to ensure that local smart growth provides broad opportunity, expands the local economy, and preserves vital local resources – both human and natural.

Several themes recur throughout *Local Tools for Smart Growth*. First, smart growth requires significant public participation. Smart growth is designed to carry out the vision of community members and improve their overall quality of life; therefore their participation

is essential. Second, smart growth may be a logical extension of a community’s comprehensive plan or similar planning effort. All of the various tools described here may be used to support and advance a community’s vision identified in the planning process. Third, smart growth is a regional approach and therefore each of these tools could be applied in the context of regional economic and policy realities. Finally, smart growth is about providing more, not fewer, choices to a region’s urban, suburban, and rural residents.

Smart Growth Principles

- Mix land uses.
- Take advantage of compact building design.
- Create housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable communities.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Source: Smart Growth Network, 2000

Resources :

General Smart Growth

Books and Publications

- Bank of America, Greenbelt Alliance, California Resources Agency, and Low Income Housing Fund. *Beyond Sprawl: New Patterns of Growth to Fit the New California* 1995.
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- International City/County Management Association. *Why Smart Growth: A Primer*. Washington, DC: ICMA – Smart Growth Network, 1998.

Organizations and Contacts

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- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Development, Community and Environment Division (mail code 1808), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20460, Ph. 202-260-2750, Fax. 202-260-0174

Comprehensive Planning

The comprehensive plan is the basic foundation for local planning. Metaphorically speaking, it is the toolbox within which all your tools must fit. Comprehensive plans, also known as master or general plans, lay out a community's vision and priorities. The plan describes where, how and in some cases when development will occur. Comprehensive plans are a powerful tool to manage growth, capture its benefits and deter undesirable patterns of development. Comprehensive plans with substantial foresight and defensible goals can also combat NIMBY-ism ("Not In My Back Yard") by establishing broader regional objectives and responsibilities. Comprehensive plans stipulate the ultimate goals and the rules of the game — efficient transportation; adequate employment; affordable and adequate housing; community and individual pride; and access to clean air, water and open space.

Traditional/Standard Practice

While not universal, comprehensive plans have been standard practice in many cities and counties since the early 1900s. Early on, they were documents crafted by elite professionals with very little input from ordinary citizens. Today, comprehensive plans are most effective when they are dynamic blueprints rooted in broad-based citizen participation and reflecting the values and goals of the general public.

Comprehensive plans should be up to date, dynamic documents that address current development and growth issues.

To be effective, they must be updated regularly. However, many comprehensive plans are outdated and cannot adequately guide new development, respond to growth pressures, and carry out the community vision.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Increasingly, municipalities are using their comprehensive plans to develop a local smart growth strategy. Smart growth implements the community vision, creates a variety of transportation, employment and housing choices, and enhances citizens' quality of life. To accomplish these objectives, smart growth, through the comprehensive plan, directs growth to areas that can accommodate new development and retain local community character.

Many municipalities recognize that growth will come to their community. To maintain high levels of service, preserve unique local character and respond to development proposals quickly and consistently, they need a strategy to direct new growth. Firmly rooting smart growth in the comprehensive plan ensures that it is consistent with the community vision and not simply a stop-gap measure to stall growth. Far from being anti-growth, plans that take a smart growth approach provide a structure for well-timed and directed development, increase the predictability of development, make efficient use of public investments and attract desirable development to an area.

The remainder of this guidebook

describes the different tools that municipalities can utilize to create and implement their smart growth strategy. In each case, these tools should fit within the goals of the overall community comprehensive plan.

Toolbox

Typically, comprehensive plans describe the type of development, the level of service, and the values a community wishes to create or maintain. As such, they can be used to promote smart growth.

Community Vision – Residents know what they value in their communities and what they would like to expand or enhance. The community vision is the long-range set of guidelines for the community. It projects several years out into the future and must take into account impacts on future generations of residents. It is in part the legacy the community wishes to leave behind.

Information and Projections – Comprehensive plans include an inventory of what currently exists in the community and what growth in population and land use a locality can reasonably expect to occur in the next five- or ten-year period. This same information and demographic and economic projections are vital in designing a local smart growth strategy.

Land Classification and Zoning – Maps diagram present and future land uses and can help a community visualize their future. Maps translate the vision into specifics.

Economic Development – Smart growth encourages continued economic growth. Therefore, a comprehensive plan must document present and future economic conditions including commercial and employment centers, activity hubs, and regional economic trends.

Residential Areas – Housing choice and access to basic goods and services is an essential element to any comprehensive plan. Housing type, location, and appearance should be consistent with the ideals of the community and the vision of their comprehensive plan.

Facilities and Infrastructure – Local officials need to know the capacity of current infrastructure and where they anticipate locating future facilities or extensions. A comprehensive plan can assist communities in determining the appropriate timing and location for infrastructure repair and extension.

Case in Point: Seattle, WA

Growth management planning in Seattle is a case study of citizen participation and the use of citywide indicators. In 1990, the state passed statewide growth management legislation, and required communities to prepare growth management plans. As the city developed its plan in 1991-92, a group of concerned citizens formed an organization called Sustainable Seattle. City and citizen efforts progressed in tandem, with much cross-fertilization. In 1994, the city ratified a 20-year comprehensive plan called “Toward

a Sustainable Seattle.” The following year, Sustainable Seattle finalized a list of 40 citywide indicators of environmental, social, and economic significance.

The Seattle municipal plan focuses on the five elements required by state law: land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, and utilities. Plans are also required to include neighborhood planning, human development, and compliance with countywide economic development. The legislation identifies four central values of sustainability:

- **Community:** Support strong, inclusive, accessible neighborhoods and services.
- **Environmental stewardship:** Maintain good environmental conditions, reduce future liability, protect infrastructure, and minimize environmental risk.
- **Economic opportunity and security:** Enhance prosperity. Promote employment at a good wage and education and skill-building opportunities.
- **Social equity:** Ensure that citizens have access to education, skills and opportunity.

The plan preserves neighborhoods through an “urban village” strategy with transit, housing, denser neighborhoods, and local decision-making. The city is able to retain households with children by supporting pedestrian uses, housing with yards and play areas, multifamily homes, and excellent schools.

Citywide Indicators for Seattle	
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Salmon • Wetlands • Biodiversity • Soil erosion • Air quality • Pedestrian-friendly streets • Open space in urban villages • Impervious surfaces
Population and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Residential water consumption • Solid waste generated and recycled • Pollution prevention and renewable resource use • Farm acreage • Vehicle miles traveled and fuel consumption • Renewable and nonrenewable energy use
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment concentration • Real unemployment • Distribution of personal income • Health care expenditures • Work required for basic needs • Housing affordability ratio • Children living in poverty • Emergency room use for non-ER purposes • Community capital
Youth and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Literacy • High School graduation • Ethnic diversity of teachers • Arts instruction • Volunteer involvement in schools • Juvenile crime • Youth involvement in community service
Health and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity in justice • Low birthweight infants • Asthma hospitalization rate for children • Voter participation • Library and community center usage • Public participation in the arts • Gardening Activity • Neighborliness • Perceived quality of life

Case in Point: Barnstable County, MA

Barnstable County, which comprises Cape Cod, has 200,000 residents and millions of summer visitors. It also has a fragile ecology, with a number of endangered species and only one aquifer for groundwater. Due to rapid growth in the 1970s and 1980s, the state enacted the Cape Cod Commission Act in 1990, establishing a regional planning and regulatory agency and Local Planning Committees (LPCs) in each of the Cape's 15 towns. These LPCs helped draft the regional plan and engage the public in the plan's creation.

The Commission has explicit authority over new development and developments of regional impact (DRIs). The Commission sets minimum performance standards for new development to direct development toward activity centers and away from natural resource areas. In addition, the Commission encourages cluster development and vegetative buffers and protects water supply-related land uses such as wellhead protection areas, fresh water recharge areas, marine water recharge areas, and potential water supply areas. Coastal beaches, banks, dunes, and floodplains are likewise protected. "Developments of Regional Importance" include commercial developments of more than 10,000 square feet or 10 enterprises or residential development of more than 10 units. Under the 1990 law, DRIs must retain 40 to 60 per cent open space, satisfy traffic and nitrogen

loading requirements, and have at least 10 per cent affordable housing.

Case in Point: Chester County, PA

The population of Chester County increased from 316,660 in 1980 to 376,396 in 1990, while its farm acreage shrank from 219,980 in 1982 to 176,643 in 1992. As the county experienced rapid growth, the protection of open space became a popular concern. Over 5000 citizens responded to a survey the county conducted in 1995. The results indicated that citizens preferred 10 to 1 development patterns that consumed less land. In the same year, citizens elected county commissioners who supported growth management and in 1996, the commissioners adopted a strong countywide land use plan effective through the year 2020.

The plan defines and maps four types of land use: natural, rural, suburban, and urban. Growth is targeted toward urban and suburban areas. Growth boundaries are proposed to separate the urban areas from natural and rural ones. In natural areas, the county will implement open space plans. In the rural areas, the county will manage infrastructure and zone for farmland preservation. In suburban areas, it will support mixed-use development, open space and pedestrian uses. The plan for urban areas promotes community and economic development.

The county will partner with municipalities in creating a unified vision – making \$50,000 to \$70,000 available to

each local unit of government for changes to plans and ordinances. The county will review its own plans as well as local plans and ordinances to determine if they are consistent with the county vision. The county has produced a community-planning handbook with over 60 planning tools available to municipalities and plans to produce an annual state of the county report on open space, public costs, and traffic.

Case in Point: City of Lincoln/Lancaster County, NE

A freestanding city in the Great Plains, Lincoln is a state capital and a university town surrounded by vast farms and prairie. Located about 40 miles southwest of Omaha, Lincoln is the last city west of the Missouri River until Denver, about 450 miles away. City and county planners believe that the citizens' longstanding commitment to good government has allowed the area to control sprawl.

The region's growth stems from the insurance industry, software development companies, pharmaceutical firms, and agribusiness that have provided the region with a steady annual employment growth rate of two percent since 1980. The population of Lancaster County is about 213,000 and has grown by 1.38 percent annually over the last 10 years. More than 80 percent of the county's 846-square mile area is farmland, com-

prising 1,500 farms. Lincoln occupies 60 square miles in the middle of the county.

In part, the Lincoln/Lancaster County area attributes its growth management success to positive state intervention. In 1929, in response to local leaders' concerns over controlling future development, the state legislature granted Lincoln zoning jurisdiction over a three-mile extraterritorial area. Since then, the state also has prohibited the incorporation of other municipalities within five miles of Lincoln's city limits without city consent and has provided a relatively easy annexation procedure.

This is the only city in Nebraska given this authority, which is rare in American cities.

A joint comprehensive plan, first produced in 1961, is the cornerstone of the region's growth management program. Revised in 1977, 1985, and 1994, the plan provides a policy framework for zoning, capital and transportation improvement programs, design standards, and environmental protection. An inter-governmental agreement has combined many city and county functions, including the departments of planning, health, employment, and human services. The state-authorized zoning powers enable the City of Lincoln to have almost total control over development at its fringe. Three principles guide the regional comprehensive plan:

- Encourage contiguous growth outward from the established core of the city;
- Maintain and revitalize the downtown area (which, until recently, motivated

the city to restrict commercial development outside of the core); and

- Ensure the quality of life and physical condition of older neighborhoods.

The Lincoln/Lancaster County planning approach grounds the planning process in popular mandates and stresses the importance of contiguous development in retaining a vibrant community and providing efficient urban services. With citizen input and support, the region maintains a controlled boundary, allowing the city to grow outward in concentric circles from the core. The region's development pattern more closely resembles European cities than American cities. Comprehensive plans and other tools have been working in Lincoln and Lancaster County for 40 years, adjusting as the times and the people demand. The latest Comprehensive Plan evolved over four years. During that time, a "community congress" charged with defining community goals and objectives convened and citizens offered extensive reviews and revisions.

The contiguous zoning also maintains a clean and reliable water distribution system. With a rather poor groundwater supply, area citizens rely heavily on Lincoln's water distribution system for its drinking water. This need for a reliable water distribution system was an underlying reason for developing a comprehensive cooperative planning process.

Key components for achieving this level of planning success include annexation laws, extraterritorial zoning jurisdic-

tion, and a high level of city-county coordination. Few communities currently have such "ingredients for success" already in place. Short of a state legislative solution, intergovernmental agreements cannot always provide cities and surrounding jurisdictions with the authority required to manage growth effectively.

Another unique aspect of the Lincoln/Lancaster approach to curbing urban sprawl is that 90 percent of the voters live in Lincoln, so it is easy for the city to have priority in annexation issues. However, this high-percentage share of the population is also a result of keeping growth clustered contiguous to the city and not allowing much "leapfrogging" into rural county areas.

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Resources

Books and Publications

- Altshuler, Alan. "The Goals of Comprehensive Planning." The City Planning Process. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965.
- American Planning Association. *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook*. Chicago, IL: American Planning Association, 1998.
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Organizations and Contacts

- American Planning Association, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, Ph: 202-872-0611, <http://www.planning.org>

Regional Cooperation

Cities, counties, towns, and villages have to wrestle with problems that extend beyond their municipal boundaries. Regional, state, and national policies and trends inadvertently impact even the most secluded local community. While a local comprehensive plan with a growth management component is a powerful tool, it is not sufficient to deal with these larger regional issues unless it is coordinated across jurisdictions. Economic development, infrastructure, affordable housing, and environmental quality do not fit neatly within political jurisdictions. Except for transportation planning, few regional authorities exist to address these broader regional issues. Cooperation between cities and suburbs is essential to capture and manage growth for the benefit of the entire region and its future viability.

Traditional/Standard Practice

Traditionally, cities, suburbs, and rural villages focused inward on their own problems and developed their own strategies separately from their neighbors. This inward focus has become particularly evident in the post-World War II era of suburbanization, though it has been typical of more rural areas as well. As the central cities began to decline, those who could moved out of the city and established suburban communities. This exodus of people reduces the urban tax base and further weakens central cities. Few suburban communities want to take on the burdens of their neighboring city. Regional

cooperation and responsibility are generally unpopular if seen only in terms of sharing a portion of local tax revenues with other municipalities or accommodating a larger proportional share of the region's lower-income residents.

The result is a shortsighted, overly narrow approach. David Rusk, in his book *Cities without Suburbs*, found that regions are healthier and more competitive when cities and suburbs share both the wealth and the burdens and together address issues that expand across the urban-suburban divide. Suburban communities that fail to work together with their host city eventually experience the same decline as their urban neighbor.

Economic disparities demonstrate the chasm that exists between central cities and suburbs. In many regions, inner cities are handicapped with a small tax base and overburdened public services while growing suburbs enjoy a large tax base and fewer residents needing assistance. To be successful as a region and competitive in an increasingly global community, rural, urban and suburban areas must cooperate for their mutual benefit, growth, and survival.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Neighborhoods, civic leaders, and local officials are increasingly taking an outward looking approach to solving their local problems. Regional trends impact local prosperity and opportunity. Changes, investment, or disinvestment in one part of the region affect other parts of the region. Local officials in-

creasingly track these regional trends and work with counterparts across the region to ensure the health of the region and the prosperity of their locale.

Cities and older suburbs are forming alliances to address revenue, land use, employment, and housing concerns in a cooperative way. Newer suburbs and ex-urban rural areas are pursuing coalition building with their central cities. By pursuing a regional agenda, suburban residents have realized advantages in preserving their quality of life, treasured open spaces, and transportation choices while enjoying the cultural and historical amenities of the city and contributing to its revitalization.

Toolbox

Council of Governments (COGs) –

Most cities have some kind of a regional governmental association in place. Typically, these entities are focused strictly on transportation and State Implementation Plans (SIPs) or other data collection, mapping and research. COGs, however, can be leaders and advocates for regional cooperation and bold programs for housing, economic development and environmental protection beyond their traditional transportation focus.

Regional Authorities -

Portland, Oregon, is the only city with an elected regional council with legislative powers. Many cities (such as Minneapolis) have appointed regional councils with varying amounts of administrative power. These

cities have successfully established a form of regional government that has enforcement and fundraising abilities – both crucial to an effective regional authority. In addition, many counties have administrative or planning powers that function at a broad regional level.

Civic Leadership – Citizen leaders play a vital role in initiating and advocating regional cooperation. Across the country, church groups, grassroots advocacy organizations, business associations and others have reached out and bridged political, demographic, and geographic differences. They have found that regional approaches more effectively accomplish their mission of community and economic improvement.

Business Collaboratives – Businesses naturally function in a regional environment. To remain healthy, businesses depend on the health of the region from which they draw their patrons. Industry networks also extend across a geographic region. These business-to-business and business-to-customer relationships put the private sector in a leading position to establish regional networks. Local governments can benefit by identifying these networks and working closely with them to help influence regional trends beyond their municipal boundaries and control.

Local Foundations – Local foundations have the power to foster regional collaborations. Smart growth programs rarely fit comfortably within traditional foundation aid categories. Some local foundations have realized the broad

range of issues smart growth addresses and have begun to support networks addressing issues endemic across the region. Local foundations can initiate regional cooperation by bringing together grantees from different parts of the region and drawing in local government officials to help facilitate program goals.

Political Leadership – Smart growth, at times, needs a very visible and vocal advocate to bring it to the forefront of citizens' concerns. Bold government leaders have in many places been the stewards and champions of smart growth in their communities. Governors, mayors, county commissioners, and city council members all play a very vital role in discussing quality of life issues with their constituents.

Regional Dialogues – Simply bringing different stakeholder groups from across the metropolitan or rural area together can often result in active and innovative partnerships to address regional concerns. Groups that appear to be unlikely allies can often find points of common concern when they are given the opportunity to discuss issues in a neutral and collaborative atmosphere. Study circles and other listening sessions are excellent forums to build this type of regional cooperation.

Coalition Building – Regional coalitions often sprout up around particular issues – such as school reform, infrastructure expansions, natural resource conservation, crime prevention, or attracting industry. By first identifying with a particular issue, organizations and individuals

can begin to build relationships and establish strategies for an entire rural or metropolitan area. The most successful coalitions include participation of local government, state officials, business leaders and a wide variety of grassroots, faith and civic organizations.

Tax-Base Sharing – Creating a financial bond across a metropolitan area can be a sure way to build regional collaboration. Establishing a tax-base sharing program is a daunting task that requires strong local government leadership and broad community support.

Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping - GIS maps and other visual means graphically illustrate current disparities that exist and predicted trends and growth outcomes across a region. New modeling software, like the Smart Growth Index, can illustrate the growth outcomes of various decision scenarios as they impact the region as a whole. Visual images like GIS maps show the interconnectedness of a region.

Case in Point: Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

The twin cities of Minneapolis/Saint Paul have experienced the typical pattern of growth: a “favored quarter” of the suburbs grows and prospers while the older suburbs and central core decline in population and prosperity. In 1971 the region initiated a program of limited tax-base sharing on commercial and industrial property. Over 20 years later, State

Representative Myron Orfield reinvigorated this movement by building a coalition between central cities and older suburbs for tax base sharing.

Orfield also began to build a coalition between cities and older suburbs, focused on housing, tax base sharing, land use planning, and governmental reform. Some suburbanites were reluctant to join the cities for political, socio-economic, and racial reasons, opposing what they saw as inroads by urban poverty. However, their support was crucial, and ultimately the motivating factor was their inadequate tax base. Orfield held extensive community discussions of regional issues, using maps to illustrate demographic and geographic trends.

The focus of the group became regional fair housing. Older suburbs expressed their desire to shift some of the affordable housing share onto developing suburbs. Orfield found land use planning the hardest area around which to develop a constituency. While sustainable development might appeal to urban and rural constituencies, disagreements tend to arise because low tax base suburbs must generate taxes through development, and high tax base suburbs want to retain existing large lots.

In 1994, the Metropolitan Council was transformed from a \$40 million regional planning agency to a \$600 million regional government operating regional sewer and transit systems. Orfield focused on tax base sharing, which “means (for most of the region) what

everyone always promises in American politics but almost never can deliver: immediate lower taxes and better services.”

Case in Point: City of Boise/Ada and Canyon Counties, ID Treasure Valley Partnership

The Treasure Valley Partnership (TVP) is a proactive coalition of mayors and county commissioners that encourages neighboring area leaders to unite to discuss regional issues. The TVP is a partnership between Ada and Canyon counties and ten cities in the region developed to address regional growth and development concerns through cooperative approaches. Current members include the cities of Boise, Eagle, Caldwell, Garden City, Meridian, Nampa, Parma, Star, as well as Ada County and Canyon County.

Many complex issues have arisen as a result of the area’s tremendous population growth, which is not expected to slow anytime soon. In fact, an estimated 200,000 new citizens are expected over the next 15 years. This growth requires the Treasure Valley to create a cooperative approach to planning and strategic initiatives at the regional and local level. This is the purpose of the Treasure Valley Partnership, which has dedicated itself to creating and strengthening regional collaborations.

The Treasure Valley Partnership (TVP) is a direct result of a 2-day forum,

called the Treasure Valley Institute. To prepare for the Treasure Valley Institute, a consulting team, working with local staff, conducted extensive interviews with the local elected officials from the two-county area in the Treasure Valley.

The interviews identified common concerns of all of the communities involved. These concerns centered on the region’s unprecedented growth and the problems connected with it: traffic congestion, open space loss, public transportation needs, water conservation issues and community identity crises. At the end of the 2-day forum, the Treasure Valley Partnership (TVP) was established. This agreement encourages dialogue among all parts of the region, and identifies objectives and goals that allow for participation of industry representatives, business people, schools, media, labor groups, religious institutions, elected officials and civic organizations. While all of these groups benefit from the TVP, the true beneficiaries are the citizens. This forum exists to bring not only leaders together, but also the people they represent.

The 4 original goals of the TVP are:

- Create Coherent Regional Growth and Development Patterns
- Link Land Use and Transportation
- Reinforce Community Identities and Sense of Place
- Protect and Enhance Open Space and Recreational Opportunities

The TVP officially began in June of 1997. During this relatively short time, the TVP has managed to generate

results. The most important achievements to date;

- Cooperative work on coordinating Comprehensive Plans has taken place
- The Partnership meets on a monthly basis
- Each member has a better regional awareness of overall issues
- Studies have been conducted of air quality and water drainage; with an agreement reached by the Partnership and the Idaho DEQ to work regionally on airshed problems.
- All members are working together on similar transportation issues including the start up of a regional transit authority
- Award of a \$510,000 grant from the FHWA for the development of a regional approach to growth issues and preserving our quality of life – an initiative known as the Treasure Valley Futures Project
- A grant award of \$250,000 to improve energy efficiency in city and county owned buildings.
- Specific Memorandums of Understanding between cities for improved emergency response and sharing of infrastructure facilities
- Preserved 18 miles of railroad track leading into the spur line between Boise and Nampa
- Members publicly endorsed the preservation of part of the Boise Foothills

All these efforts are enhancing and encouraging more efficient use of resources and saving thousands of tax

dollars. At the same time, they are helping all of the communities in the Treasure Valley region work towards becoming more sustainable. The TVP is seen as the leading entity for sustainability and has created the momentum to look at issues from a regional perspective. Because the TVP is made up of decision-makers responsible for governing cities and counties, the group has added credibility.

The TVP could easily be replicated in another area of the country. There are two necessary ingredients: a single point of contact for logistics and organization; and the willingness and ability of participants to put aside their biases and look at the larger picture for the region as a whole.

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Case in Point: City of Fort Collins/Larimer County, CO

Fort Collins started as a trade and farm products center in the Mid-19th Century and grew with the founding of Colorado State University in 1879. Fort Collins is bordered to the west by the Rocky Mountain foothills and to the east by the Great Plains and rolling hills of Colorado's agricultural belt.

Since the 1960's, both the city and county populations have doubled each decade. In 1990, the city's population totaled 87,500. It grew to 106,000 by 1997, an increase of 17.4 percent. At the same time, the county's population increased 18.5 percent, from 186,136 to 228,400. The university remains the largest employer, but many high-tech industries have moved into the area. In the late 1970s, conflict about development standards arose between the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County. While the city had very specific, detailed development standards, the county had few guidelines, and only general environmental protection regulations. When Fort Collins began extending its city limits by annexing former unincorporated county land, the tension heightened. Because of its well-defined development guidelines the city was able to annex unincorporated land, which increased its tax base and reduced that of the county.

To address this problem in 1980, Fort Collins, Larimer County, and the City of

Loveland (located just south of Fort Collins) officially formed a multi-jurisdictional partnership. Through the partnership, the county detailed its land-use standards, which for the first time approached city standards on issues such as roads. The original agreement, which has had only minor amendments over the years, included an Urban Growth Area (UGA) and initiated a joint two-level planning process for the region. Within the UGA, eligible properties must apply to be added to the city limits through annexation prior to development. Properties within the UGA that are not eligible for annexation may develop under the county's jurisdiction, but the developer must agree to allow the city to annex the site once it meets the standards for eligibility. Properties that are developed in the county prior to annexation must be consistent with the design standards in the intergovernmental agreement.

This intergovernmental approach has led to further cooperation. The cities of Loveland and Fort Collins worked together with Larimer County to develop and adopt a land-use plan that preserves the characteristics that make each individual city special. "We want to maintain Loveland and Fort Collins as unique communities," said County Commissioner John Clarke.

Fort Collins and Larimer County also worked to incorporate the Fossil Creek Reservoir Area Plan into the intergovernmental agreement. This plan used specific land-use criteria, such as density and design standards, to specify which

areas will eventually be suitable for annexation.

The citizens of Fort Collins were highly active regarding community development issues, and representatives from all key constituencies actively participated in the comprehensive planning process.

Fort Collins and Larimer County's joint planning efforts have resulted in compatible development standards and growth management strategies. "This hasn't affected the amount of growth," said Larry Timm, the county planning director, "but how it looks is different than most places growing at this rate."

The facts support his conclusion. In addition to the Fossil Creek Reservoir Area Plan, the Urban Growth Area agreement and joint land-use plans, multi-jurisdictional initiatives have also achieved preservation of a natural, open character along major roadway corridors. In addition, special controls were implemented to recognize the foothills, Dakota Hogback, and the Poudre River floodplain as significant visual open spaces and/or drainage resources.

The successes in the region have been hard won, and the process has been fraught with opposing opinions, conflicts, and difficulties along the way. However, according to former Fort Collins Mayor Ann Azari, a common theme has always driven the process. "We all care deeply about this area," she said. "We want to do what is in the best interests of the taxpayers and citizens. And we all have a great deal of respect for each other."

Commissioner Clarke notes that every community is unique and that the specifics of the Fort Collins area program could not simply be picked up and dropped down into another context. "The geography, culture, history and identity of each place is different." He also added that "the basic principles and values will work anywhere. If the process is based on fairness, if you make a genuine effort to work with people, and if you respect their property rights, then you can get results everyone can live with."

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Resources

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Organizations and Contacts

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- Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, 150 S.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 709, Miami, FL 33131, Ph: 305-377-4484, Fax: 305-377-4485, <http://www.fundersnetwork.org/>
- Joint Center for Sustainable Communities (National Association of Counties and U.S. Conference of Mayors) 440 1st Street, NW, Suite 800 Washington, DC 20001
- National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals. *Profiles of Business Leadership on Smart Growth (1999)*. NALGEP, 1350 New York Ave, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005, Ph: 202-638-6254, Fax: 202-393-2866, <http://www.nalgep.org/>
- National Neighborhood Coalition, Neighborhoods, Regions and Smart Growth Project, 1030 15th Street, NW, Suite 325, Washington, DC 20009. Ph: 202-408-8553, Fax 202-408-8551, <http://www.neighborhoodcoalition.org>
- Smart Growth Network, c/o International City/County Management Association (ICMA), 777 North Capitol St., N.E., Suite 500 — Washington, DC 20002-4201, Ph: 202-962-3591, Fax: 202-962-3500, <http://www.smartgrowth.org>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Development, Community and Environment Division, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW (MC1808), Washington, DC 20460, Ph: 202-260-2750, Fax: 202-260-0174

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is essential to the success of any growth management or smart growth approach. Citizen participation can lead to creative solutions, speedy resolution of development disputes, and greater community understanding of the importance of good planning and investment. High levels of public awareness better define community needs, development that meets those needs, and development that does not.

Citizen participation is not easy. It can be time-consuming, frustrating and expensive. However, done right, the investment of time and energy in gaining real citizen input in the formative stages of a smart growth initiative will be returned ten-fold when citizens themselves are vested advocates for responsible growth in their communities. There are many different strategies available to local decision-makers to ensure that the public is aware of and involved in developing a growth management policy.

Traditional/Standard Practice

In many instances, public involvement is required by law. In other cases, public participation is a condition for funding or support. Standard practice for gaining public input has often been limited to an open comment period or a handful of public meetings.

Planners, local government staff, and elected officials jointly devise the plan and then release the nearly completed document to the public for review. The document would be revised based on feedback gathered from the public and then finalized.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice – Citizen Participation “Early and Often”

Today citizens and grassroots organizations are demanding opportunities for more significant participation. Citizens want to create the vision for growth in their communities and want to play a role in devising mechanisms to implement that vision. Citizens want to learn more about the costs and benefits of growth, and how to use the various tools local governments possess.

Involving the community early and often in the planning process vastly improves public support for growth management and often leads to innovative strategies that fit the unique needs of each community. Often, municipalities and grassroots leaders will use a combination of various methods to ensure maximum opportunities for participation in the planning process.

Toolbox

Public Meetings – Public meetings have been and will continue to be an important means of citizen participation. Public meetings provide a forum for discussion with policy makers, as well as a valuable way of giving and gathering information. In addition, public meetings are a networking opportunity for community members to build coalitions across organizational or neighborhood boundaries.

Public Relations Campaigns – Simply calling a public meeting is not enough to get people out of their homes

and into a public dialogue. Public relations campaigns and media strategies are needed to convey the importance, value and opportunity of public involvement. Gaining the participation of a fair cross-section of the population is an extraordinarily difficult task and often requires heroic public relations efforts on the part of municipal and community leaders. Diversity of opinion and perspective is crucial to producing an equitable and appropriate smart growth strategy. Campaigns are a tool to share information, open the lines of communication and build trust between citizens and policy makers. A campaign may include public events and celebrations, advertisements, direct mailings and newsletters, videos and public service announcements. Media campaigns should take into account the numerous languages common in your community.

Mediation - Land use decisions can be contentious. Professional mediation, facilitation and dispute resolution professionals can help communities negotiate difficult issues to arrive at a mutually acceptable development strategy. Mediation recognizes the important, but sometimes muted, voice of citizens. Mediation can be a tool to “level the playing field” by recognizing the power imbalance that exists between grassroots organizers, developers, and city or county officials and ensure that citizens are given equal opportunity to shape a management strategy.

Consensus-Building - Building consensus requires an even higher level

of involvement, outreach, and coordination. Vital to building consensus across demographic groups are listening and respect. Consensus begins with the basic similarities all people share and then recognizing the roots and reasons for their differences. Only by validating the merits of these differences is it possible to establish relationship and trust and arrive at any kind of consensus.

Study Circles or Listening Sessions – Study circles and listening sessions are small (10-15 person) groups that bring people from across the community or region together to talk with one another about a public issue – be it growth, crime, schools, or other concerns. The facilitated group meets regularly over a period of weeks or months to investigate the many sides of a single issue and the diverse perspectives. If public officials join study circles, they should listen or voice their opinions as equal participants. Study circles work best when there are many going on at the same time throughout the community because they can share information and continue the public dialogue.

Visual Preference Survey™ or Community Image Survey – These survey tools focus on the visual appearance of the built and natural environment. Citizens are asked to view and score between 40 and 200 slides displaying a wide variety of streetscapes, buildings, public spaces, recreational areas, and land uses. Their scores reflect their personal reaction to each scene and preference for or against that visual image. This tool provides

planners and designers with valuable information on community preferences and also encourages citizens to think more analytically about their neighborhood land uses and appearance.

Alternative Futures or Alternative Scenarios – Providing a visual representation of different growth scenarios helps communities see the long-term impacts of different development choices, including impacts on resource conservation and preservation, environmental quality, and overall quality of life. Alternative futures are typically displayed using GIS mapping programs. They can also be supplemented with illustrations similar to those used in the Visual Preference Surveys. Once citizens have a clear picture of the potential future of development, they can engage in growth discussions with a clearer idea of what the options are and how preferred scenarios might be reflected in master and comprehensive plans.

Design Workshops or Charrettes – Design charrettes are solution-oriented. They provide an opportunity for community participants to contribute to a finished and tangible product over a relatively short period of time. Design workshops are typically three- to seven-day intensive planning efforts that bring local experts (community residents) together with professionals (planners, designers, economists, etc.) to develop a complete plan for a specific area. Citizens participate in everything from transportation analysis to streetscape design to economic development oppor-

tunities. Charrettes are only successful if all key constituents are involved from the outset, and relevant information is available and accurate.

Citizen Advisory Committees – The construction of a growth management plan involves many interested parties. It is often very helpful to create a citizen advisory committee of community leaders. As “key informants” they play a double role – they inform local decision-makers about concerns and priorities of their constituents and help shape local plans. Citizen advisors also disseminate information to the public. Advisory committees are typically created to address a particular issue or project such as transportation, brownfields, or Central Business District revitalization.

Formal Neighborhood Councils or Commissions – Neighborhood councils differ from Citizen Advisory Commissions in that they are institutionalized mechanisms for direct public involvement in government. In some cities like Portland, OR, Richmond, VA and Washington, DC, they are official subdivisions of city government. These are broad-based grassroots groups that deal with comprehensive planning issues. Local municipalities can support neighborhood commissions through funding, staff and technical assistance, or by creating ordinances to institutionalize neighborhood advisors.

Action Planning – Ken Reardon coined the term “hands on action planning” to indicate planning in which the community plays a central “hands-on” role.

Not only does the community actively participate in the plan design, but its members also participate in the plan's implementation. In this way, citizens can see the tangible results, and consequences, of their planning energies.

Case in Point : “Envision Utah”

Northern Utah is experiencing enormous growth and development. Its 88 cities and towns, 10 counties and numerous special service districts are home to over 1.7 million residents – 80 percent of the population of the entire state! By 2020 this population is expected to swell to 2.7 million and to 5 million by 2050. The area is hemmed in by many natural boundaries – mountains, lakes and public lands. For this reason, local officials and residents have recognized the need to make sound development decisions now in order to maintain a high quality of life and affordable cost of living as the population continues to grow.

To prepare for growth, local officials wanted to know what residents of northern Utah value and how they think growth should be accommodated. “Envision Utah” is a public/private community partnership that helped to create a “publicly supported growth strategy that will preserve Utah’s high quality of life, natural environment and economic vitality during the next 50 years.” This partnership of state and local government officials, business interests, environmentalists, landowners,

intellectuals, church groups and citizens together created Utah’s *Quality Growth Strategy*. This detailed, community-based management plan provides a menu of strategies to enhance air quality, promote mobility and transportation choices, preserve critical lands, conserve and maintain water resources, provide housing opportunities, and maximize efficiency in investments.

Public participation was key to plan development beginning with an in-depth study and survey of area residents. Next, “Envision Utah” generated a baseline model of current growth projections. The group then held a series of public workshops throughout the area to garner feedback. This feedback was used to generate four alternative growth scenarios. Finally, “Envision Utah” embarked on a major public awareness, education and mass media campaign to encourage residents to share their reactions. This input determined the preferred growth scenario based on what the public described as their concerns and values. The chosen scenario focuses on development in walkable communities with nearby opportunities to work, shop and play. For more details, see <http://www.envisionutah.org>.

Case in Point: Washington, DC

Beginning in the early 1970s Washington, DC, institutionalized grassroots, neighborhood participation in government through the use of Advisory Neighbor-

hood Commissions (ANCs). ANC commissioners are elected by their local neighborhood constituency and are official government positions. Commissioners serve a small geographic area and are intimately aware of the development and policy decisions affecting their communities. ANC commissioners review development proposals and zoning variance requests, organize public meetings on issues of concern to their fellow residents and neighbors, and serve as the direct line of communication between City Hall and the grassroots.

Like many other cities, Washington, DC recently experienced a redevelopment renaissance. Significant public and private investment has come to the city and urban neighborhoods. To address this growth, increase civic engagement and complement the ANCs, Mayor Anthony Williams instigated “Neighborhood Action” – a long-term program to restore democratic decision-making in city planning and service activities.

After an intensive media outreach effort, Neighborhood Action had its coming-out late in 1999. About 3,000 residents from every corner of the city converged on the convention center to participate in this historic event. Citizens gave feedback on major policy initiatives via electronic keypad “votes” and participated in shaping the city-wide strategic plan. They also were able to give specific recommendations for their neighborhoods in small group discussions that were recorded on networked laptop computers. The Mayor was on hand to

read key comments as they came into the central computer and respond immediately. The input from this meeting and a subsequent meeting was incorporated into the city's final strategic plan and budget priorities. Information gained from the two meetings will be used in the coming years as the city develops neighborhood strategic plans and service delivery strategies.

Case in Point Boone County, MO

The Boone County Commission had been working for a few years to find a way to communicate, collaborate and coordinate with the area's largest community, the city of Columbia, without making much headway. Through its work with NACo and the Joint Center for Sustainable Communities, the commission was brought in touch with intern Velma Gentzsch during the winter 1999 Legislative Conference. She spent her summer interning in Boone County. During her stay, she researched other communities who had completed their own visioning process, and presented the Commission with a document she titled, "The Visioning Process and Beyond," the opening paragraph of which identifies visioning as a process and a product. It is both a community effort, and a community statement.

In her report, Velma discussed sustainability as a key concept behind community visioning. The report states, by creating a vision that considers its

social, environmental and economic components equally, a community can then use that vision to grow more sustainably — to find smarter ways to grow that preserve community values.

Smart growth is not about inhibiting growth or progress. It is about growing in such a way that no one element of the community is damaged or sacrificed, and in fact all are improved. It is about planning for the future and taking decisive action that preserves and improves the quality of life for each and every resident in a community. But in order to do that, a community must first know what its quality of life issues are. That is why *process* is so important.

In the fall of 1999, for the first time in its tenure, the county commission hosted a dinner meeting with all the local mayors and other elected officials. It was a long time coming, but due to the continual growth pressures being addressed by some communities, the timing seemed to be right to create a vision for Boone County's future. Nick Keller, who was NACo's co-director of the Joint Center for Sustainable Communities at the time, had been following the development challenges facing the County. He believed Boone County to be an exemplary rural urbanizing project that could benefit from the assistance of the Joint Center. The Center is a partnership between NACo and the U.S. Conference of Mayors to promote multi-jurisdictional cooperation and sustainable development practices among counties and cities. It was through the Joint

Center that the Commission was able to attract a national facilitator, Kent Newman, Executive Director of the Wallace House Foundation, in Iowa to help get the ball rolling. The Wallace House Foundation's mission focuses on working with communities in the areas of intergovernmental cooperation and growth planning.

Kent facilitated a historic meeting of elected officials with the purpose of starting the visioning process for the future of our county. He asked everyone to set aside their roles as elected officials and focus on their personal values and concerns. The dialogue opened with sharing the quality of life issues people value in our county today. The next step in the process was to share concerns about issues that could hamper our quality of life. Throughout both of these processes, common threads seemed to emerge. One of the threads had to do with planning. It was clear that we cannot continue to plan as if every community or unincorporated area is an island. The plan must be able to be integrated, because as transportation, sewer or zoning projects approach the border of any jurisdictional area, the individual plans must mesh and not conflict with each other.

The last part of the process was to hear from each member present about their opinions on the process and thoughts on how to proceed. A common denominator floated to the top — no matter what course was pursued, it must be community-based. This is not a

process that can be completed by elected officials. It must be done in a way that allows all citizens throughout the county to have a representative voice in the process. And, once the exercise is completed, the elected officials must have the political will to implement the strategies and solutions identified to preserve the quality of life.

The next step was to prepare a budget and identify a funding source to move the process along. The Commission met and secured a commitment from the Missouri Institute for Public Policy at the University of Missouri to provide a local match in facilitation services and staff. As a new arm of the University with a focus towards providing technical support to rural areas, our community visioning process is being replicated across the state. In order to make the process one in which no governmental entity is the driving force, the county, all eight cities (Ashland, Columbia, Centralia, Hallsville, Hartsburg, Harrisburg, Sturgeon, McBaine) and the Wallace House Foundation together applied for a community grant from our local rural electric cooperative. Unfortunately that grant was not awarded; but the W.T. Kemper Foundation did provide \$5,000 to be used by the project. The Commission supported the balance of the cost and Phase One was implemented.

As with most successful processes evaluated, Boone County had a steering committee made up of leaders from the community to guide the process. Each political jurisdiction submitted the top twenty-five community stakeholders from

their perception. The Policy Institute put the submittals on a matrix; the top twenty-five organizations then chose members to make-up the steering committee. The steering committee chose to use the study circle method of finding the positive qualities to maintain (values, assets, and resources) and the concerns and priority issues. A final report was presented to the Commission and elected bodies of the eight jurisdictions the first part of December 2000. The community vision, the goals and objectives identified by the study circles were discussed and found to have value by the elected bodies. In addition, the County Commission hosted a meeting of all the planning and zoning committees within the county. Representatives from the five communities that have committees, along with the county Planning and Zoning Commission discussed the process and findings of the project. It was the consensus of both groups that public hearings or town hall meetings needed to be conducted in order to ratify the findings of the study circle. It was also suggested that a survey could be conducted to garner additional input from the community. The County Commission surveyed steering committee members, planning and zoning commission members and study circle participants about their willingness to participate in Phase Two, which would be to implement the findings and incorporate them in the plans of the county and municipalities. The elected officials and staff will need to identify the tools available on hand,

and those which will need to be created through legislative change in order to help us fulfill the community's vision. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the cities and municipalities in Boone County, the University of Missouri and the Joint Center to assure a high quality of life for all citizens, their children, and their children's children.

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Case in Point: City of Raleigh/Wake County, NC

Known nationwide as an information technology center, North Carolina's Raleigh-Durham Greater Research Triangle is named for its three major universities which have spawned many high technology companies in Wake County, the region's largest county. The growth of high tech industry has triggered extensive development and a rapid population increase. Between 1960 and 1990, Wake County's population rose by more than 150 percent to 426,000, with more than half (53 percent) living in

Raleigh. By 2020, the county's population is expected to more than double again, reaching 918,000 people.

Despite more than 30 years of rapid growth, much of Wake County remains a verdant, forested area traditionally known for its horse farms and agriculture. In the early 1990s, citizens began to question how to balance population growth and development with a high quality of life, and how to foster continued economic expansion while maintaining the region's unique culture. They began to look to smart growth.

To better engage the public in planning for smart growth, the planning board conducted extensive public forums. The primary vehicle to solicit citizen input was a two-tiered group that met to establish the plan's guidelines. The first tier included elected officials and 20 voting members representing the constituencies most affected by the plan. The second tier consisted of a larger group of advisory members. All meetings were open to the public. "It was a very productive effort, although it ran counter to the standard approach," says George Chapman, Planning Director for the City of Raleigh. "Usually you start with goals, and then work out the implementation. But because the jurisdictional boundaries were so politicized, we had to start there."

"Everybody learned a lot about the others' positions," said James Wahlbrink of the local home builder's association. "The way the meetings started and ended was very different." The entire process of building consensus on the comprehensive

plan was a lesson in civics and collaboration for all participants, as well as an education in land use planning, conservation, and real estate markets. Former National Association of Counties President, County Commissioner Betty Lou Ward said, "There was a lot of educating and talking going on. Property rights were a very big issue, and we just had people talk and talk until they came to an understanding."

Jeri Gray, a local environmentalist who served on the advisory board and other task forces said that the Joint Comprehensive Plan was essentially developed by the local citizens, with expertise provided by the planning departments. However, Commissioner Ward noted that they leaned heavily on the professional staff for their expertise and also stressed the need for long-term planning. "Shortsightedness leads to bad planning," said Ward. "Our staff would come in and ask, 'What will Wake County be like in 25 years? What do you want it to be like?'"

Wake County and its 12 municipalities—including its largest city, Raleigh—adopted a Joint Comprehensive Plan in July 1997, after five years of preparation. The comprehensive plan primarily identifies future service areas for the county and the location of services such as sewer and water lines. In addition to addressing such issues as private property rights and urban sprawl, the plan divides the county's land into different uses. It also is specific about activity centers and prospective growth

patterns. In reaching agreement on the final service areas, Wake County and its encompassing municipalities vowed to coordinate all planning initiatives.

According to a county planner, the plan "guides, rather than controls, growth. Incentives for developers to build close to town centers will mitigate "leapfrogging" (i.e., building in the middle of open spaces and rural areas), a problem existing before the plan's adoption. Cluster development, which requires a developer to put 10 percent of the land into open spaces and build houses closer together, is encouraged.

Changes since the plan's adoption include a speedier approval process for development petitions, as well as continued public involvement and support. The work begun by the comprehensive plan has continued. The community has an ongoing Open Space Task Force to identify natural areas, wildlife habitat, other open spaces, and potential park and green way sites that should be conserved. The county plans to buy some of the most fragile land. In addition, a Water and Sewer Task Force is preparing a water and sewer master plan that will recommend how, where and in what order the municipal water and sewer service will be extended.

The multi-jurisdictional approach to land use planning is reaching other counties that neighbor Wake County. The recently formed Durham/Wake Working Group is collaborating to examine the and use issues of the common border between Wake and Durham Counties,

which will further extend the Raleigh/Wake County regional planning efforts.

"The process was very pragmatic. It lacks the elegance of a traditional top-down approach, but it's realistic," said Raleigh Planner George Chapman. "There are real challenges for implementation since there is no framework of state law to help. You have to rely on continued cooperation."

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Organizations and Contacts

AmericaSpeaks, 2312 19th St. N.W. Washington, DC 20009, Ph: 202-667-3382, Fax: 202-328-0685, <http://www.americaspeaks.org>

Joint Center for Sustainable Communities (National Association of Counties and U.S. Conference of Mayors) 440 1st Street, NW, Suite 800 Washington, DC 20001, Ph: 202-661-8805.

League of Women Voters, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036-4508, Ph: 202-429-1965, Fax: 202-429-0854, <http://www.lwv.org>

National Civic League, 1445 Market Street, Suite 300, Denver, CO, 80202-1728, Ph: 303-571-4343, Fax: 303-571-4404, <http://www.ncl.org>

National Community Building Network, 1624 Franklin Street, Suite 1000, Oakland, CA, 94612, Ph: 510-663-6226, Fax: 510-663-6222, <http://www.ncbn.org>

Study Circles Research Center, 697 Pomfret Street, Box 203, Pomfret, CT 06258, Phone: 860-928-2616, Fax: 860-928-3713, <http://www.studycircle.org>

Zoning is the most common method for controlling local land uses. Through zoning, localities can encourage or discourage development — type, size, and location. The comprehensive plan lays out the general objectives for municipal land use, but it is the zoning map that designates specifically which parcels can be used for which particular purposes. Frequently, a coded zoning map is included in the comprehensive plan to show the various zones.

Zoning determines a number of factors relating to land use. The zoning code determines what land uses will be allowed in a particular area. Zoning also determines the density at which an area can be developed, as well as the height and size of buildings. Agricultural land that a community wishes to preserve may be zoned at an extremely low density to dissuade development, while lands available for infill development may be zoned at higher densities to encourage development. It is up to the local Zoning Board or other local body to determine which uses are compatible with one another, which should be kept separate, and what is the optimal density to achieve the community's goals.

Typically, the local Zoning Board establishes the zoning code and the Board of Zoning Appeals hears all challenges to land use decisions. Zoning plans and changes are generally done with significant citizen participation via community hearings or charrettes. Once districts and uses are designated, developers and citizens who wish to

modify the code must appeal to the Zoning Board for variances. Variances permit moderate changes in the established zoning designation for individual parcels.

Traditional/Standard Practice

Zoning has long-term effects on regional land use patterns. Traditionally, American zoning has followed one of two patterns. It has either taken the form of single use districts or “pyramidal” zoning. “Pyramidal” zoning is a tiered zoning strategy that designates the level of uses permitted and permits any use that is more restrictive. For example, single family detached houses are the most restrictive tier. An area zoned to permit multi-family housing would also permit single-family housing. An area zoned for commercial use would also permit multi-family and single-family residences and so on.

In 1926, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the landmark case of *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.*, ruled that local governments had the constitutional authority to separate uses for the public good. The precedent set by this case made it possible for municipalities to establish single-use districts: areas that are zoned for one use only such as industrial or agricultural or commercial or residential. This pattern of zoning often resulted in low-density development that separates single-family from multi-family areas and residential from commercial areas. While this type of zoning can be used to exclude undesirable uses, it can

also exclude anyone who cannot afford a single-family residence from many areas, thus contributing to concentrated poverty, inadequate affordable housing, and racial segregation. Additionally, by separating residential districts from commercial and light manufacturing areas, such zoning forces people to travel greater distances for work, shopping and recreational activities. As a result, this limits transportation choices and creates greater regional traffic congestion.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Many local governments are now moving away from the single-use model and are encouraging a mix of uses, preservation of open space, and more compact development patterns. Mixed-use means that more than one use is permitted in the same zone. This allows both commercial and residential spaces in a single development. Mixed-use development enables people to live closer to where they work and makes goods and services accessible within a very short distance of home or work. Mixed uses also encourage compact development that is more pedestrian-friendly and easier to service with public transit. Frequently, this type of development is concentrated near existing infrastructure, having the added benefit of lowering municipal infrastructure costs.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	USE
Incentive zoning	Offers a developer an increased benefit (additional allowable floor area, design variances, etc.) in return for some needed public amenity such as public facilities, open space, or affordable housing.	To preserve community character and ensure adequate public services
Cluster zoning	Maintains high levels of development by “clustering” buildings and infrastructure on a concentrated area of the site instead of spreading development evenly over the site ²	Preserve open space and make more efficient use of infrastructure
Large lot zoning	Establishes large <i>minimum</i> lot sizes (5-10 acres) to reduce incentives for development. <u>Caution</u> : can make the remaining land unsuitable for farming, forestry, or most recreation, and make affordable housing impractical.	Preserve agricultural lands and open space
Environ-mental zoning	Tailors regulations to local environmental conditions	Protect natural resources such as wetlands, habitat and forests
Overlay zoning (also special area district)	Imposes a set of requirements over and above those laid out by standard zoning regulations. Overlay zones may protect special features such as historic areas, wetlands, and downtown residential enclaves.	Historic, residential or environmental preservation
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	Allows a developer flexibility, creativity, and variety in master-planning development within an overlay zone or rezoned district	Flexible and creative planning
Floating zones	Established for a use that is allowable in the zoning ordinance, but the zone is not located on a specific site on the zoning map. ³ The designation of the zone usually requires special review procedures.	Reserving land for future regional development need
Performance Zoning (also Flexible Zoning)	Permits uses based on a particular set of standards (such as smoke, noise, and odor) rather than on type of use. It provides flexibility in development so long as the requirements are adhered to.	Attract industry for economic development
Purchase of Development Rights and Conservation Easements	Government agencies or private land trusts pay land owners for the development rights of a parcel to preserve it from future development. Note: this technique can be very expensive as payment is usually near the value of the land with development.	Preservation of farmland, open space, or unique habitat
Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)	Separates the value of potential development of land from the value of the current use of that parcel and “transfers” that development value to another site. Generally the value is transferred from a less desirable area for development, such as open space, to one where density is desirable. ⁴	Preservation of open space and vulnerable land parcels and historic preservation

Toolbox

Many different strategies for zoning are available to help municipalities meet their community goals to preserve open space, attract certain types of development, standardize the permitting process, and integrate land uses. The table (see previous page) provides a summary.

Case in Point: Wildwood, MO

An example of a small city that effectively wrote environmental conditions into its zoning code, Wildwood is a city of about 7000 people in the foothills of the Ozarks. In contrast to the city of St. Louis and most of its suburbs, which are in the alluvial plain of the Missouri River, the city has fairly thin, rocky soils, and gets a good amount of rain. Without proper precautions, its development sites are prone to erosion and siltation. The area was an unincorporated part of St. Louis County until subdivision development caused extensive erosion, and officials, finding no relief in county zoning ordinances, incorporated in September 1995.

The city created a master plan, zoning ordinance, and subdivision code. It based its subdivision code largely on the quality of soils, slopes, and water tables. Land was separated into three categories: entirely protected from development, partially protected, and fully developable. Classification was determined on a parcel basis and was based on analysis of soil depth, existence of a

restrictive layer, soil surface shape, and soil attributes. Land unsuitable for development is held by deed as permanent open space. Areas with infrastructure deemed inadequate for high density, were zoned as low-density residential.

These regulations were included in the subdivision code, not the zoning code, because while developments do not always require rezoning, they nearly always require division of lots through platting. Many developers had already been following these practices out of common sense. Wildwood's land use regulation based on soil and water quality and topography is an important example of the need to tailor zoning to specific environmental conditions.

Jonathan Barnett, the master developer for Wildwood, asserts that zoning usually sees the world like a billiard table — green and flat. It does not incorporate the variability of the natural world (or often the variability of the social world. Regulations function more as damage control, mopping up after development. A fuller incorporation of environmental criteria into the zoning code could lead to more carefully tailored design, more flexibility, and better anticipation and response to environmental conditions.

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Organizations and Contacts

American Planning Association, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, Ph: 202-872-0611, <http://www.planning.org>

Control of Local Infrastructure

Development and growth rely on basic infrastructure such as water, sewer, and roads as well as public services such as police, fire, and education. Investing in and expanding these necessities is the domain of local government officials. This gives local governments tremendous power in determining when and where infrastructure and services are extended and growth is directed.

Using infrastructure and service investments as a tool, municipalities can attract development of an appropriate type and scale, phasing it in to maintain high levels of service and a high quality of life. States with statewide plans, such as Oregon, Florida, Washington, Rhode Island, California, and Maryland, are using infrastructure as a means of promoting smart growth. .

Traditional/Standard Practice

Most municipalities want to grow – if not physically, then economically. Cities, counties, and towns lobby for highway exits, expanded roadways, and sewer expansions in hopes of attracting new industry and investment to their communities. Where infrastructure goes, so will industry. The result, however, has not always been what they hoped for. Infrastructure expansions have been made when existing systems still have underused capacity – an inefficient use of past investments. Expanding services over a wide area encourages low-density development and makes efficient service delivery difficult.

Some local governments that franti-

cally pursue growth have failed to consider the impacts of this rapid growth on the ability of their fire, police, and education systems to service new population. The result has been overly large and inefficient fire and police response areas and overcrowded public schools.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Smart growth links infrastructure and program investments to both local economic competitiveness and community quality of life. Controlling infrastructure allows communities to remain close-knit with a range of uses and services relatively close to one another. Phasing new growth ensures that municipal programs can adequately service the newly developed areas.

Infrastructure improvements are a fixed, long-term investment. Strong and healthy businesses maximize their investments. So too do strong and healthy communities. There are a number of tools available to local government planners and decision-makers to help them make the most of their investments for smarter local growth.

Infrastructure control measures are not intended to stop or prohibit growth. Rather, they are intended to encourage and accommodate appropriate future land uses that complement and support strong, healthy communities and economies. Like other smart growth tools, infrastructure investment decisions are rooted in a locality's master plan. The goals and objectives of these investments should be consistent with the

community's future vision and evaluated and reassessed regularly.

Toolbox

Costs of Community Services— refers to a comparative analysis of the relative costs of different development alternatives. Each development scenario, be it industrial, residential, or mixed, carries a certain price in terms of infrastructure, revenue, and long-term maintenance. Costs of Community Services analysis are a key tool that communities can use to project, quantify, and compare the costs of proposed initiatives. This information proves useful in weighing the short and long-term viability of any development scenario.

Adequate Public Facilities (APF) – Adequate public facility requirements are formal mechanisms used to enforce one of the most fundamental tenets of land-use planning – that development should not be permitted where it cannot be adequately accommodated by critical public facilities and services. From Florida to Washington State, adequate public facilities standards are increasingly used to ensure that urban growth does not overburden municipal facilities and reduce current service. Requiring sufficient public facilities allows local officials to influence the timing and location of new development.

Adequate Public Facility requirements prohibit development in areas without the minimum required levels of service for water, sewer, drainage, and traffic flow.

Existing infrastructure and projected use determines the APF standard requirements. APFs must be used in accordance with the comprehensive plan. APF ordinances encourage infill development, facilitate municipal service delivery, and direct development toward facility-rich areas.

Priority Funding Areas – The State of Maryland has been a pioneer in designating priority funding areas. Targeting growth to these areas makes efficient use of a city’s infrastructure investments, promotes infill development, and preserves greenspace in undeveloped areas. Priority Funding Areas provide the extra incentive needed to help make infill development and land recycling more appealing to developers.

Sidewalk and Bicycle Retrofitting Programs – These programs are aimed at making existing roadways more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Retrofitting roads with bike lanes and sidewalks provides an incentive for development designs at a human scale. These simple infrastructure improvements enhance opportunities for multi-modal transportation, mixed uses, compact design and preservation of community character.

Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) - Tax increment financing (TIF) allows municipalities to finance capital improvements from the revenue stream generated by a project. Typically, bonds are issued to finance public improvements such as roads, sewers, fiber optic cable, parks, schools, etc. Cities designate a “tax increment district” and are then able to float a tax increment bond to improve

that area. Once the capital improvements are made, land will be developed and properties will be more valuable. TIFs “capture” this extra value in property taxes to repay the bond issues. Like a revolving loan fund, TIFs allow municipalities to use the property taxes generated by new projects for other redevelopment initiatives in the locale. Nearly 40 states have used TIFs. Many cities, including San Diego, Baltimore, Cleveland, Denver, Providence, and San Antonio, have redeveloped their downtowns through special area districts, sometimes financed through TIF.

Green Infrastructure – Green infrastructure is a term that refers to the ability of natural systems to perform the duties of man-made infrastructure – for instance, wetlands clean and filter stormwater, rivers were the highways of old, and trees cool and quiet urban areas. Not only is green infrastructure more aesthetically pleasing, it is also relatively inexpensive to maintain. Green infrastructure can dramatically increase the quality of life in a community while decreasing the cost of infrastructure for local governments.

Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) - Urban growth boundaries, also known as urban service areas, identify land slated for development from land set aside for natural or rural uses. UGBs contain development within predetermined areas and preserve the surrounding open space, agricultural lands, watersheds, and other valuable lands. UGBs are generally designed to accommodate

growth for a significant period of time—typically 20 years or more and they are updated periodically. The first metropolitan area to establish an urban growth boundary was Lexington, KY in 1958; however, Portland, OR, which established the boundary in 1979, is perhaps the most well known. UGBs bring certainty to the development process by clearly defining regional land uses and municipal priorities. UGBs direct growth toward existing communities. They can increase density and the efficient use of existing infrastructure investments. Growth boundaries promote land recycling and infill development. Combined with mixed-use zoning and affordable housing plans, UGBs can be a force for revitalizing blighted neighborhoods.

Exactions and Impact Fees – With exactions or impact fees, the developer shares in the costs of development. Exactions are a flat compensation negotiated between developers and the city for development of a site. Developers compensate the city for providing infrastructure to their development through fees, dedication of land, or facility construction. Exactions must be closely related to the development’s impact on infrastructure and facilities. Impact fees are one-time outlays paid by developers to defray the costs of off-site impacts from their development, such as the need for new services, roads, or facilities. Impact fees are used to shift some of the cost of development from current residents to new residents or developers. Revenues generated through

impact fees must be used for future needs, not existing ones.

School Construction and Improvement Programs – Local officials can influence homebuyer and renter location decisions based on the quality of their schools. Aging school buildings need funding to remain competitive with newly built schools. Studies have indicated that school crowding is as great a factor as test scores in attracting new families with school-age children. Local governments need to time their school construction plans to correlate with their infrastructure improvement programs to accommodate the new growth without decreasing the quality of local education.

Expanded Policing Activities – Safety is definitely an influencing factor for older developed areas. Investing in expanded police and fire protection in these areas produces a sizable return in public perception and ability to attract new residents and developments. When police are spread too thin, their ability to perform their jobs well is hurt. Concentrating new growth in already developed areas increases the level of safety for residents.

Case in Point: Windsor, CA

Windsor is a northern California suburb of nearly 20,000 whose population has tripled in the past 10 years. For many years city council made no attempts to manage the traffic, fiscal and other impacts. As a result, town residents

became concerned about growth, consistently rating it the top issue in a local newspaper's annual poll. In a 1994 election, two candidates for a five-person city council ran on a managed growth platform. Despite being heavily outspent, they received the most votes. These members sponsored a "Community Visions" questionnaire, which was opposed by the other three members. The questionnaire asked what kind of growth, development, and design citizens favored. The questionnaire confirmed the leanings of the citizenry toward smarter growth.

In 1996, the council put an urban growth boundary on the ballot; the measure passed in 1998 with 72 percent of the votes cast. The resolution established the UGB as an amendment to the general plan. The UGB is complemented by the town's Growth Management Ordinance, which controls the rate of development per year. As one official noted, the growth boundary is meaningless without concepts about rate of growth and community design.

Case in Point: Montville Township, OH

Montville Township is south of the City of Medina and within a commute from Cleveland and Akron. Its population grew from 3371 in 1990 to an estimated 4042 in 1996, an increase of almost 20 percent. Land use is 48 percent agricultural and just 14 percent residential. Water and sewer utilities and subdivision

regulations are administered through Medina County, while the township handles zoning, township road maintenance, and police protection services. The township contracts with Medina City for fire protection services, and the majority of students in Montville Township are enrolled within the Medina City school system.

A group of citizens began to voice a desire to preserve the township's distinctiveness and avoid becoming a typical suburb. This group worked on an update of the township's 1977 plan with the township's trustees and the Community Planning Assistance Program of the Medina County Planning Commission. This was a grassroots effort. This group conducted two community surveys on development issues.

A distinguishing feature of the township is that it is transected by the north-south continental divide. North of the divide, where water runs north to Lake Erie, the township is served by the water and sewer services of the City of Medina. South of the line, where water drains south to the Ohio River, there is no adequate source for these services. As neither water nor waste water can be transferred from one continental drainage area to another, the divide is a natural boundary for development. The development committee declared the divide an "urban growth limit." North of the line, land is primarily zoned at densities of up to two homes per acre, a density ratio characteristic of smart growth, with higher densities allowed for

cluster development and in areas zoned for multifamily dwellings. South of the line, maximum density is one home per two acres. In addition to a lack of infrastructure, the area outside the urban growth limit has soils that are not conducive to intense development.

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Economic Development

Local economic policies have a profound effect on how cities, counties, and regions grow. They affect not only monetary decisions, but land use decisions as well. Local governments decide how they will collect money and where they will invest it. These policies can be harnessed to help direct where growth goes and when it occurs, and to enhance the quality of growth in the region. Municipalities must choose their growth wisely and be aware of the long-term impacts of economic policies on land use, social equity and future opportunities.

Smart local economic development is more than just job creation or business retention. It encompasses considerations of environmental impacts, social equity, and long-term influences on future regional health. Municipalities must evaluate economic development alternatives against their effects on future land use, jobs-housing balance, transportation, education, public health, and social justice. Increasingly, localities are realizing that global forces influence and impact the local economy, necessitating the pursuit of economic development on a regional scale in cooperation with the other municipalities that comprise the local economic market.

Traditional/Standard Practice

Manufacturing has traditionally been seen as the backbone of the American economy. To this end, local economic development commonly focused on industrial recruitment. Industrial and manufacturing jobs were stable. Workers

were unionized and less prone to layoffs. Heavy industry was unlikely to relocate to another town – it was difficult to move a steel plant, slaughterhouse, or timber mill. Many small “company towns” cropped up across the American landscape. Businesses were commonly locally owned, and corporations had a paternalistic interest in the health and vitality of the communities in which they located.

However, the new technology-based global economy has redefined the characteristics that are desirable for economic development and business attraction. Under the previous industry-based economy, the accepted formula for success for more than three-quarters of a century had been to attract growth and industry at almost every opportunity. This is particularly true of our mid-sized and larger urban centers although even many rural communities are engaged in this pursuit to a lesser degree. However, in the new technology-based, and global economy, the need for building up “clusters” or pockets of industry and demonstrating the rapid ability and desire to gain more of it is no longer necessarily an attractive selling point. This is due in no small part to the fact that “place” in terms of clustering of similar industries and sectors is less important in our technology-based economy. Locating a business near others like it, in proximity to its partners and suppliers is no longer necessary. The result is that businesses, seeking to attract the technologically savvy employees that they need, are interested in different characteristics that

reflect the interests of their desired workforce. These include walkable communities with easy access to home, school, and work; open space and cleaner air; top-notch schools; strong technical infrastructure that assures growth and ease of accessibility to the outside world; and communities with a strong sense of character. These amenities have become the “new capital” in the competition for economic development.

Therefore, cities and counties have learned that they need to look collectively at how they position themselves to compete in this new global marketplace. By working together, and presenting themselves to the business world as city-county REGIONS as opposed to individual cities and counties, mayors and county officials often can offer a much stronger, much more diverse package to the global community.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Smart growth encourages integrated economic development where the region is the basic unit of economic activity. Industry clusters – interconnected and mutually supporting businesses – are the focus rather than individual industries. Under this model, economic development includes community development: good design, celebration of community character, education, employment training and other features that attract human capital.

Smart growth in general encourages building upon existing strengths. This also applies in economic development - “do

what you do best.” Comparative advantage is applicable both in terms of product and location. If your locality is founded on a particular product, continue to build your industry clusters from that foundation and diversify as you expand. Think of the benefits associated with a central city or rural location and seek out businesses that naturally gravitate to that setting.

Smart local economic development grows out of a community-based vision firmly rooted in the local comprehensive plan. It includes a high degree of public involvement in public investment decisions and economic policy-making. It encourages corporate responsibility, recognizing that a high quality of life benefits both residents and resident industries.

While still forging collaborative partnerships with large industries, smart growth encourages local business entrepreneurship. Such “home-grown” industries tend to have greater loyalty to the locality or region and are generally better neighbors to their home communities. Smart economic growth is a partnership between local governments, the business community, and local residents – each with an equal stake in the vitality of the others.

Toolbox

Brownfield Redevelopment – Brownfields are underutilized, former industrial or commercial properties that suffer from real or perceived environmental contamination. Found in all 50 states, these idle properties are potential assets for local economies. Sitting idle they drain the local tax base,

project a negative image of their neighborhoods, and pose threats to environmental and economic health. Many local and state programs, supported by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Housing and Urban Development Agency, serve to help cleanup brownfield sites and return them to productive uses. Brownfield sites are frequently well serviced by transportation systems and other infrastructure, making them ripe for infill development that brings people and jobs closer to the traditional urban core and provides an alternative to suburban expansion.

Business Incubators - Business incubators provide a one-stop resource for loans, training, job placement, recruitment, technical assistance and mentoring. They offer low-cost lease space and reduced overhead by sharing expenses for marketing, utilities, and other operations. Business incubators have a proven track record in both urban and rural settings. They provide a nurturing environment for local businesses to evolve and grow. Once established, businesses move out of the incubator to make room for the next generation. Business incubators are often built through public-private partnerships with local universities or industries.

Zoning Changes – Changes in zoning designations can be engines for economic development, as in the case of home-based businesses and home occupations. These activities may be technically illegal under traditional zoning restrictions. Changing zoning codes to allow non-annexing causing home industry gener-

ates economic activity in residential areas, improves job-housing balance, and decreases transportation trips.

Micro-enterprise Development - Micro-enterprises are typically described as new businesses that can be capitalized for under \$25,000. Local governments can support *revolving loan funds* or *community venture capital funds* to provide seed money for new local economic development. Frequently, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or other Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds can be applied in this way.

Direct Local Investment - While most development is privately financed, public investment plays a critical role in leveraging development that benefits a community as a whole. Local government needs to examine carefully where they are spending public dollars and how their investments affect both the urban form and local economic health. Many innovative, environmentally friendly, community-serving industries do not yet have an established track record to attract private investment and rely on public investments to help them develop.

Develop Main Streets – Main streets are a natural magnet for economic activity. Wherever people are prone to gather and engage in civic life, so too are they prone to spending money. Main streets are similar to business incubators in that the area is collectively marketed rather than individual stores. Businesses on the main street work together to determine, and adhere to, their unique identity.

Land Banking - Many local governments acquire land directly. Local municipalities purchase land and then hold it for future use. Commonly this land is used to: provide land for government services, redevelop previously developed lands, improve imperfect local land markets, and recapture land values created by government activities.

Split-rate Property Tax - A split rate property tax charges land at a higher rate and buildings at a lower rate. The application of a split-rate tax can directly influence local land uses. Landowners in dense areas or near transit have an incentive to build or improve their properties, because of economic potential. Property on the fringe with less economic activity is less valuable and will likely remain unimproved. The split rate property tax is a valuable tool for commercial revitalization and compact development. It discourages land speculation and increases redevelopment at sites adjacent to infrastructure.

Cross-cutting Approaches – Local government is coming to understand that more than a healthy economy and monetary investment are needed to ensure a sustainable future for their community. Affordable housing for workers, a clean and healthy environment, efficient transportation, recreational opportunities and open space: All are important for continued economic growth. The Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group is one example of an industry group that has taken steps in affordable housing to maintain their workforce and economic viability.

Safeguard Community Character – Historic preservation can be a tool for local economic development. Community character and identity are becoming increasingly important to local residents, emerging industries, and relocated corporations. Strong community character provides a sense of pride and confidence in a local community.

Poverty Reduction – The US Conference of Mayors, in their report “Growing Together,” showed that “efforts to reduce central city poverty led to an increase in regional income: doing good and doing well.” David Rusk, in his book *Cities without Suburbs*, came to the same conclusion. Communities are not isolated from one another – their economic fates are closely linked. Local governments must work collectively to eradicate poverty and to increase the strength, vitality, and competitiveness of their local economy and the regional economy as a whole.

Open and Civic Space – Studies from the Trust for Public Land, the National Park Service, and others are finding that there are quantifiable economic benefits of “idle” open space. Open space in the vicinity is appealing to retailers, workers, local residents, and visitors. Open space and public areas actually increase the value of adjacent property and encourage economic and social activity.

Comparative Advantage - Urban areas tend to have assets such as central business districts, infrastructure, entertainment and tourist centers, industry clusters, markets, and labor.

Rural areas have large tracts of land, open space, and outdoor tourism destinations. Local activists and officials should not approach economic development with a cookie-cutter model of what has worked elsewhere. They need to look at the unique assets of their community, including workforce talents, location, amenities, political will, and community character, and select economic development projects that utilize these strengths rather than undermine them.

Streamlined Permitting - Time is money, and municipal permitting processes frequently take a great deal of time. If permitting takes too long or is too unpredictable, businesses may locate elsewhere. Cities can often meet their obligations to their citizens and at the same time “capture the moment” by using their master plan as essentially a pre-permitting process. A well-written and community-approved plan should clearly articulate what is and is not acceptable to a community, and where. If a developer or business proposal is solidly within these guidelines, then they can be permitted “as of right” – this reduces lost time and increases predictability, making the locality more attractive for economic development.

Case in Point: Arcata, CA

Arcata is a city of 17,000 in northern California, with an annual growth rate of 12 to 13 percent. In the last two decades, many timber mills - a player in the area

economy - have closed, leaving over 30 abandoned sites in the city.

In 1987, an economic development report commissioned by Arcarta recommended that, given its remoteness and weak transportation network, the city focus its economic energies on developing its indigenous local industries. Since the city is not a magnet for major firms, local businesses are a way to develop the local economy and help support gradual redevelopment of the city's abandoned mills.

The Arcata Development Corporation (ADC) partnered with the USDA Rural Development program and private investors to build a 20,000 square foot facility to incubate local industries. The first incubated industry was food processing. That experience will be used as a template to sponsor other industries. The program offers both economic and educational assistance.

Case in Point: Pittsburgh, PA

Pittsburgh began implementing a split rate property tax in 1911. By 1925, the city taxed land at twice the rate of structures and 80 percent of its revenue came from the land tax. In 1979-80, as part of an urban renewal program, the land tax was raised to five times the rate on structures. The city provided tax abatements for new construction and low-interest loans for rehabilitation and construction. Federal programs accelerated depreciation and tax credits to spur renovation.

The city experienced a boom in development after 1980. While the average annual value of building permits in 14 comparable "Rust Belt" cities decreased by 21 percent between 1960-79 and 1980-89, in Pittsburgh it increased by 70 percent. While building permits increased by 157 percent between 1974-8 and 1980-9 within the city (with nonresidential construction increasing by 234 percent), they dropped in the suburbs by 19 percent.

Pittsburgh grew significantly faster than other cities, and 14 other Pennsylvania cities and towns experienced similar growth with the tax. One observer argues that while other incentives were important for development, the land tax was the teeth. Without it, urban renewal incentives could make speculation worse as landowners waited for urban renewal designation. With a land tax, such speculation is too expensive. Oates and Schwab suggest that the land tax is a method of raising revenue while avoiding other taxes that undermine development.

Case in Point: Delray Beach, FL

In the late 1980s, businesses in Delray Beach were moving to the suburbs, infrastructure was deteriorating, crime was increasing, and the population was racially divided. Efforts to revitalize the city were ineffective. The state proposed a plan to widen the city's main street and destroy many old buildings. However, a multiracial task force appointed by the

mayor studied the situation and recommended instead narrowing and improving the street.

In 1985, the city established a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) under the state Community Redevelopment Act. The CRA established a downtown redevelopment district using tax increment financing. Its first priority was to improve the main street. The first significant private investment came about two years later.

In 1988, the city brought together politicians, business leaders, and citizens for a visioning retreat on the city's future. The group agreed to recreate the city's historic reputation as a "village by the sea" – a town of small stores and historic architecture. Racial inclusiveness was a key element. From a declining city, Delray Beach has become a model for growth management, and was named Florida's best-run town by *Florida Trend* magazine in 1995.

Case in Point: Denver City/County, CO

Lowry Air Force Base was a major training center when it was placed on the federal base closure list in 1991. Denver Mayor Wellington Webb and Aurora Mayor Paul Tauer quickly came to the conclusion that the impacts of the base closure hit the two communities equally. The conclusion paved the way for the launching of a community-based effort to plan for Lowry's reuse, including replacement of jobs. It was a daunting task

because together the two cities were losing 7,000 jobs, while inheriting obsolete buildings and infrastructure, substantial operating expenses, and a \$32 million debt (the Air Force's asking price). Only a truly innovative effort, incorporating sustainable development principles, has made it possible to put in place a plan that is creating a community where people can live, learn, work, and play. Two intergovernmental agreements between the two cities took shape:

1. *Lowry Economic Recovery Project.*

Executive and citizen advisory committees of equal representation were formed. After a lengthy and citizen-inclusive planning process, a base reuse plan was submitted to the U. S. Department of Defense. From Aurora's perspective, the planning process was not difficult because there was equal representation on the executive committee and consensus about the reuse plan for its portion of the base. Under the plan, a portion of Aurora's community college would be relocated, but the base's golf course would remain, now surrounded by new housing. Reuse and land planning issues were more complex for the Denver portion of the base, given its size and proximity to existing neighborhoods.

2. *Lowry Redevelopment Authority.* After completion of the reuse planning process, the LRA was formed to implement the plan and manage the property. Independent of either city, the agency's board is business/development oriented. (Two of the

nine LRA board members are from Aurora, seven from Denver. Government officials are not allowed to serve, except one ex-officio from each city's planning department.)

The Lowry Redevelopment Authority (LRA) is following community-based master plans adopted in 1993 and 1996. These plans call for residential, educational, recreational, and employment uses, tied together with public trails, open space and a telecommunications network. The LRA is also working to reduce sprawl through the efficient re-use of land and infrastructure. The build-out projection for the project is 10,000 jobs, 4,000 homes and apartments, 10,000 residents, 800 acres of business park, 20,000 on-and-off-site students in an education complex, and 800 acres of parks and athletic fields. Lowry is adding significantly to the entire metropolitan area with the creation of jobs, residences, education and retail opportunities.

Funding for the Lowry redevelopment project, including internal operations and financing costs, totals \$350 million. Public funding pays for only \$68 million of the \$350 million of debt, or less than 19 percent. The two cities, in exchange, obtain a long-term increase in property tax base of \$1.3 billion.

Two other entities advise the board: the community advisory committee, which is made up of residents from surrounding neighborhoods (Aurora has 7 of the 21 appointees); and the Denver/Aurora coordinating committee, which is made up of two city council members

and the mayor of each city. The coordinating committee resolves matters of joint interest. The board is required to have a majority recommendation from this committee prior to acting on pre-specified areas of joint interest.

Lowry's redevelopment will serve three major goals:

- *In-fill development:* Within the confines of the Lowry community, the goal is to create mixed-use development that provides a high quality of life to current and future residents
- *Increased affordable housing:* The goal for Lowry is to make 10-12 percent of new housing affordable to moderate-income families.
- *Reduced homelessness:* When Lowry closed, the federal McKinney Act required that surplus property be made available for providers of housing for the homeless.

The Lowry Redevelopment Project can be replicated by other communities. In setting up a similar program, communities should think about the following seven areas.

- *Organizational structure*
- *Construction*
- *Technology*
- *Public relations and marketing*
- *Design guidelines*
- *Homeless initiatives*
- *Financing*

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Case in Point: The Cities of Youngstown, Struthers, and Campbell, OH

The 900 acres of brownfields lying along the Mahoning River in Youngstown, Campbell, and Struthers, Ohio, are the detritus of nearly 100 years of heavy steel production. In 1995, public and private groups decided to come together for the purpose of forming the Mahoning River Corridor of Opportunity (MRCO), an organization that would facilitate the reclamation, redevelopment, and promotion of these underutilized and abandoned properties.

The MRCO brownfields lie in the heart of the Mahoning Valley, at one time the third largest steel producing area in the United States. Statistics for the City of Campbell illustrate how steel closings in the '70s crippled the region. Before 1977, Campbell could count on over \$100 million in personal property tax valuation. Today's valuation is less than \$10

million. Industries within the MRCO area once provided employment for over 15,000. Now, mills stand vacant and the few companies located there employ about 1,750, an almost ten-fold reduction in revenues and employment.

MRCO was the outgrowth of the Mahoning River Redevelopment Project, started in 1991 to inventory brownfields sites along a 34-mile stretch of the Mahoning River in conjunction with 15 riverfront communities.

As a result of the inventory, the need for a more specific and unified focus on the former steel sites in Youngstown, Struthers, and Campbell became apparent to local officials. In June 1995, Struthers Mayor Daniel C. Mamula proposed the creation of MRCO to focus specifically on the riverfront brownfields in these three cities. Shortly thereafter, a first meeting was held with Campbell Mayor George D. Tablack; the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce; the Eastgate Development and Transportation Agency; CASTLO—a nonprofit economic development corporation serving Campbell, Struthers, and Lowellville; property owners; local utilities; and the governor's office.

CASTLO Industrial Park rose from the remains of an industrial ghost town of 11 buildings on 120 acres of abandoned Struthers steelworks. Since the property's purchase, with assistance from the State of Ohio, new roadways have been built, utilities updated, rail rights-of-way improved and railroad sidings modernized. At present, the park has 17 tenants, with

160 employees and an annual payroll of approximately \$4 million. It is economically self-sufficient through lease revenues generated by the development. CASTLO is an exemplary demonstration of how America can profitably recycle its land and infrastructure through reuse of brownfields and existing buildings. Not only is the project contributing to saving America's greenfields, its construction costs were half those of building a new industrial park.

On MRCO's western end, Performance Place is a 135-acre industrial park located on a former Republic Steel site. Its first phase consists of 75 acres with nearly 300 employees, an annual payroll of \$7.5 million, and about \$150,000 in income taxes paid to Youngstown.

Hundreds of cities across the nation face the challenge of brownfields reclamation and revitalization. Some tips from MRCO's experience:

- Rely on a mix of uses in development. At one time industry thrived along the banks of the Mahoning, but these banks were rendered largely unusable when the steel industry collapsed. As a result, the whole region suffered. To turn around the local economy, MRCO's model for redevelopment relies on a mix of uses along the riverway. Specifically, it is targeting smaller businesses, more sustainable and less hazardous to residents and natural habitat.
- Goals cannot be achieved unless problems are addressed directly. For MRCO, issues requiring particular

attention included environmental concerns, funding, good access to roads, restoring on-site infrastructure, economic development, marketing, and gaining the support and cooperation of private landowners and the general public. Seek out individuals with the right qualifications, and bring them onto the team.

- Foster the cooperation of individuals and organizations that represent local governing bodies, public and private landowners, utility companies, research entities, large and small businesses, and economic development agencies. Critical elements of success include teamwork, communication, and a broad alliance that honors the contributions and listens to the concerns of every player on the team.

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Resources

Books and Publications

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- Burnstein, Melvin L. and Arthur J. Rolnick. "Congress Should End the Economic War Among the States." *Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis 1994 Annual Report*. March 1995.
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Porter, Michael. *The Comparative Advantage of the Inner-City*. Harvard Review.

Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., *OverAchievers – Business Clusters that Work: Prospects for Regional Development*.

Organizations and Contacts

- American Economic Development Council, 1030 Higgins Rd., Suite 301, Park Ridge, IL 60018, Ph: 847-692-9944, Fax: 847-696-2990, <http://www.AEDC.org>
- Business for Social Responsibility, 609 Mission Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3506, Ph: 415-537-0888, Fax: 415-537-0889, <http://www.bsr.org>
- Corporation for Enterprise Development, 800 N. Capitol Street, NE, Suite 410, Washington, DC 20002, Ph: 202-408-9788, Fax: 202-408-9793, <http://www.cfed.org>
- Council for Urban Economic Development, 1730 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006, Ph: 202-223-4735, Fax: 202-223-4745, <http://cued.org>
- Economic Development Administration, 14 Constitution Lane, NW, Washington, DC 20230, Ph: 202-482-5081, <http://www.doc.gov/eda/>

International Downtown Association, 910
17th Street, NW, Suite #210, Wash-
ington, DC 20006, Ph: 202-293-4505,
Fax: 202-293-4509, [http://www.ida-
downtown.org/](http://www.ida-downtown.org/)

Institute for Local Self Reliance, 2425
18th Street, NW, Washington, DC
20009, Ph: 202-232-4108, Fax: 202-
332-0463, <http://www.ilsr.org>

Joint Center for Sustainable Communi-
ties (National Association of Counties
and U.S. Conference of Mayors) 440
1st Street, NW, Suite 800 Washington,
DC 20001

National Association of Development
Organizations, 400 N. Capitol Street,
NW Suite 630, Washington, DC
20001, Ph: 202-624-7806, Fax : 202-
624-8813, <http://www.nado.org/>

National Association of Industrial and
Office Properties. 2201 Cooperative
Way Third Floor, Herndon, Virginia
20171, Ph:703-904-7100, Fax: 703-
904-7942, [http://www.naiop.org/
legislate/growth/index.html](http://www.naiop.org/legislate/growth/index.html)

National Main Street Center, National
Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785
Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington,
DC 20036, Ph: 202-588-6000, [http://
www.mainst.org/](http://www.mainst.org/)

Rocky Mountain Institute, 1739
Snowmass Creek Rd, Snowmass, CO
81654-9199, 970-927-3851, fax 970-
927-3420, <http://www.rmi.org>

Sierra Business Council, P.O. Box 2428
Truckee, CA 96160, Ph: 530-582-
4800, Fax: 530-582-1230, [http://
www.sbcouncil.org/](http://www.sbcouncil.org/)

Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group, 226
Airport Parkway, Suite 190, San Jose,
CA 95110, Ph: 408-501-7864, Fax
408-501-7861, <http://www.svmg.org/>

Small Business Administration, 409 3rd
St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20416, Ph:
1-800-827-5722, <http://www.sba.gov>

Attainable Housing

Local governments have little or no control over many of the factors that affect housing prices, including national and international economic trends, private lending practices and interest rates, labor and materials costs, and other factors that are subject to, and change, along with the cycles of the national and regional economies.... Local governments do, however, exercise clear control in setting local land use and development regulations, which can, and do, have significant impacts on housing development costs.

*Affordable Housing Techniques: A Primer for Local Government Officials , March 1992, Report No. 22
Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington*

Housing is a basic necessity of life and an important part of any smart growth strategy. For many urban and rural residents, securing suitable housing is difficult. Often, housing is costly or located far from employment and service centers. Ever increasing distances between work and home force people to drive more – thus harming regional air quality. Job-housing imbalances deter businesses from locating in an area that cannot accommodate the new workers they will bring.

Rapid, unmanaged growth threatens household affordability and quality of life. While homes and apartments in low-density suburbs may indeed be less expensive, they are usually isolated from employment, retail and education and civic centers - indirectly increasing household expenses for transportation and other costs of living.

Traditional/Standard Practice

Housing is generally considered affordable if rent or mortgage payments consume no more than one third of the household budget. In practice, determining what is affordable for a household is

not so simple. Housing must also be appropriate to household size. Residents need to have access to employment and education centers and goods and services that meet their daily needs. Though housing itself may fit the standard definition of “affordable,” its location may increase household expenses in other areas and/or decrease a household’s quality of life.

In practice, affordable housing has often been concentrated in lower-income enclaves of a region – frequently in the urban core. Many wealthier residential areas resist affordable housing, associating low-income residents with crime, violence, and diminished property values. These communities sometimes use zoning to effectively exclude affordable housing by requiring large minimum lot sizes, single-family only residences or prohibiting a mix of uses. With these areas closed to affordable housing construction, cities and older suburbs are left to accommodate lower-income and/or minority residents. This increases concentrated poverty and racial segregation within the metropolitan areas. Cities and older suburbs already struggling with a limited tax base must

support an even more disproportionate share of households in need of public subsidy. David Rusk illustrated the economic danger to the entire region when lower-income housing is concentrated and lower-income people are isolated from jobs and opportunities.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Smart growth encourages the construction of affordable housing throughout a region. A regional housing agenda enhances region-wide residential diversity and economic stability. Dispersed, affordable housing increases regional economic efficiency by balancing employment and housing location and protects the security of the region’s working residents.

Toolbox

Many tools are available to encourage the construction and maintenance of affordable housing. In determining which technique to use, a local government should consider the extent of housing needs, the economic strength of the area, and the perception of local residents.

Technique	Explanation	Benefits	Concerns
Inclusionary Zoning	A set proportion of new units constructed in a locality are set aside as affordable to low- and moderate-income homebuyers. Can be voluntary or mandatory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not require local tax expenditures • Voluntary programs can be linked to density bonuses • Integrates affordable housing units throughout the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require ongoing administrative oversight • Unclear legal authority in some places • Mandatory programs could drive away developers
Density Bonuses	Allows a developer to build more units within a project than would otherwise be permitted under normal limits, so long as a proportion of the units are affordable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting additional units makes affordable housing more economical • Often affordable units are architecturally indistinguishable from market-rate units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be a sufficient incentive for developers • Localities must understand real estate market feasibility • Works best in large developments
Impact Fees Exemptions	Reduces or waives impact fees levied on new development infrastructure as applied to below-market housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee waivers reduce developers upfront construction costs for housing production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to review current impact fees and exactions to determine where application is appropriate
Upzoning	Selective rezoning of residential land to allow higher density development of single- and/or multi-family housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing a larger number of units reduces land and site development costs per unit • Preserves farmland, open space and undeveloped land • Encourages development closer to employment/ transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be poorly designed • Requires sufficient transportation capacity or options • Community opposition to out-of-scale buildings, congestion, and density
Accessory Dwelling Units	Rezoning to allow an additional living unit, including separate kitchen, sleeping and bathroom facilities, attached or detached from the primary residential unit on a single-family lot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No government expenditure • Owner-occupied rental units • Income generation for resident landowner • Uses surplus space • Creates rental units in more desirable areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood concerns about declining property values, appearance, parking and traffic
Rezoning Vacant land for Residential Use	Amends the comprehensive plan to rezone surplus industrial and/or commercial land for residential uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land is often in close proximity to job centers, retail and transit • Does not disturb current residential areas • Residential uses generate less traffic than industrial, office or commercial uses • Increases municipal tax base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires an inventory of available vacant land • Site development and design is important • Must consider potential environmental contamination • Only works in expanding markets
Mixed-Use zoning	Flexible zoning that allows various types of land uses (office, commercial residential) to be combined within a single district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses are in close proximity/ increased convenience • Savings through shared parking and building operation, maintenance and security costs • Higher return commercial units can subsidize low return housing • Reduced traffic congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often requires changes in the zoning ordinance • Requires attention to standards and design
Building Code Revisions	Revise building codes to allow flexibility in building codes for rehabilitation of existing and/or historic structures or buildings adapted for an alternative use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces costs of rehabilitation • Encourages revitalization of established neighborhoods • Increases developer predictability • Retains community character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could hinder accessibility • Incentive to rehab could displace existing residents in favor of higher incomes
Performance/ Impact Zoning	Flexible zoning that determines land use locations through a system of performance criteria (point system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits all types of housing • Increases supply of developable land • Greater design flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires detailed performance criteria • Unlikely to replace traditional zoning

Technique	Explanation	Benefits	Concerns
Planned Unit Development	Ordinances allow flexibility in building location, housing types and densities, and land uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows clustered development • Preserves open space • Allows higher densities and lowers per unit costs • Mixed land uses subsidize housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires attention to planning and design • May be limited to residential uses only • Often an overly cumbersome process
Cluster Subdivisions	Clustering of housing units within a residential development in lots smaller than normally allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less stringent review procedures than PUDs • Comply with existing zoning standards for density & land use • Decreases development costs • Allows more environmentally sensitive site planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to residential uses • Generally there is a minimum size for cluster subdivisions • Responsibility for maintaining open space (public or private?)
Small lots and small lot districts	Allows a reduction in minimum lot sizes for single-family detached or attached housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces residential development costs by increasing density • Lower per-unit land and infrastructure costs • Less pavement, sidewalk and gutters per unit (reduced materials costs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs attention to site design • Parking can overpower streetscape of community • Maintenance of privacy
Zero Lot Line Development (ZLL)	Allows houses to be sited on one side lot line (instead of set back from all) to maximize available yard space. Used in small lot housing developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compatible with single-family neighborhoods • More useful yard space • Lower site development, utility and materials costs • Maintains privacy/ appearance of single-family housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs stringent review criteria • Resistance from residents in established neighborhoods • Space and privacy issues • Location and design of parking
Infill Development	Development on land within built-up urban areas that is either previously undeveloped, vacant, or under utilized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient use of existing infrastructure resulting in lower developer costs • Revitalize older neighborhoods • Reduced pressure on suburban locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly higher land costs than suburban locations • Compatibility with surrounding neighborhood • Previous uses of site
Mobile or manufactured housing	Structure transportable in one or more sections built on a permanent chassis with or without a permanent foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantially lower cost • Can be very high quality and attractive • Adaptive for infill development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public acceptance • Siting is difficult (insufficient land set aside) • Overly restrictive ordinances • Unsafe if area is prone to natural hazards
Adaptive Reuse	Conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings to economically viable new uses (adapting older buildings to current market needs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can introduce housing into non-residential areas • Convenient access to shopping, transportation, and employment • Less expensive structure/ infrastructure costs • Revitalize existing communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning and land use issues • Previous use • Property ownership issues • Funding • Commercial financing may be difficult to find
Office/ Housing linkages	Programs to require or induce commercial developers to construct or contribute to housing construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves "live near your work" objectives • Meets increased demand for housing resulting from dev't • Development bonuses increase project value or lower costs • Does not require local dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionable legal authority (need to prove "rational nexus") • Require strong commercial office market with more willing developers
Transfer of Development Rights	Separates "development rights" from physical property and allows the sale and transfer of rights to another piece of property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can increase allowable density of projects • Can preserve affordable housing downtown • Does not increase net area density • Preserves greenspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex administration • Require a healthy downtown real estate market • Some communities are unwilling to accept increased densities • Require a thorough understanding of real estate

Sources of capital for affordable housing include grants, loans, loan guarantees, real estate syndications, mortgage revenues, secondary market bond issues, housing vouchers, and Community Development Block Grants and other government funds.

Growing communities should anticipate housing needs as they plan for growth, rather than attempting to retrofit their programs later.

Case in Point: Redmond, WA

The city of Redmond, a suburb of Seattle, grew from 11,031 people in 1970 to 42,230 in 1997, an increase of 283 percent. In Washington, state law requires that 17 percent of projected housing unit growth be affordable to moderate-income residents, and 24 percent to low-income residents. Land use controls, development review, and financing policies are utilized to make housing more affordable.

Land use policies have reduced costs for moderate-income renters and buyers, but have had little success in generating apartments for low-income households and persons with special needs. The comprehensive plan states that keeping residential development capacity in pace with projected growth is an important step in planning for affordable housing. To accommodate growth, the city will zone sufficient buildable land, create development capacity, and allow for a

mix of housing types. It will promote higher density development and alternatives to single family dwellings. Zones will be created for low-moderate, moderate, and high-density development, as well as new residential, mixed-use, maximum density, and "fairshare"/incentive zones. Accessory dwelling units, clustering, and special housing types will be encouraged, and development standards enforced.

Development review policies cover planned residential development, impact fee exemptions for affordable projects, and preservation and rehabilitation. Financing policies include dedicated funding and public land provision.

Case in Point: Petaluma, CA

The City of Petaluma has one of the oldest and most notable growth management programs in the country. The city's population is projected to increase from 42,950 in 1990 to more than 60,000 by 2005. In 1984, the city foresaw a potential housing crisis and implemented a comprehensive housing program. Exceeding its mandate, the program generated over 900 affordable units, to provide 10-15 percent of all units as affordable or 21 percent of new housing since 1984. The program is based on the city's state-certified Housing Element, HUD-approved Consolidated Plan, and Redevelopment Commission's Implementation Plan. The city began by constructing complexes to serve the

elderly, but now serves all housing needs, including homeless shelters, rental apartments, homeownership opportunities, and special needs housing. Affordable units are exempted from the provisions of the city's Residential Growth Management System.

Resources

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- National Low-Income Housing Coalition, 1012 Fourteenth Street NW, Suite 610, Washington, D.C. 20005, Ph: 202-662-1530; Fax 202-393-1973; <http://www.nlihc.org>
- Urban Habitat Program, P.O. Box 29908, Presidio Station, San Francisco, CA 94129-9908, Ph: 415-561-3333, Fax: 415-561-3334
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, <http://www.hud.gov>

Transportation plays a critical role in where and how cities, counties, and communities develop and grow. Accessibility to home, work, community centers, stores, businesses, and industry are key components of any community's growth and development patterns. In fact, access to a particular place in large measure determines its range of potential or appropriate uses. Transportation has profound impacts on housing, employment, efficiency, quality of life and social equity. By recognizing the cross-cutting effects of transportation investments, local governments can use transportation as a tool to attract and direct desirable development and conservation activities.

Traditional/Standard Practice

In the early 20th century, streetcars and other mass transit systems allowed citizens to move further away from the urban core, which housed the necessities and conveniences of life in close proximity. The introduction of these early mass transit systems made life outside of the central city much more feasible due to increased speed of access to goods and services.

Later on, as the automobile became more and more prevalent, citizens were not only able to move much farther away from cities, but those who owned cars had vastly increased mobility. Roads grew up to accommodate new methods of transportation, new businesses, strategic interests, and lifestyle changes. Land was cleared to make way for new roads, housing, and businesses. Phone

lines, sewers, water treatment plants, and other infrastructure followed.

Since mid-century, the automobile has superceded mass transit, the bicycle and walking as the dominant form of travel. The growing popularity of the automobile, sparked by its relative affordability and ease of use, has ushered in new road building programs, changed development patterns and helped disperse the growing population. As this process accelerated, it triggered new development challenges directly related to transportation, including increased traffic congestion, air pollution, natural resource consumption and steep increases in infrastructure costs. Over time, the dominance of automobile has produced unexpected side effects. They include isolation, particularly affecting elderly people who lack access to goods and services and children who can no longer walk or bike to school and decay of inner-city and suburban-rim communities, destabilized by the flight of businesses and services to outer neighborhoods.

Consequently, transportation poses a special challenge for smart growth. Populations will continue to grow. Roads and infrastructure will need to be built. But a wider array of transportation solutions will be needed, solutions that strengthen communities and preserve their character.

Smart Growth Alternative

Transportation-friendly land use designations and good design offer cities "preventive medicine" to avoid congestion, air pollution, and other transportation woes.

Smart growth recognizes the cross-cutting impacts of growth on mobility, employment, project form, environmental quality and equity. In smart growth, transportation planning is attentive to multi-modal options, business priorities, and property values. Properties near transportation facilities have higher value for development than those not yet connected to transit or those with no transit alternatives. Transportation investments add value to neighborhoods and municipalities and provide the link between homes and workplaces. If transportation is difficult, costly and time-consuming, making people waste time and money in traffic, they are less efficient at work and home. The land use solution is to locate employment areas within or adjacent to residential areas. The smart growth approach is to ensure that the links between job and home are accessible in a number of different ways.

Toolbox

Good Design – In terms of transportation, good design means efficient design, and efficiency means options. Good design in both land development and transportation systems facilitates the quick and easy transport of people and goods. Providing a diversity of options improves efficiency by creating a number of different modes to accomplish the same trip.

Infill and Land Recycling – Municipalities are wise to reuse land serviced by existing transportation systems. Large

and small communities, both urban and rural, have under-used developed land in central localities, conducive to short trips, either by car, mass transit, or even on foot or by bicycle. These may be brownfields – lightly contaminated, previously industrial lands – or simply vacant land. Land reuse preserves undeveloped “greenfields” on the urban edge, and avoids the costs of extending service to newly developed areas.

Density – Critics argue that density is the root cause of congestion; however, it can also be a solution. Density determines what kinds of transportation are possible. Density is essential to cost-effective and efficient public transit systems – systems that will serve the city transportation needs while taking numerous cars off the road, thus easing congestion. Localities manage residential density through planning, zoning, and development incentives. New development should be concentrated around activity centers and integrated into unified, discrete neighborhoods.

Mixed-use and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) – A mix of uses concentrated within a walkable distance reduces the number of car trips needed for household errands and other activities. Transit-oriented Development (TOD) is typically mixed use development concentrated around a transit stop – often a subway or light rail station. This spatial arrangement helps to decrease auto-dependency, increase opportunities for alternative transportation, and create vibrant economic centers.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) - Transportation demand refers to the use of road space. The general goal of demand management is to reduce that use. Employers can help to alter demand by modifying work hours, rewarding “ridesharers” and telecommuters, providing transit subsidies, and hiring transportation coordinators. Developers can negotiate transit-friendly agreements with communities and support transit stops. Municipalities can reduce demand on roadways by improving the public transit system and by fostering safe environments for cyclists and pedestrians.

Multi-modal Options – The “modal split” – the way that people choose to travel – is important in managing transportation demand. People need options for travel – by foot, bicycle, bus, rail or private automobile. This multi-modal approach uses the many different transportation investments a local government has made including sidewalks, bike paths, “High Occupancy Vehicle” lanes, roads and highways, and rail lines.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Ways – Bicycle and pedestrian ways or sidewalks have been conspicuously missing from most suburban developments of the past 20 years. Without this infrastructure, many potential cyclists and pedestrians are leery of commuting by bike or foot. Establishing clear, direct and safe routes can encourage greater use of non-motorized transportation and may encourage developers to build to a human scale

and focus on pedestrian access.

Waterways – Rivers were the first highways and many cities are rediscovering them as viable transportation routes. Water taxis are profitable business in cities across the country. They attract tourists to the waterfront and transport residents to work, home and play. Publicly operated ferries also fill transportation needs in cities like New York and Seattle, where workers use the waterways in their daily commutes.

Modified Parking Requirements – Parking is a little used, but extremely useful, tool that can help manage transportation issues. Strategically placed on-street parking can serve a traffic-calming purpose. Increased parking fees or limited parking availability can strongly encourage the use of public transportation or car-pooling. Abundant and affordable parking at transit stations encourages transit use.

TEA-21 - The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which authorized the federal surface transportation program for highways and transit for the six year period 1998-2003, provides the flexibility needed to make transportation investments work to support brownfields redevelopment.

Case in Point: Penfield, NY

Penfield, New York, a suburban town adjacent to Rochester, is facing increased growth and traffic pressures along Routes 441 and 250, two arterial

State highways that traverse the town. A 1997 New York State DOT improvement project was proposed for these roadways. The town, in cooperation with NYSDOT, decided to adopt an Access Management Overlay district that incorporates a Land Use and Access Management Plan (LUAMP) for Routes 441 and 250. The LUAMP provides a comprehensive and coordinated management plan for access control to improve the capacity and safety of both roads. The LUAMP gives the Town Planning Board a basic framework, or planning tool, for accommodating future growth along these two corridors.

Case in Point: Boulder, CO

Using ISTEA funds, the City of Boulder has established an efficient, environmentally sound small-bus shuttle service. The shuttle has increased rider-ship and improved access in and around the congested core. The shuttle was conceived as a fully packaged transit service meeting community needs. It provides frequent service connecting core activity areas: downtown, a university campus, and a mall retail area. People use it for shopping, lunch, errands, and meetings, leaving cars at home. Vehicles are small, clean burning, open, inviting, and attractive. Routes are direct, and waiting time is minimal.

There are eight propane vehicles. Service is provided daily every 10 minutes on a two-way loop. The route connects to

the regional system, and intersects pedestrian and bicycle lanes. Daily rider-ship of 4300 in mid-1996 well exceeded initial estimates of 2000 passengers. About half the riders state that the shuttle reduces their drive-alone travel. There is also a night service for university students, funded by student fees.

The service has strengthened the local economy by providing access to activity centers. Riders are a significant part of commerce in parts of the downtown, with 32 percent of trips taken for shopping or eating. About seven percent of trips to downtown would not be taken without the shuttle. The service is praised for its small vehicles, clear route maps, high frequency, and low-emission vehicles. The system was designed with the participation of a 40-member community group including business owners, university students and staff, hotel/motel association members, retail and employment center representatives, and residents. The group established the shuttle's route, stops, frequency, vehicle characteristics, and fares.

Case in Point: Glendale, CA

A demonstration program in Glendale is proving the value of parking management and carpool incentive packages in reducing traffic congestion and air pollution. A public-private partnership between the Glendale Transportation Management Association (TMA), Nestle USA, Inc., and Commonwealth Land Trust Company

initiated a three-year program designed to reduce the number of area employees driving to work alone. The program, designed by the companies with assistance from the Glendale TMA, uses a combination of incentives to encourage employees to shift from solo driving to carpooling and transit. The companies eliminated parking subsidies for employees who drove alone, and imposed charges of between \$40 and \$50 per month for solo drivers. At the same time, the employers offered a comprehensive system of ridesharing incentives, with rewards and compensation for employees who chose carpools, vanpools, bicycling, walking, and transit. Incentives included free and preferred carpool parking, cafeteria discounts, a guaranteed ride home program, and cash subsidies to vanpools and shuttle services.

The Glendale program is part of a larger transportation management pilot project sponsored by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The Glendale project is among 100 projects designed to test the effectiveness of parking management and other strategies to reduce congestion and regional air pollution. A formal evaluation of the program is being used to design similar programs throughout Southern California.

An evaluation of the Glendale project found that the parking charge and rideshare incentive programs increased average vehicle occupancy from 1.15 to 1.5 employees per vehicle. There was a 30 percent reduction in solo driving at Nestle and a 25 percent reduction at

Commonwealth Trust, and respective increases in carpooling of 41 and 85 percent. Ridesharing increases at both companies reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 60.6 million miles per year and 99,600 fewer pounds of air pollutants per year. Both companies reported cost savings from the programs. Company parking subsidies were reduced, and though rideshare incentives were costly, they resulted in net reductions in employer transportation expenditures of \$0.44 for every trip.

Case in Point: Fairfax and Loudoun Counties, VA

Growth-related traffic congestion in the Dulles Transportation Corridor in northern Virginia is increasing rapidly. By 2020, households and jobs in the area are projected to grow by nearly 140 percent and 125 percent, respectively. Daily traffic on the Dulles toll road running through the corridor is projected to increase from 80,000 to 140,000 by 2020.

The Dulles Corridor Transportation Study, conducted from 1994 to 1996, examined multi-modal alternatives along the corridor. It involved five rounds of public meetings drawing over 1,200 people. Newsletters were sent to over 2,500 households, information booths were featured at community events, and presentations were made to community

associations, interested citizens, and business groups. A web page that provided information and allowed responses by e-mail was visited by over 8,000 people and received more than 500 comments.

A Major Investment Study (MIS) gathered information needed to answer broad questions about the corridor including appropriate investments in new transportation facilities. The MIS identified transportation alternatives from previous studies, public comment, and a study team of representatives from participating local agencies. Through the analysis and public participation, four options were outlined: a no build alternative, expanding express bus service, and two rail options providing links to Washington, DC's Metro system. The study team recommended a Metro-like rail system for the corridor, and the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board followed with a similar recommendation.

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- Surface Transportation Policy Project. *TEA-21 User's Guide: Making the Most of the New Transportation Bill*. Washington, DC: STPP, 1998.

Organizations and Contacts

- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 1700 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC, 20006, Ph: 202-457-0710 ext. 19, Fax: 202-296-9352, <http://www.ampo.org/>
- Federal Highway Administration, US Department of Transportation <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov>
- Federal Transit Administration, US Department of Transportation, <http://www.fta.dot.gov>
- National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), Regional Transportation Online Center, 400 N. Capitol Street, NW, Suite 370, Washington, DC, 20001, Ph: 202-624-7806, Fax: 202-624-8813, <http://www.nado.org/rtoc/index.html>
- Surface Transportation Policy Project, 1100 17th St., NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20036, Ph: 202-466-2636, Fax 202-466-2247, <http://www.transact.org>

Geographic Information Systems

Geographic information systems (GIS) are an increasingly popular tool for local planning, data collection, and smart growth. A GIS system can integrate many kinds of data, including land ownership and use, infrastructure status, populations trends, traffic patterns, open space, environmental quality, topography, and many others. Data comes from census information, soil and topographical maps, aerial and satellite photographs, remote sensors, and hand-held devices.

In recent years, the cost and size of GIS system tools have decreased, so that a system for a small community can operate from a desktop computer. Larger communities can network data collection for use by all relevant city or county departments. Basic GIS operations can be performed by an official with a basic knowledge of the system, with some expense for data collection. Larger communities will require at least one expert in GIS, and more money for hardware and data collection. Much of the costs of data collection can be shared, however.

GIS maps can show how development will affect a community or its parts. The maps can stimulate debate about growth. They can sometimes be accessed via the internet. GIS is a useful smart growth tool because it makes diverse information available to officials and citizens. GIS maps help people understand demographic and geographic trends.

How does it work?

The first choice in creating a local GIS

system is to choose its capacity level. Deciding between a high-end or desktop system depends on community size, cost effectiveness, and system goals. The most popular high-end system is ArcInfo, originally for mainframe computers and now adapted for Unix and Windows NT workstations. This system allows the user to fully automate, modify, manage, analyze, and display geographic information. Local government agencies can network to a central server. This system requires at least one full-time GIS specialist.

A desktop system, such as MapInfo or ArcView, costs much less. These systems provide Athematic mapping rather than data manipulation. Data collection, when it involves geo-coding, streets, or census information involves extra expense. ArcView can be linked with an ArcInfo system.

A small county or city can build a GIS system, with a base map, property holdings, zoning, development permits and constraints, water and sewer lines, jurisdictions, and land use for less than \$5 per person. The first step should be to see if a neighboring city, the county, a regional agency, or a fire or school district has built a GIS, particularly the base map or controls, which might include part or all of its area. The city or county should not re-code lot or line coverages in-house, but should set up its own system, saving costs by entering data itself. It should also list the inquiries, analysis, and maps users' needs, and ensure sufficient software. There also

may be opportunities for joint ventures within the intended mapping area.

Much of the data for local GIS operations comes from federal, state, and regional sources. It is readily available and can save collection costs. Major federal sources of information include the Federal Geographic Data Committee, the Census Bureau, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Federal Geographic Data Committee also administers grants to improve community level mapping. The Census Bureau and EPA have developed a software package called Land View III, which has database extracts on air quality, source pollution, hazardous waste, Superfund and wastewater sites, watersheds, dams, nuclear sites, airports, roads, and expanded census data. It can be purchased or downloaded via the internet for one county. There are also many private firms that specialized in land use and environmental mapping.

Where is it used?

GIS is used at all levels of government to collect data on land use, natural resources, point source pollution, and infrastructure. All large cities have GIS systems that cover, at least, land use and development planning, infrastructure, city services, and transportation. Usually, the GIS is on a server linked to other city agencies. Many cities, like San Diego, offer public access through the internet.

GIS is also well-established in counties, smaller cities, and towns. Now that

the cost for GIS is dramatically reduced, even small towns are finding it an economical way to catalog and map data.

Discussion

GIS is a powerful tool for collecting and analyzing spatial information. Even for a small town, it can provide a cost-effective way to utilize information about streets, infrastructure, natural resources, buildings, population, and housing. In addition, information can be networked and shared by city departments.

GIS has a vast potential for facilitating public participation and education about development and the environment. It is commonly used to produce effective educational maps. However, GIS reaches full potential when it becomes interactive, that is, when people can view, discuss, and influence land use decisions over the internet.

GIS has potential to facilitate national coordination of land use. Land use is politically complex at the local level, and even more at the national level. GIS is a way of increasing education opportunities for participation about politically neutral land use. The federal government has created a National Spatial Data Infrastructure, and signaled its support for local applications of GIS.

Case in Point: Gallatin County, MT

Gallatin County, Montana, has made a notable commitment to manage open space through GIS. The county has

grown by 21 percent in the last six years. Half of its land is publicly owned. Its countywide plan was implemented with a small grant from the National Association of Counties and the Joint Center for Sustainable Communities. Recognizing the importance of open space, the county commissioners appointed an Open Space Task Force, which has recently presented its report to the County Planning Board.

The county recently completed the first stage of a GIS project. The GIS produces a shaded relief map of approved subdivisions and man-made features in the county, contrasting a concentrated development pattern with present trends. Now the county is beginning a second phase of the project, developing a user-friendly, interactive format where residents can get specific data about trends in their neighborhood. Maps would be available on the internet and workstations placed in local libraries. According to Dale Beland, the county's planning director, the maps serve as an educational tool, so that an informed consensus can be reached about patterns of future development.

The first phase of the project was developed as part of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI), program for sharing geographic data. The second phase will be developed as one of six national Community Demonstration Projects, receiving a grant from the Innovation Project of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), which administers the NSDI. Small grants for

communities that wish to improve their mapping capability are available from the FGDC.

Case in Point: Ontario, CA

The population of Ontario, east of Los Angeles, is projected to grow from 150,000 to perhaps 250,000 in 20 to 30 years. The northwestern part of Ontario County, which includes the City of Ontario, is almost fully developed, and contains nearly all the retail space. The east part of the city contains a thriving warehouse and industrial section where most recent growth has occurred. South of the city is a dairy farming district that was declared an agricultural preserve in 1998.

The city began to use GIS in 1987, with an engineer updating parcel and street layers that had been digitized by a consultant using ArcInfo. The next year, a planner began to compile what would become the land use database. As other departments became aware of the potential of GIS, the program was centralized and shifted from a minicomputer to three networked Sun workstations with ArcView software.

GIS has been used to facilitate a citywide re-zoning program, and to enhance citizen access to information. The system allows the public, via the internet, to find parcel locations, determine the status of current developments, locate potential sites, and identify sewer and water lines and storm drains. It provides specific information for all

aspects of planning and development. It is a valuable tool to analyze and facilitate development, particularly for growing cities and counties keeping up with rapid new development.

Resources

Books and Publications

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Open Space and Farmland Protection

Traditional/Standard Practice

American identity is closely linked to the agrarian lifestyle. Thomas Jefferson founded his democratic philosophy on the ideal of the citizen farmer. Teddy Roosevelt relished the wide open spaces of the West. Today's reality, however, is the steady disappearance of the family farm, clearance of forests and plains for new development, and the greening of southwestern deserts.

Rural economies are typically small. They rely on narrow industry bases such as resource extraction, farming or a single local industry. Like suburban and urban leaders, rural community officials seek to expand their tax base and raise funds to modernize and widen municipal services. However, when their parent industry experiences a downturn, thriving small towns can rapidly decline into ghost towns.

Where land seems abundant, rural areas find it difficult to resist low-density development. Many relatively small communities are unincorporated and lack comprehensive plans or zoning ordinances, which makes it more difficult to control and direct development. As urban and suburban dwellers move farther from urban areas, rural communities are often ill prepared to deal with encroaching development. The result, all too frequently, is extremely low-density, suburban style strip development devoid of the original character and of the rural town setting.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Rural communities are acutely aware

of urban encroachment. Many are finding smart growth a way to protect their unique identity and still expand the local economy. Smart growth techniques can preserve a vibrant rural downtown – complete with main streets, sidewalks, and original charm. New development is nestled close in to the downtown. Strict zoning assignments direct development into walkable areas typical of the local heritage and prevent strip development along highway routes from sapping the life and character from the town. Agricultural lands are maintained either as working farms or as agricultural preserves. Forests are protected and development is directed away from steep slopes and other fragile areas. Economies are diversified to take advantage of new telecommunication options. The objective is for rural enclaves to have an economy of their own, rather than becoming bedroom communities for workers of nearby cities.

The best farmland conservation programs combine techniques. Agricultural district programs (ADPs) encourage farmers to voluntarily enroll in a locally administered district with incentives for farmland protection. Farmland protection can be linked to environmental protection by easing regulation for farmers who comply with environmental laws, or by purchasing easements on land vital to water quality.

Other programs include mitigation ordinances, which require developers to permanently set aside a unit of farmland for each one lost to development,

through an easement or a fee. Differential assessment taxes land at a variable rate according to use, aiding farmers liable for a disproportionate share of local property taxes. Right-to-farm laws protect farmers against nuisance suits. Transferable development rights, however, are rarely used to protect farmland. This may be due to the complexity of administering these regulations.

Toolbox

Farmland Protection. — Farmland protection is frequently integrated into comprehensive plans. For example, it became the focus of the growth management program in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The county encircled growing towns with protected farms, preventing the spread of sewer and water lines and establishing *de facto* growth boundaries. The county identified areas where growth was more desirable than others, assisted towns in establishing boundaries, encouraged them to adopt agricultural protection zoning, and purchased easements on farmland.

Agricultural Protection Zoning — Agricultural protection zoning creates zones where farming is the main land use and prohibits or discourages other uses there. It usually limits residential density. As such, it can be controversial because it may suppress the land's market value.

Land Trusts – In the last decade, land trusts have made significant gains across the country. Conservation land

trusts have gained popularity because they are local, voluntary, and flexible. Many land trusts bring the public and private sector together, build regional networks, and preserve local character and assets. Land trusts are not purely for conservation – some use Transfer of Development Rights (described below) while the farmers continue to farm the land – growing crops instead of houses.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) – Transfer of development rights are a mechanism that allows communities to direct growth and density from one part of the area to another. In essence, a developer purchases the development that could happen on a parcel of land and instead uses those development rights to increase the density on another parcel of land. In this way, growth is concentrated in higher density areas and open space is preserved in other areas. To use TDRs, however, a community must establish areas that will be “transfer” areas (where development is taken from) and “receiving” areas (where the density is moved to). In theory, TDR’s are established in perpetuity – once the development potential is sold from a parcel of land, the community establishes a permanent preservation district that carries on to all future land owners.

Conservation Easements — Conservation easements are contracts between a landowner and a land trust, conservation organization, or government. Landowners often receive tax benefits. Agricultural conservation easements are often purchased from farmers by govern-

ments or conservation organizations that pay the difference between the land’s value for development and for farming. Cooperative easement programs between states and localities often are best, as they combine broad planning with local monitoring and can increase available funding. Open space can be protected through government acquisition using dedicated sources, or acquired or leveraged by nonprofits such as the Nature Conservancy.

Proactive Planning and Administration — Local officials can exert a large measure of control over their natural areas through planning and administration. Parks, trails, community gardens, greenways, and other open space are critical to the appeal and functioning of any community, particularly in urban environments. A town may reclaim vacant or underutilized land for a low price or through eminent domain; many cities have land acquisition programs. Converting this land to parks or gardens may be possible in areas of urban revitalization. Investment in parks and open space can attract businesses, create jobs, boost tourism, increase property values and neighborhood pride, and decrease crime. Parks can be a low cost alternative to flood control and water treatment. Greenways are often created along waterways or abandoned rail tracks.

Business Development Resources — Creative financing and small business loans are crucial resources for spurring local, rural economic endeavors that can compete in today’s business environment.

Local governments can work with area businesses to assemble loans and financing options using both public and private resources. These tactics help grow a financially stable and diverse local economy. In addition to capital, such technical assistance as business planning, financial accounting, and market assessments can also significantly boost a rural entrepreneur’s chance for success.

Local Character – Perhaps the most valuable enduring asset of America’s small towns and rural communities is their character. Americans value the rural lifestyle. Small towns are envisioned as safe havens, with friendly folks and quaint markets. In today’s high tech and mobile world, local character is a tremendous asset for attracting businesses, for which quality of life often outweighs other considerations in industry location decisions.

Case in Point: Routt County, CO

High in the Colorado Rockies, an unusual partnership of ranchers, resort owners, county and city governments, and conservationists is helping a community shape its future in ways that will balance the new and the traditional, urban and rural. In the process, people in Routt County are proving that creative ideas, hard work, and a can-do attitude can work small miracles when it comes to securing resources to make vision reality.

In the early 1990s, Routt County (population 19,700) found itself divided

over plans for large-scale development, including a second major ski resort near the town of Steamboat Springs. The community seemed to polarize into “pro-growth” and “no-growth” camps, leaving little hope of consensus, or even compromise. But gradually, people began to see that tourism and conservation are natural partners, with the ski industry benefiting from an unspoiled landscape, and conservation dependent on a healthy ranch and resort economy. Encouraged by the effort at dialogue, county and city officials in 1992 launched a public process, called Vision 2020, to help the community develop a long-range comprehensive plan.

The County also asked a newly created Open Lands Committee to develop a plan for conserving local ranchlands and natural areas, using methods that most of the community would find acceptable. After hearing public testimony, the panel recommended that the County focus on voluntary, community-based approaches like purchase of development rights (PDR), incentives for clustered housing, and a right-to-farm ordinance. In November 1995, the county board adopted the plan unanimously. But many wondered how a small county could raise the funds that would be needed.

The County and the City of Steamboat Springs decided to use available discretionary funds to get initial projects off and running. Some years earlier, a group of local ranchers had donated conservation easements to the American Farmland

Trust, a nonprofit organization that works to protect agricultural resources. The success of these easements helped convince the County and City to fund a pilot project to purchase development rights (secured by conservation easements) on several other properties that the community wished to protect as open space. The first easement was purchased in June 1997. Voters in 1996 approved a 1 mill (1/1,000 of \$1.00) property tax hike to fund a countywide PDR program (see “Creating a Dedicated Funding Source,” below). By May 2001, the PDR Committee completed four additional projects totaling 2,411 acres, and six other projects are under consideration.

In addition, the County and City have been extremely successful at leveraging local resources with matching grants from the state’s “Great Outdoors Colorado” (GOCO) program. Funded through a share of state lottery proceeds, GOCO each year provides millions of dollars in grants for locally-initiated conservation and outdoor recreation projects. In May 1996, GOCO awarded a \$6 million matching grant, the program’s second largest grant ever, to Routt County for its proposed Yampa River System Legacy Project. Observes Will Shafroth, GOCO’s executive director: “The kind of partnership that developed in the Yampa Valley is rare and is very much a model for the rest of the state, as well as the country.” “The lesson,” he adds, “is to always broaden your stakeholders, and be committed.”

Important as grants are, the County

also needed a regular, ongoing source of funds to make a PDR program possible. In November 1996, the County held a referendum in which voters were asked whether they would accept a one mill property tax increase to purchase (and then retire) development rights on ranchlands and natural areas. By a narrow margin, the voters said “yes,” becoming the first in the intermountain west to dedicate a share of tax monies for this purpose. Criteria for properties to be considered for the PDR program include:

- Leverage of the funds with other contributions
- Quality of the agricultural resource
- Community value, and
- Continuation of agricultural operations.

Several conservation groups, local and national, are working with the County on land protection measures. The Nature Conservancy, which owns and operates the historic Carpenter Ranch on the Yampa Rivers, has formed a local advisory committee that will provide input on the management of the property (as both a nature preserve and a working cattle ranch). The panel is comprised of local ranchers, business people, and others. Also, local groups such as the Yampa Valley Land Trust help provide a vital connection with landowners. In addition, Routt County and the Colorado State University Extension Service have cooperated on other sources of revenue for agricultural operators. These include Value Added Businesses such as:

1. Yampa Valley Woolens, which uses local sheep wool to create and market woolen blankets;
2. Yampa Valley Beef, which processes locally raised beef for sale to wholesalers, supermarkets, and local restaurants;
3. The Community Agricultural Alliance, which works toward forging a better connection between agricultural-based businesses and tourist-based businesses.

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Case in Point: Calvert County, MD

In communities around Washington, D.C., sprawl is fast replacing farmland. Development pressure on Calvert County is intense; it is the fastest-growing county in Maryland. Working farms decreased in the county from 1,014 in 1964 to 400 in 1992. The county has a transferable development rights program for farmland. Since 1979, it has preserved 12,130 acres through that program. The process of selling and transferring rights is complex and time-consuming, however. Often,

farmers are confronted with lucrative offers from developers before they have even considered selling their development rights.

The Calvert Farmland Trust, formed by three young farmers, has used a sophisticated mix of tax incentives and preservation laws to buy five farms totaling about 587 acres.

Public and private land trusts are growing steadily in Maryland and elsewhere, buying up land and removing it from the market. In 1989, the state had seven land trusts; today there are 42. Land trusts in Maryland, along with local and state programs, have saved 488,334 acres from development. Farm trusts avoid many land use battles, drawn-out public hearings, seeking new zoning rules or a moratorium on construction. The Calvert Farmland Trust is unique in the way it transfers land from farmer to farmer.

The trust's nonprofit status allows it to make offers below market because the difference can be considered a charitable contribution. That makes landowners eligible for tax breaks, enough to sometimes make selling to the trust as attractive as to a developer. The trust uses little upfront capital, relying instead on split-second timing. It lines up a buyer in advance, gets the development rights ready for sale, and then uses those two sources of money to transfer the farm through the trust to the farm owner almost simultaneously. The trust is building a \$250,000 revolving fund so it can purchase property as it becomes

available and without a buyer lined up in advance. It hopes to build its reputation so that landowners come to the trust before going to developers. The trust's founders donate their time, draw no salaries, and lead about 100 volunteers.

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Organizations and Contacts

- American Farmland Trust, 1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036, Ph: 202-331-7300, Fax: 202-659-8339, <http://www.farmland.org>
- Communities by Choice, 433 Chestnut Street, Berea, Kentucky 40403-1510, Ph: 877-671-3777, Fax: 859-986-1299, <http://www.CommunitiesbyChoice.org>
- Land Trust Alliance, 1331 H Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005, Ph: 202-638-4725, Fax: 202-638-4730, <http://www.lta.org>
- Joint Center for Sustainable Communities (National Association of Counties and U.S. Conference of Mayors) 440 1st Street, NW, Suite 800 Washington, DC, 20001
- Southern Rural Development Initiative, 128 E. Hargett Street, Suite 202, Raleigh NC, 27601, Ph: 919.829.5900, Fax: 919.829.0504, <http://www.srdi.org>
- Trust for Public Lands, 116 New Montgomery St., 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105, Ph: 415-495-4014 Fax: 415-495-4103, <http://www.tpl.org>

Streamlining Development Review

Development review refers to the daily administration and enforcement of the requirements – the zoning and subdivision ordinances, environmental health standards, building codes, and public policies – that define the location, type, size, density, mix, and site design of development. Development review is a cumulative process in which developer proposals are granted successive permits, and ultimately full project approval, when the project, as a whole, clearly meets all applicable regulations and standards.

In recent decades, development review has become increasingly complex and time-consuming. There are many reasons for this added complexity. Multiple agencies have been given permitting authority, with each agency having its procedural requirements and review process. Process length has grown due to legal and administrative rules requiring projects that are not permitted “by right” – projects that don’t conform to existing regulations – be issued a variance or a rezoning. As a result, developers and regulators are advocating for streamlining the review processes and layers of state and federal oversight.

The aim of streamlining is to reduce application review times and increase certainty and predictability in the permitting process – creating a customer or developer driven process. Streamlining lets developers move quickly from design to construction, thereby reducing

their project cost and, ideally, freeing up funds for site improvement and design. Streamlining helps regulators achieve public goals such as affordable housing, mixed use, and infill development leveraging developer desire for certainty and lower project costs. For the public sector, streamlining can be a powerful incentive in an era of local government competition for footloose development.

Streamlining is not an easy task and needs to be tailored to the local regulatory framework, development goals and resources. Following is a checklist of questions a community should consider as it streamlines.

Streamlining Checklist

(Adapted from Arimes George, “Performance Improvement in the Development Review System,” Proceedings of the 1998 APA Conference, Boston, MA. April 7, 1998)

Core Business Processes:

- Are the steps in the development review process integrated and efficient?
- Are communication mechanisms for the organizations’ staff, outside consultants, applicants, and the community structured to share information freely, manage projects effectively, and resolve conflicts as they occur?

Regulations and Support Documents:

- Are the regulations and ordinances that drive the review process understandable, objective and reasonable?

Technology:

- Do the tools available to people

provide accurate and real time information, support the tracking of projects, and assist in informed decision-making?

Physical Space:

- Does the physical environment reflect a user-friendly, project-oriented approach for customers and citizens to interact with the review process?

Organizational Structure:

- Is the organization structured to be cost-effective, provide appropriate resources to staff, and support an approach with accountability for performance?

For streamlining to be effective, changes made within a system must address root deficiencies and not symptoms. A new process should strive to increase the efficiency of development review, decrease resource demands, and achieve consensus in process design and administration from stakeholders-developers, public administrators, and the public. Streamlining can take place in several ways:

1. *Development by right:* Eliminating the need for developers to receive approval for a rezoning from the planning commission or city council enables staff to approve projects that meet established performance standards. However, removing commission approval would eliminate a vehicle for citizen/community input.
2. *Project management:* A single project manager is responsible for coordinating the review process. Focusing

responsibility in one place provides the customer a clear, demarcated point of entry into the review process and the assurance of assistance throughout the process. The efforts of the case manager are supported by an inter-agency team of staff who assist in application review, work with applicant prior to formal submittal to provide fee estimates, timelines, clarify submittal requirements and assess likelihood of project approval.

3. *Scorecard*: Development applications are assigned scores, based on how well they meet community policies and goals. Applications receiving scores above a threshold value are approved. Developments meeting or exceeding specific scores are given priority in review.
4. *Centralized permitting*: Creating a one-stop program enables applicants to access all agencies responsible for permitting in one location. Centralized permitting allows departments to concurrently review applications and issue specific permits as point of the approval process. The permit center coordinates, distributes, routes and re-consolidates application packages when ready for approval.
5. *Development checklist*: Applicants are provided a checklist of needed items and the expected duration of review time, by type of construction. Variations of the checklist may include addition of

construction plans for minor homeowner projects such as decks, sheds or retaining walls, allowing homeowners to forgo plan review as long as the project falls within the parameters of the construction plan.

6. *Public-private partnerships*: In situations where a public agency or agencies are working on multi-phased project with a private developer, partnerships allow joint resolution of code and inspection issues, concerns, and logistics.
7. *Education*: To improve the professionalism and efficiency of building inspections, several states have implemented education centers to train inspectors in the daily enforcement of state building codes. Variations on this strategy have included certifying private sector design professionals to review site plans before passing them on to county officials for priority review and approval.
8. *Fast-track or expedited processing*: Regulatory requirements are reduced for certain categories of construction projects –for example, projects where occupancy or emergency exits are not modified – thereby reducing review and permitting time. Variations include giving applicants the opportunity to meet with reviewers by appointment. Plans already completed and prepared in accordance with procedure are approved, often within a day's time.

9. *Technology*: Automated information retrieval and storage reduces the duration of the permitting process by providing quick access to permit records, maps, zoning ordinances and regulations. Technological improvements often complement other process changes.

10. *Customer meetings*: An optimal service to allow applicants to meet with reviewers to clarify concerns, identify potential application flaws during critical stages of the review process — pre-application, post-submission and pre-construction. A team of reviewers remains the same throughout the meetings.

Case in Point: San Diego, CA

San Diego is a leader in streamlining its development review process. Previously, the city had a permitting system that required applicants to deal with as many as seven departments. Applicants were “frustrated by contradictions and inconsistencies in the application of standards, turnaround delays, and the lack of a clear method to resolve disputes.” The city council formed an economic development task force, which concluded that the permitting process was a main reason why businesses left the city. In 1994, the city merged its planning division and building inspection department into a new development services department. That department

created project teams, with a project manager, to coordinate each development review. The customer is provided fee estimates, timelines, submittal requirements, and an assessment of the likelihood of approval before applying.

A central goal of "Process 2000," as the system is known, is to computerize the maps and data used by city departments, including permit information, infrastructure, zoning overlays, topographical maps, and aerial photographs. Each project is given a number in a Windows-based tracking system that can integrate geographic information with images. The data is available to staff on desktop computer, and much of it will be available on the Internet. Half of the system's \$13.2 million budget is for computers, and much of the rest is for digitizing information.

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Exemplary Community Design Practices

As local governments begin to address today's development challenges – traffic congestion, loss of natural areas, declining accessibility, lack of housing and transportation choice – one of the important decisions they will make is deciding on the physical form of their community. Should they continue to follow contemporary design principles calling for the construction of automobile-oriented, single-use, low-density development? Would it be more practical to adopt alternative models, such as neo-traditional or new urbanist which advocate compact, pedestrian- and transit-oriented, higher-density development? As they make this decision, local officials face increasing pressure from advocates on both sides. Proponents of contemporary patterns cite market preferences for lower densities and developer reluctance as reasons to tread present development paths. Opponents document environmental decline, loss of community, and social fragmentation as reasons for change.

Traditional/Standard Practice

Developments designed and built in the past several decades share a number of characteristics: they are generally low-density, auto-oriented, and segregated by use. Originally, Americans sought the suburbs to be close to wide-open spaces, away from urban problems such as crime and blight.

However, the very developments that many Americans have chosen to live in are threatening the assets they enjoy. Sprawling development is devouring

open space and farmland. As the cities expand, so does the abandoned center and its crime and blight.

Low-density, suburban development did not happen by accident. Many federal and local incentives helped to spur and support this type of development. Federal money paid for highways. Low-interest federal loans targeted for newly constructed suburban homes influenced location decisions for many looking to buy their own home. Today, those subsidies are rapidly diminishing and the cost of suburban living is rising.

Smart Growth Alternative Practice

Smart growth offers an alternative pattern — reconciling consumer preferences while resolving present development problems. Known also as “good design,” this pattern creates communities able to meet the demands of growth — increased housing, infrastructure and public services; reduced taxes; sustained economic prosperity and social cohesiveness — while preserving the environment and the community's quality of life. It does so by reconfiguring traditional design elements such as grid streets, the mix of uses and formal public and green space, so they retain their utility, make good business sense, and are consistent with consumer preferences.

Implementing good design presents a challenge for most communities. The challenge reflects the difficulty of creating guidelines that: 1) encourage the private sector to construct an attractive and well—designed built environment; 2) provide

developers the latitude to respond to market and site conditions; and 3) coordinate public policy to support good design.

Toolbox

Mix Land Uses — By mixing land uses — locating commercial, residential, and/or institutional use within the same development area or node — communities can reduce automobile use, increase accessibility of those unable to drive, and increase the value of nearby properties. Mixed-use centers concentrate commercial, transit and community uses within a quarter-mile of housing. Structures should be of a similar scale either through buffering or by architecturally compatible design.

Create Housing Diversity — Housing diversity — dwelling units of varying size, price, and occupancy intermingled in a single area — creates housing opportunities and choices for a range of household types, family sizes, and income levels. Housing diversity benefits developers by allowing them to simultaneously access several different markets within the same development. Developments with a mix of housing types have higher market value than homogeneous developments. Furthermore, housing diversity contributes to a diverse and vibrant community.

Cluster Development — Cluster developments are built at the same gross densities as conventional development but concentrate development on smaller lots in a portion of the property. This arrangement offers greater environmental, economic, and public benefits.

Cluster development yields the same number of units as conventional projects. Leaving undeveloped property as open space reduces the grading, infrastructure, and site preparation requirements – these efficiencies can reduce development costs by one third. Good design is necessary in cluster developments to preserve personal privacy. Clustering reduces energy costs, increases developer flexibility, provides more opportunities for community interaction and safety, permits more recreational space, and conserves resources.

Design Hybrid Streets – A mix of street patterns maintains a sense of community, increases efficiency, and preserves environmental features. Good design strives for street networks with multiple connections and relatively direct routing. Hybrid patterns employ both grids and curvilinear streets. Modified grid patterns maintain the traditional street patterns interspersed with short curved stretches to bypass areas of constraint and carry through traffic. Traffic speed is reduced by frequently altering the vertical or horizontal alignment of streets and keeping block size small.

Include Street-oriented Design – Streets are important for building communities. Buildings should enhance this community feeling. Building to the property line creates a consistent “edge” to the public space and makes streets more friendly and walkable. Resist blank-faced buildings – buildings with street-facing windows are much more inviting and link the outside and inside worlds.

Discourage parking in front of buildings except on the street. Parking should be placed in the back, at the side, or on the street – leaving the sidewalk as the territory of pedestrians.

Review Parking Requirements – Home builders across the country have complained that excessive parking requirements make good compact or infill development difficult. Local governments should review off-street parking requirements. Parking requirements may be excessive if transit options exist or the area is mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented. Including on-street parking in the required parking calculation can also reduce parking requirements. Reducing parking requirements enhances opportunities for compact development, preserves open space, and reduces impervious surfaces.

Ensure Transportation Choice – Local governments can encourage mode choice in urban design. Including transit stations in mixed-use nodes connects nodes through bus or rail and increases the accessibility and connectivity of residents to one another and services within the community and region. Encourage pedestrian activity by locating uses in close proximity and laying sidewalks along roadways between housing and job, shopping, and transit hubs. Buffer sidewalks from roadways with trees, vertical curbs, and clearances. On street parking can be used as a tool for traffic calming and as an alternative to large paved lots.

Provide Public Spaces – Social

interaction is furthered when residents have access to public spaces and buildings. Greens, plazas, and parks form the civic foci of neighborhoods. Sited in prominent, pedestrian-accessible locations, they are connected to or serve as the terminus of major streets. Community facilities – community centers, government offices, schools, places of worship – flanked by public spaces reinforce the importance of the public domain in community life.

Establish Design Review – Design review ensures that development projects serve public goals and ideals. It is a fairly straightforward process. Citizens evaluate developer projects against a set of criteria (similar to the planning board). Citizens have the opportunity to testify on the proposal. Based on the testimony and findings, projects meeting the criteria are approved for development; those that fall short are subject to refinement and design negotiation. Guidelines for review should be general rather than detailed, advisory not mandatory, and performance-based rather than prescriptive. Experts recommend that guidelines be consistent with the statutory authority and competence of the reviewer, devised outside of the negotiation process, and coupled with additional regulatory measures and such incentives as density bonuses to encourage developer compliance.

Secure Small Area Planning – Small area plans are developed for continuous areas – downtowns, commercial corridors, or historic districts – that would benefit from uniform design but are

governed by multiple zoning districts. The function of small area plans is to provide a framework for coordinating public improvements and design review and, when necessary, stimulating private investment through public action. Implementation of plans is accomplished through the creation of a separate zoning district for the area.

**Gary Hack's
"Ten Commandments
of Design Review"**
(adapted from <http://www.citycomforts.com>)

1. Thou shall not use design review as a substitute for rezoning or quick fix.
2. Thou shall not overreach.
3. Thou shall have standards: do not invent them as you go along.
4. Thou shall tell people in advance what you would like to see.
5. Thou shall editorialize – an inherent part of design review.
6. Thou shall have patrons – a core of supporters who stick with it over time.
7. Thou will be prepared to break the rules.
8. Thou will preserve the future as well as the past.
9. Thou will focus on more than creating beautiful buildings.
10. Thou will begin by identifying the icons and the aliens in a neighborhood.

Case in Point: Clackamas County, OR (Sunnyside Village)

Sunnyside Village, a 368-acre site within the City of Portland, was one of the nation's first "traditional neighborhood developments" (TND) initiated by a local government. The project originated from a 1991 regional growth conference that inspired the Clackamas County Board to secure 100 acres of underdeveloped land along an arterial road, on which to encourage a TND.

Initial planning funding came from the county, the state land office, the regional transit authority, the state transportation agency, and Pacific Gas and Electric. In 1995, a Federal Transit Administration Livable Communities Initiative grant and county matching funds allowed the purchase of two parcels and construction of a transit plaza and community center building.

The plan mixed uses within a compact, walkable setting: Apartments, townhouses, small-lot single-family residences, and professional offices surround a core of complementary retail and public services, as well as a transit stop. These land uses are concentrated within easy walking distance from the core (about 1/4 mile) and arranged so that pedestrians were not required to cross an arterial street. The site has 60 private landowners, so public participation was integral. A citizens' steering committee facilitated decision-making

and built community support. County officials met with property owners, public agencies, bankers, lenders, and real estate agents, conducted a marketing campaign, and held an open design contest for the project's housing.

Case in Point: Tucson, AZ (Civano)

Civano, a 1145-acre development three miles from downtown Tucson, accommodates over 6000 people, 2500 homes and apartments, light industry, offices, and retail. The project originated as a small, village-scale experiment in solar design. As the Arizona Energy Office backed funding for the planning and design, the planners expanded their idea to include energy and water conservation, solid waste reduction, and air pollution counter measures. The village became a much larger experiment in sustainability.

Civano has a village core, neighborhood shops, and community facilities. Half the population and two-thirds of the jobs are within a five-minute walk of the center. Streets are narrow and shaded. Buildings use passive solar design, including high-efficiency windows, walls, heating and cooling, and fixtures. Harvested and reclaimed "grey water" irrigates vegetation. An "eco-industrial park" creates economic activity that integrates human and environmental systems.

The regional energy commission and the city developed resource-efficient building codes and builder training programs to promote sustainable tech-

nology. Civano's success rests on its marketing plan, signing flagship companies, and implementing the Civano Institute and the Civano builder program.

Civano's initial costs are higher than conventional developments. However, substantial savings accrue over time because of the infrastructure and social efficiencies of the development. This income allows Civano to repay its \$3 million direct public investment in six years, a 23 percent annual rate of return. Savings from avoided infrastructure continue indefinitely, providing a net tax benefit to the city for many years.

Case in Point: City of Chattanooga/ Hamilton County, TN

Urban sprawl leaves behind not only abandoned downtown cores, but also bruised "first-ring suburbs" that first flourished then declined as economic vitality shifted further from downtown. The City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County governments have confronted this problem in the Eastgate Mall and the surrounding Brainerd community.

Once a thriving economic center, Eastgate was built in the early 1960s, during Chattanooga's first wave of urban sprawl. In the 1980s, Eastgate and its surrounding community began a long decline, as new suburbs and a larger mall opened a few miles away. By 1997, Eastgate was only 25 percent occupied. Surrounding property values fell, and the crime rate increased.

City and County officials met with representatives of the private sector to discuss measures to halt the area's rapid decline. The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency convened a stakeholder meeting to set the parameters for a planning study. Following a competitive round of proposals, an interdisciplinary consulting team was selected that included urban planning, retail planning, and traffic engineering professionals.

In January 1998, more than 300 neighbors, business owners, developers, elected officials, and staff participated in a seven-day design charrette. This collaboration culminated in the development of the *Eastgate Town Center Plan*. Finalized in April 1998, it is a blueprint for turning a 35-year old, 700,000-square foot artifact of urban sprawl into a new, thriving nucleus. Housing, retail, and office construction define a new street grid around the old mall structure. The plan integrates recreation facilities, green spaces, and a greenway with offices, retail businesses, and new housing in a design that looks and functions like a small town. Planned innovations in transportation include narrowing, instead of widening, major access streets and establishing the Town Center as the hub of an intermodal transfer system.

The Eastgate Town Center plan represents a sustainable reuse of both public and private infrastructure. It provides a model of redevelopment not dependent on new roads, sewers, and utilities. It was created with the extensive

public involvement that has become the hallmark of Chattanooga's revitalization and community planning processes.

The resulting Town Center exemplifies many of the principles of sustainable development. It utilized broad-based coalitions for planning and development. It encouraged open, inclusive decision-making. It was achieved through the cooperative support of local governments and communities throughout the region, including the metropolitan planning organization's transportation board of elected officials from Southeast Tennessee and North Georgia. The Town Center promotes efficient land use, reuses existing infrastructure, reduces sprawl, and promotes smart growth through redevelopment. The end result is a strong, diversified economy and the renaissance of a community.

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Organizations and Contacts

American Institute of Architects Center for Livable Communities, 1735 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20006, Ph: 800-242-3837, Fax: 202-626-7547, <http://www.aia.org/livable>

American Planning Association, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, Ph: 202-872-0611, <http://www.planning.org>

Center for Watershed Protection, 8391 Main Street, Ellicott City, MD 21043-4605, Ph: 410- 461-8323, Fax: 410-461-8324 <http://www.cwp.org/>

Congress for the New Urbanism, The Hearst Building, 5 Third Street, Suite 725, San Francisco, CA 94103, Ph: 415-495-2255, Fax: 415-495-1731, <http://www.cnu.org>

Joint Center for Sustainable Communities (National Association of Counties and U.S. Conference of Mayors) 440 1st Street, NW, Suite 800 Washington, DC 20001

Local Government Commission, 1414 K Street, Suite 250, Sacramento, CA 95814, Ph: 916-448-1198, <http://www.lgc.org>

Mayors Institute on City Design, 1620 I St NW # 307, Washington, DC 20006, Ph: 202-463-1390, Fax: 202-463-1392, <http://www.micd.org/>

National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, Phone 202/588-6219, <http://www.mainst.org>

ULI: The Urban Land Institute, 1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007, Ph: 202-624-7000, Fax: 202-624-7140, <http://www.uli.org>

