

Paul Beyer, Director of Smart Growth
Governor's Smart Growth Cabinet
Albany, NY

SMART GROWTH

Description:

"Smart Growth," defined simply, is good planning. The New York State Governor's Smart Growth Cabinet defines Smart Growth as sensible, planned, efficient growth that integrates economic development and job creation with a community's quality-of-life by preserving and enhancing the built and natural environments.

Smart Growth encourages growth in a developed area that has existing infrastructure to sustain it—for example, municipal centers, downtowns ("Main Streets"), urban cores, hamlets, historic districts, and older first-tier suburbs. It does not refer merely to one component of planning and development, but trends toward natural resources and energy conservation and preservation through the consideration of those factors in various planning and development activities.

Some of the specific Smart Growth tools used to carry out these goals on the local level include:

- Compact, conservation-oriented and transit-oriented development;
- Strategic preservation of farmland and open space;
- Historic preservation;
- Brownfield clean-up and re-development;
- Re-use of vacant property;
- Regional and inter-municipal land use and transportation planning;
- Revitalization of existing developed and mixed-use areas;
- "Green" buildings and infrastructure;
- Varied transportation and mobility choices, including walking, biking, small-motor vehicles, and public transit;
- Mixed-use land areas;
- Age-, income-, and ethnically integrated communities;
- Targeted investments in affordable housing;
- Collaborative, public, inclusive, and stakeholder-driven planning processes;

- Accessible, well-planned, and well-maintained public spaces.

Most of these elements are fundamental qualities of desirable age-integrated communities.

Benefits:

- Smart Growth combines many elements of livable community design—balancing economic, environmental, and social needs.

Impediments or barriers to development or implementation:

- Those who are unfamiliar with the goals and benefits of "Smart Growth" planning and development may misperceive this approach as "no growth" or "slow growth."
- Some individuals may not understand or adhere to the principles underlying successful Smart Growth and may simply view it as an opportunity for more development.

Resource—examples and ordinances:

- Steve Tracy (2003), *Smart Growth Zoning Codes: A Resource Guide*. Sacramento, CA: Local Government Commission (LGC). To purchase for \$20 from the LGC Bookstore:
http://www.lgc.org/freepub/community_design/guides/smart_codes.html.
- Marya Morris (2009), *Smart Codes: Model Land Development Regulations*. Chicago, IL: American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service.
<http://www.planning.org/apastore/search/default.aspx?p=3960>.
- Kristen Forsyth (2001), *Smart Neighborhoods: Managing Maryland's Growth (The Smart Growth Areas Act of 1997)*. Baltimore, MD: Maryland State Department of Planning.
<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/PDF/OurProducts/Publications/ModelsGuidelines/smartneighborhoods.pdf>.
- "Examples of Codes That Support Smart Growth Development," *Smart Growth*. Washington, DC: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.
www.epa.gov/livablecommunities/codeexamples.htm.
- Brian Ross, et al. (2000), *From Policy to Reality: Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Planning, Environmental Quality Board. (Includes Transfer of Development Rights, Conservation-Oriented Development/Cluster Zoning, New Urbanism, Town Centers, Planned Unit Developments/Neighborhood Residential Districts, Street Standards, and more.) <http://www.gda.state.mn.us/pdf/2000/eqb/ModelOrdWhole.pdf>.
http://www.nextstep.state.mn.us/res_detail.cfm?ID=163.
- U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (on line, 2011), *Aging Initiative*, "Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging Awards"— The principal goal of

the awards program is to raise awareness across the nation about healthy synergies that can be achieved when communities combine and implement the principles of smart growth with the concepts of active aging. Applicants are evaluated based on the overall effectiveness of their programs, level of community involvement and outreach, use of innovative approaches, and overall environmental and health benefits of the project.

Description of the four 2010 award-winning projects and three prior award-winning projects, including contact information:

<http://www.epa.gov/aging/bhc/awards/2010/index.html>.

"What is Smart Growth" and "Smart Growth Principles":

<http://www.epa.gov/aging/bhc/awards/2010/index.html#smartgrowth>.

Resource—written and web:

- New York State Department of State, Office of Communities and Waterfronts:
<http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/>.
 - Smart Growth Grants Program— program information and descriptions of smart growth projects that focus on economic, community and environmental issue to improve both local economies and the environment:
http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/grantOpportunities/epf_smartgrowthGrants.html.
- Andres Duany, Jeff Speck, and Mike Lydon (2009), *The Smart Growth Manual*. Columbus, OH: McGraw Hill. The authors have organized the latest contributions of new urbanism, green design, and healthy communities into a comprehensive handbook of good planning, fully illustrated with the built work of the nation's leading practitioners, and addressing the pressing challenges of urban development with easy-to-follow advice and broad array of best practices.
- (March, 2011), *Building for the 21st Century: American Support for Sustainable Communities*; a national opinion survey of 1,200 Americans (calibrated to mirror current U.S. Census estimates for age, race, income, gender, and region) conducted in late 2010 by Collective Strength and reviewed by Harris Interactive for Smart Growth America, 1707 L Street NW, Washington, DC, 20036, 202-207-3355. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/building-for-the-21st-century.pdf>.
- Deborah Howe (2001), *Aging and Smart Growth: Building Aging-Sensitive Communities*. Miami, FL: Collins Center for Public Policy, Inc., Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities.
- (On-line, last updated July, 2010), *Growing Smarter, Living Healthier: A Guide to Smart Growth and Active Aging*. Washington, DC: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/aging/bhc/guide/index.html>.
- Doug Wilhelm, Report Editor (October, 2003), *The Models Projects: The Report of a Partnership Project for Achieving Smart Growth in Commercial and*

Industrial Development. Burlington, VT: Vermont Forum on Sprawl; South Burlington, VT: Vermont Business Roundtable.
<http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/fileadmin/files/publications/NewModels.pdf>.

- "Summary of Smart Growth Policies and Legislation," *Smart Growth Vermont*, Burlington, VT: www.smartgrowthvermont.org/help/policies/.
- (July 1, 2007), "Smart Growth Progress Report—A Smart Growth Check Up," *On Common Ground*, (Realtor and Smart Growth Newsletter), Vol.: Summer, 2007, National Association of Realtors.
<http://archive.realtor.org/sites/default/files/ocgsummer07.pdf>.
- *Empire State Future: Realizing the Principles of Smart Growth in New York State*—New York State's statewide coalition of 39 member organizations that is leading the citizen effort to improve New York's economic and civic potential through Smart Growth. <http://www.empirestatefuture.org>.
- *Understanding Smart Growth.* A series of articles reprinted from the *Planning Commissioners Journal*. Burlington, VT: *Planning Commissioners Journal: City and Regional Planning Resources*. <http://www.plannersweb.com/smart.html>. *Planning Commissioners Journal*: <http://www.pcj.typepad.com/>.