

About Smart Growth

In communities across the nation, there is a growing concern that current development patterns -- dominated by what some call "sprawl" -- are no longer in the long-term interest of our cities, existing suburbs, small towns, rural communities, or wilderness areas. Though supportive of growth, communities are questioning the economic costs of abandoning infrastructure in the city, only to rebuild it further out.

Spurring the smart growth movement are demographic shifts, a strong environmental ethic, increased fiscal concerns, and more nuanced views of growth. The result is both a new demand and a new opportunity for smart growth.

The features that distinguish smart growth in a community vary from place to place. In general, smart growth invests time, attention, and resources in restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. New smart growth is more town-centered, is transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also preserves open space and many other environmental amenities.

The Smart Growth Principles and Issues below describe in greater details the various aspects of planning and development that make up smart growth.

Source: Smart Growth Online, <http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/default.asp?res=1280>

Smart Growth Principles	Smart Growth Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices• Create Walkable Neighborhoods• Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration• Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place• Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective• Mix Land Uses• Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas• Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices• Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities• Take Advantage of Compact Building Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Quality of Life• Design• Economics• Environment• Health• Housing• Transportation