

Smart Growth

Packet Synopsis

Where population growth is occurring or anticipated and where economic growth is occurring or anticipated to occur, the expanded need for land to accommodate this growth is a “given”. It is unrealistic to expect that the population of the United States as of the 2000 decennial census of 289,421,906 would be able to fit into the same land area as the population of 132,164,569 per the 1950 decennial census occupied. Land use to accommodate the socio-economic needs of we humans thus has had to increase as populations increase. What has been occurring however is that our increase in our developed area has often been exponentially greater than our population growth.

Applying **smart growth** principals is seen as a means to control land use sprawl and it most certainly is a concept that is helpful in controlling land use sprawl. But **smart growth** is more than a just a tool to control sprawl, it is a concept for good, efficient and effective governance and community land use, whether sprawl is a concern or not. **Smart growth** could just as well be called **common sense growth**.

In some of the information presented, the term Metropolitan Area is used. As defined by the US Census, the general concept of an MA is that of a core area containing a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core.

The Minnesota community that is being challenged by growth – having to accommodate more people – is really fortunate. There are Minnesota communities that are facing the challenges of declining growth and even stagnant growth. Dealing with these challenges can well require more civic imagination than dealing with growth.

The items that have been selected for this packet are not just “how to” or “why to” but also try to shed some light on impacts of growth.

“Smart Growth Background”, Maryland Department of Planning, Annapolis, MD, April 2003 – presents the “four straightforward goals” of **smart growth** in and for Maryland. It also lists the guiding principles for new development, infill development and redevelopment. Although uniquely developed for Maryland, the goals and principles are universally applicable.

“Smart Growth: Myth and Fact”, Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC, 1999 – simply lists, side by side, eight myths regarding **smart growth** and what **smart growth** actually is and represents in practice.

“The Ahwahnee Principles” – are a set of principles developed by a group of American community planners to serve as benchmarks against which a community can judge its community planning and land use programs and actions. The Principles are subdivided in 15 local governance principles and four principles addressing regional issues. Of special

importance is its implementation strategy which essentially is that communities must be proactive and their planning and their planning must be community based.

“Growing Smart in Minnesota”, *Office of the Governor*, State of Minnesota – were a set of goals, principles and strategies outlined by the Ventura administration. The stated Goals, Principles for Success and Implementation Strategies do define what **smart growth** is about and in a Minnesota perspective. They are still a good description of what **smart growth** is and how it can work.

“Stopping Sprawl by Growing Smarter”, McMahon, Edward T., *Planning Commissioners Journal*, Number 26, Spring 1997, Burlington, VT. – identifies three results of sprawl: 1. loss of green space, 2. urban disinvestment, and 3. fiscal folly and debunks four myths: 1. interference with free markets, 2. unwarranted interference with property rights, 3. loss of local control and 4. development itself is the problem. A sidebar also lists several resources on sprawl and its alternatives.

“Population Growth and Sprawl in Minnesota”, Kolankiewicz, Leon and Roy Beck, *Sprawl City*, <http://www.sprawlcity.org> – uses U S Census data to evaluate the impacts of population growth on land use in three of Minnesota’s four MSUs or MAs. Interestingly in the 1970-1980 decennial, land consumption was about equally related between population growth and sprawl. In the 1980-1990 decennial, land use consumption was essentially due to population growth. The Duluth-Superior MSA significantly lost population during these twenty years, thus the anomaly. That population growth has occasioned 100% of land use consumption during 1980-1990 can well reflect Minnesota’s concerns with good land use planning through such tools as the Metropolitan Council and other voluntary local regional efforts.

“Main Street: When a Highway runs through It”, Oliver, Gordon, March 2002 and “Above and Beyond”, Campoli, Julie, Elizabeth Humstone and Alex MacLean, October 2002, *Planning*, American Planning Association, Chicago, IL – are two articles expressly addressing **smart growth** issues that frequently face smaller communities, the main highway or thoroughfare or highway running through the community and dealing with the automobile. They post no solutions, but they do give ideas and examples of the application of the concept of **smart growth**.

“Bring Sprawl to Life”, Sostek, Anna, *Congressional Quarterly*, Washington, DC, 2001 – describes how the use of the new tool of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) can be used to model a community’s growth over time (historic). It describes the use of GIS by the Twin Cities Metropolitan Council in this manner in public presentations. GIS can also be used to develop or model various future scenarios and thus can be a very effective tool for **smart growth** planning.

FYI: The Local Planning Assistance Division of the Minnesota Department of Administration (formerly Minnesota Planning/Local Planning Assistance) has developed a “user friendly” GIS software program entitled “Planning Places with GIS” which Minnesota communities can use for modeling land use plans and community build-out scenarios which is available at no charge to Minnesota cities, town and counties.

INTERLIBRARY LOANS MATERIALS

The following on **smart growth** can be borrowed via MnLINK.

Getting to Smart Growth: Reinvestment Tools and Best Practices., Metropolitan Council, St. Paul, MN, 2002. Electronic Access: URL:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/landuse/reinvest%5Ftool.pdf>

Making Smart Growth Work, Porter, Douglas R., Robert T. Dunphy, David Salvesen. Urban Land Institute, Washington, D.C., 2002.

Smarter Growth: Market-based Strategies for Land-use Planning in the 21st Century. Holcombe, Randall G. and Samuel R. Staley. Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn. 2001.

Best Development Practices: A Primer for Smart Growth, Ewing, Reid; with Robert Hodder. Smart Growth Network: International City/County Management Association, Washington, D.C., 1998.

Growing Smart in Minnesota: A Preliminary Report, Elkins, Scott and Kim Hiller, 1000 Friends of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn., 1999.

Planning for Smart Growth : A Survey of State Planning Reforms and Smart Growth Measures in order to Manage Growth and Development, Smart Growth Network; American Planning Association, Washington, DC, 2002 Electronic Access: URL:
<http://c1.planning.org/growingsmart/pdf/states2002.pdf>

America's Downtowns: Growth, Politics and Preservation, Collins, Richard C. Elizabeth B. Waters, A. Bruce Dotson, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Press, Washington, D.C., 1991.

LEGAL NOTES

No specific references to **smart growth** are found in Minnesota Statutes or in Minnesota Rules.

The various Minnesota Statutes authorizing local governments to engage in land use planning and land use control do not micro-manage and so local units of government are quite free to adopt their own methodologies in working out their land use plans.

May 7, 2003

Congressional Quarterly, Inc
1255 22nd Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Sirs:

Minnesota's Department of Administration and its Local Planning Assistance Center has prepared a number of "information packets" on specific land use planning and zoning topics for disseminating to our Local Units of Government inquiring about the same. The packets are not intended to be the definitive "bibles" on the packet topic but rather a basic response to help define and provide basic background to assist a community to focus and define its specific concern.

The packet materials have been selected from the wider literature because they, in our judgment, concisely make good points and help define the topic for our consumer, principally our non-metro area townships, cities and counties.

We are developing an informational packet on **Smart Growth**. We are seeking your permission to reprint and include in this packet

Bringing Sprawl to Life, Anya Sosteck, *Governing Magazine*, December 2001.

A copy of the **Smart Growth** packet summary is enclosed for your information.

No charge is made to the recipients of our packets, who are local planning staff, planning commission members, LGU officials and citizen members of appointed planning groups, and recipients are instructed that the materials enclosed are not for resale.

Sincerely,

John LaVine
Local Planning Assistance
Attachment as stated

May 7, 2003

American Planning Association
122 South Michigan Ave Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60603

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