



Issue Brief

The American Institute of Architects • Government Advocacy • Current Issue Position and Analysis

Smart Growth Examples:

- *Nevada passed legislation in 2005 that encourages mixed-use, transit-oriented, and environmentally friendly development.*
- *Delaware's program, Livable Delaware, set a strategy to curb sprawl and direct growth to areas of the state with existing infrastructure and adequate planning.*
- *Arlington, Va., received the EPA's first national smart-growth award in 2002 for its development of the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor. This corridor includes mixed-use residential, retail, and recreational development around five Metro transit stations.*
- *Louisiana established the Neighborhood Enhancement Program in 2004. It focuses on revitalization strategies for distressed, central downtown districts.*
- *Davidson, N.C., won the EPA's smart-growth award in 2004. This community adopted a planning ordinance in 2001 and requires intensive, collaborative design sessions for every new development project.*

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Smart-Growth: Building Livable Communities

AIA Position

The AIA supports smart growth. The AIA believes that smart, mixed-use development, including residential, commercial, retail, and municipal buildings within close proximity of one another, cuts down on automobile use, saves energy and promotes walkable, healthy, well-designed neighborhoods.

Action Sought

The AIA urges state legislators and local government officials to support legislation that promotes smart-growth development. Successful state and local programs exist across the country. These programs preserve urban centers, promote managed growth, decrease congestion and sprawl, enhance neighborhood identity, and support outstanding architecture.

Explanation and Justification

State and local officials across the country are responding to citizen requests for smarter growth. They're passing pushing initiatives that create environmentally sensitive, pedestrian friendly, livable communities.

On the local level, incentive zoning programs have worked particularly well. These plans can include initiatives such as bonus density programs, form based codes, and tax credits in return for focused development within cities and towns. By focusing development in areas with pre-existing infrastructure it also saves local governments money and protects the environment. Arlington, Va., successfully used incentive zoning to focus development in its Rosslyn-Ballston transportation corridor, resulting in over 21 million square feet of retail, office, and commercial space, more than 3,000 hotel rooms, and over 22,000 residential units. These "urban villages" encourage people to live, shop, play, and work in their immediate community and to travel using multiple modes of transportation.

Mixed-use, smart-growth development protects open space and the environment by reducing sprawl and environmental problems, including surface water run-off and carbon dioxide emissions. Smart-growth development supports vital public transportation systems and affordable housing, through the promotion of mixed income neighborhoods. The creation of diverse, attractive, walkable neighborhoods furthers the AIA's goals of livable communities. The AIA's 10 principles for livable communities provide the foundation to create economically viable, healthy, sustainable communities:

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| 1. Design on a Human Scale | 6. Build Vibrant Public Spaces |
| 2. Provide Choices | 7. Create a Neighborhood Identity |
| 3. Encourage Mixed-Use Development | 8. Protect Environmental Resources |
| 4. Preserve Urban Centers | 9. Conserve Landscapes |
| 5. Vary Transportation Options | 10. Design Matters |

For more information on the AIA's Center for Communities by Design and the 10 of Livable Communities, go to the Web at: www.aia.org/liv_principles

For more information contact the State and Local Affairs team at 202-626-7507 or govaffs@aia.org.