



National Association of Conservation Districts

Smart Growth

NATIONAL

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Smart Growth

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth

“Smart growth” covers a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect our natural environment while making our communities more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse. The Smart Growth Program, offered through EPA’s national Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, helps communities improve their development practices and get the type of development they want. This includes deciding where to grow as well as what lands to protect or restore. The program works with local, state, and national experts to define and encourage successful, environmentally sensitive development strategies. The program conducts applied research; publishes reports; showcases the smart growth achievements of outstanding communities; works directly with states and communities through grants and technical assistance; and brings together diverse interests to encourage better growth and development.

For a listing of free smart growth publications available through EPA, check this website: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/publications.htm.

The EPA Smart Growth Program sometimes offers competitive grants to support activities and policy development related to smart growth. Grant offerings are always announced on the program’s website (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth) and on the federal grants site: www.grants.gov.

The Smart Growth Program also provides direct technical assistance for localities and states interested in smart growth implementation. Requests for applications are announced about once a year, depending on the availability of funds. Details are posted at www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm#apply.

Several EPA Regions also provide related assistance. For links to their sites, see www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/links.htm#epa.

STATE

State Smart Growth Programs

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/links.htm#state

A number of states offer smart growth programs and assistance, including Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, California and Oregon. Check the EPA link above for a full list and follow up with your Governor’s office.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Smart Growth Network (SGN) and Smart Growth Online

www.smartgrowth.org

The SGN is a diverse coalition of business, civic, and environmental leadership organizations working to encourage smart growth. A core committee of “partner” organizations leads SGN. The SGN website provides extensive information resources as well as links to each of the SGN partner organizations. All of them offer resources related to smart growth. In addition, SGN offers a free membership program administered by the International City and County Management Association (ICMA). Membership provides access to an electronic newsletter, an information hotline/query service, and additional information resources. You can sign up for membership at <http://icma.org/sgn/join.cfm>.

The New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

www.NewPartners.org

The Local Government Commission offers an annual smart growth conference. Supported by a wide array of health, business, conservation, environmental, and governmental organizations, the conference provides hands-on workshops, tours, and presentations addressing all aspects of smart growth.

Smart Growth Leadership Institute

www.sgli.org

The Smart Growth Leadership Institute, a project of SGN partner Smart Growth America, is dedicated to helping state and local elected, civic and business leaders design and implement effective land use strategies to successfully leverage expected growth.

GETTING YOUR DISTRICTS INVOLVED

- ✓ Check the EPA website to see if your state has a smart growth program. If so, visit with the Director to learn more about their activities, resources and how districts can get involved.
- ✓ Work with your state and EPA to educate your districts about smart growth principles, resources, and how these complement their conservation goals and services.
- ✓ Help your districts educate key decision-makers and others about smart growth principles and why they are important to conservation.
- ✓ Encourage district employees to become members of the Smart Growth Network and to get training in smart growth approaches (and become a member yourself).
- ✓ Attend the annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference and encourage district employees to do the same. This is an excellent venue for obtaining information and training on smart growth.