

SMART GROWTH SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES: MADISON COUNTY, NEW YORK

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Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

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Executive Summary

Rural communities cover much of the United States, but often grow at a slower rate than metropolitan areas. Smart growth approaches to development can help these places strengthen their economies while protecting their environment and residents' health. For example, encouraging compact development allows people to drive less if they choose, reducing air pollution, while helping to maintain a vibrant, walkable downtown. Rural communities also see smart growth approaches as a way to compete for knowledge- and innovation-based workers by helping to create lively places with amenities that attract skilled workers.

Madison County, New York, faces many of the same challenges as other rural communities around the country: development encroaching on working farmlands and scenic areas, an aging population with increasing health problems, and slow or no population growth. In addition, the county's local governments have widely varying levels of staff and technical capacity and could improve policy coordination. About half of Madison County's municipalities have no comprehensive plans, and many have no zoning ordinance or planning board.

In 2012, Madison County asked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Sustainable Communities (OSC) for help developing a smart growth self-assessment tool for rural communities that helps local governments evaluate how well their policies and regulations support the type of development they want and identify strategies for improvement. EPA tested the tool in three rural communities in Madison County—the small city of Oneida, the town of Brookfield and the village of Chittenango.

Although EPA designed the tool in collaboration with Madison County, any rural community can use the self-assessment. It focuses on issues that are unique to rural areas while acknowledging that rural communities are diverse. For example, some rural places have full-time planning staff, while others have limited regulatory systems and implementation capacity.

The smart growth self-assessment tool for rural communities is divided into sections based on topics, or "goal areas," including:

- Revitalize village and town centers.
- Strengthen the local economy.
- Engage and connect community members.
- Improve health and promote active living.
- Protect natural habitats and ecosystems.
- Support productive agriculture for a variety of markets.
- Meet housing needs for different ages and incomes.
- Preserve historic and cultural resources.
- Provide transportation choices.
- Invest in efficient public infrastructure systems and operations.
- Use energy efficiently and provide renewable energy.

Each section includes a series of questions about the community’s policies, codes, and strategies that might help the community achieve its long-term objectives. Following the questions are strategies, grouped according to whether they apply to larger towns or more rural areas, which support the overall goal. The tool also helps users prioritize strategies to pursue. It includes links to case studies, sample code language, and other resources.

In addition to the self-assessment tool, the document includes a case study of smart growth planning in Dryden, New York. Dryden, a town of 15,000 residents, used various smart growth approaches to increase housing choices and address the loss of agricultural land after much of its growth in the latter half of the 1900s occurred in undeveloped areas outside the town centers. Dryden illustrates several strategies like those explored in the self-assessment tool that can help rural local governments achieve a wide range of community goals.

1) Introduction

Madison County, New York, requested assistance from EPA in 2012 to develop a smart growth self-assessment that its rural towns and villages could use to examine their development practices and adopt new policies and codes that support smart growth. Aware of the national demand for such a self-assessment, EPA selected Madison County for assistance through its Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program.¹ EPA worked with a team of contractors and local officials in Madison County to develop the Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities tool, provided in the appendices of this report.

EPA and Madison County tested the draft Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities through a three-day workshop in 2013. The workshop included meetings with the county's Board of Health and officials from the small city of Oneida, the town of Brookfield and the village of Chittenango, where the self-assessment was tested. Oneida is a small city in a rural county, Chittenango is a small village of about 5,000 people that attracts some commuters to the nearby Syracuse metropolitan area, and Brookfield is a largely agrarian and isolated town. The communities that helped test the self-assessment reflect the diversity of small cities and towns across rural America.

While EPA developed the tool in response to Madison County's request, it is applicable to many types of rural communities throughout the United States.

2) The Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

The Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities fills a gap among existing tools that help communities assess whether their plans, land use regulations, policies, and programs support smart growth development. Many of the existing smart growth self-assessment tools are designed for urban and suburban locations, and focus on issues that are often not applicable to rural communities nor tailored to rural development contexts.

This tool focuses on the needs of rural areas. Divided into 11 topic areas, it can help local and regional staff and elected officials assess how well their plans, policies, and programs support their goals for development, and identify potential land use and development-related policy changes that can support the economic, environmental, health, and fiscal well-being of rural communities. The tool also helps local officials assess their development codes, such as their zoning and subdivision ordinances, and their local programs and policies. Additionally, the self-assessment includes policies and programs that small cities and towns in rural areas that lack zoning and subdivision ordinances can use, as well as strategies to encourage economic development and enhance quality of life in communities that are not growing.

The self-assessment recognizes the diversity of rural communities. Smart growth policies are not "one size fits all." A small city with nearly 10,000 people is likely to have more planning and implementation capacity, and be concerned with a broader array of issues, than a village with less than 500 people. The tool helps a user identify whether a policy is applicable to a specific geographic area—a small city, a town,

¹ See Appendix A for more information on the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program.

a village, or a rural area outside of towns and villages. With the tool's 11 self-assessment topics, users can also focus on policy areas that are most important to their communities. However, many smart growth policies can achieve multiple goals, and communities are encouraged to think holistically when they use the self-assessment. This report provides more detailed instructions for how to use the tool.

3) The Rural & Small Town Context

Working lands and open space are important elements of rural areas and small towns. Rural areas are home to only about 19 percent of the U.S. population² but cover the vast majority of its landscape.³ Communities in rural areas have historically depended on their lands—including farmland, rangelands, and working forests—for their economic well-being. Preserving the productive use of these lands is very important for rural communities. However, the number of people needed to work these lands has declined steadily for several decades as new technologies have replaced manual labor. As a result, rural communities are often growing more slowly than metropolitan areas. The manufacturing sector, which is also important to many rural economies, has also seen large job losses. These job losses have led many young adults to move from rural areas to metropolitan areas in search of employment opportunities.

Some small cities and towns in rural areas are using smart growth approaches to development to slow or reverse these economic and migration trends while improving their environments. A clean environment is often essential to rural economies, as many rely on farming, timber, energy resources, and outdoor recreation. Smart growth practices protect environmental resources by directing development to existing town centers, creating a strong core that can spark new growth while reducing development pressure on outlying natural areas and farmland. Smart growth principles encourage compact development, which uses land more efficiently and makes it easier for people to get around by walking, biking, or driving shorter distances, which reduces air pollution from vehicles. Compact development can also reduce impervious surfaces that can harm water quality by letting rainfall collect pollutants and debris and run off into water bodies.

Smart growth approaches can also help small and rural communities position themselves to be economically successful by creating places where people want to live. Many rural communities are working to diversify their economies, develop industry clusters that take advantage of local assets, and attract and grow the knowledge- and innovation-based businesses that are becoming more important to the national economy. Improvements in communication technology allow small cities and towns in rural areas to compete for workers and jobs in the knowledge-based industries, as workers can more easily work remotely from anywhere. Today, it is easier for people to choose where they will live, work, or start a business based on a community's amenities rather than proximity to other metropolitan centers.

² U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 Census Urban and Rural Classification and Urban Area Criteria. <https://www.census.gov/geo/reference/ua/urban-rural-2010.html>. Accessed Mar. 27, 2015.

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Population and Migration. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/population-migration.aspx>. Accessed Mar. 27, 2015.

Communities that emphasize vibrant and walkable neighborhoods and downtowns, and a strong sense of place, have an advantage in attracting and retaining a modern workforce and employers.⁴

Smart growth approaches to development can also help rural communities use their limited budgets more effectively. For example, smart growth strategies focus development in areas that have existing infrastructure, which uses previous investments in roads and utilities more efficiently. Decreased need for additional water and sewer infrastructure can also reduce the financial burden on governments that provide these services.⁵

Health is another major concern in rural communities. Less than half of Americans meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommendation for physical activity.⁶ Creating compact, walkable, and bikeable communities makes it easier for people to work physical activity into their daily lives. Putting a mix of uses close together—for example, putting homes near schools, parks, stores, and workplaces—lets people walk or bike to their daily destinations if they choose. That freedom is particularly important to those who cannot or do not drive—for example, children, older adults, those who cannot afford a car, or those who simply prefer not to drive. By increasing the amount of walking and biking, rural communities can also cut down the amount of air pollution caused by vehicle travel. These types of accessible neighborhoods can also build social capital, which is the sense of community that comes from residents knowing the people around them and feeling connected to where they live.⁷

4) The Madison County Context

Madison County, New York, faces many of the same challenges and opportunities as other rural communities across the country. One of the county’s biggest challenges is the spread of development into rural areas. Since 1980, the vast majority of new growth in the county has been outside of the historic city and village population centers. To protect its farmland and scenic vistas, and take advantage of the existing infrastructure in its already-developed areas, the county has developed a vision for its future—and a strategy for implementing that vision—that incorporates smart growth principles.

a) Background and Trends

Madison County is in central New York state, about 25 miles southeast of Syracuse, New York. The northern portion of the county includes the relatively flat Oneida Lake Plain, while the southern portion is home to the Appalachian Uplands, the edge of the Appalachian mountain range. Population and jobs are concentrated in the lake plain, which is home to the two largest villages, Chittenango and Canastota, and its lone city, Oneida. The rural parts of the county are home to many of its farms, which are an

⁴ For more information on how smart growth strategies can help businesses attract and retain employees, see: EPA. *Smart Growth and Economic Success: The Business Case*. 2013. <http://www2.epa.gov/smart-growth/smart-growth-and-economic-success-business-case>.

⁵ For more information on how smart growth strategies can help local governments improve their fiscal health, see: EPA. *Smart Growth and Economic Success: Strategies for Local Governments*. 2014. <http://www2.epa.gov/smart-growth/smart-growth-and-economic-success-strategies-local-governments>.

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Exercise of Physical Activity. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/exercise.htm>. Accessed Mar. 27, 2015.

⁷ For more information on the health benefits of smart growth development, see: EPA. *Our Built and Natural Environments* (2nd edition). 2013. <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/built.htm>.

important part of the region’s economy and culture. The county’s most fertile soils, and therefore many of its farms, are in the northern lake plain and the valleys of the southern uplands.

Nearly 77,500 people live in Madison County. All of the county’s residents live in one of 26 municipalities or on the Oneida Indian Nation reservation. The 26 municipalities include one small city, 15 towns, and 10 villages. New York state divides its land into towns, except for land in cities and Indian reservations. The state grants cities, villages, and towns home rule privileges under the New York State Constitution, which gives these jurisdictions broad authority to control land use within their boundaries.⁸ Counties and regional planning agencies are, therefore, typically limited to advising or coordinating with municipalities on planning issues.⁹

The distinction between villages and towns is important. Villages are smaller municipalities within towns that often have their own governments. However, villages are also part of the surrounding town and their residents pay taxes to and receive services from both the village and the town. Villages typically offer better and more targeted public services than the surrounding town. Villages also determine their own zoning.

Five of Madison County’s villages and one of its towns have fewer than 1,000 residents, while the city of Oneida and the town of Sullivan are both home to over 10,000 people. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of Madison County grew 6 percent from 2000 to 2010. This placed it sixth among New York’s 62 counties for population growth during that decade.

During the 1980s, there was an even division in the county’s population between sparsely populated, rural towns and the historic population centers—the county’s many villages and the city of Oneida. In the past 30 years, however, more than 80 percent of Madison County’s population has moved towards rural areas, which lack services, amenities and infrastructure. The slow population growth of towns indicates that much of the county’s new development is outside of the historical population centers.¹⁰ In 2005, to protect its farmland and open space, the county developed the Madison County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.

Madison County’s population is aging faster than the national rate. Madison County’s median age is 39.5, which is higher than the median age for New York state (38) and the United States as a whole

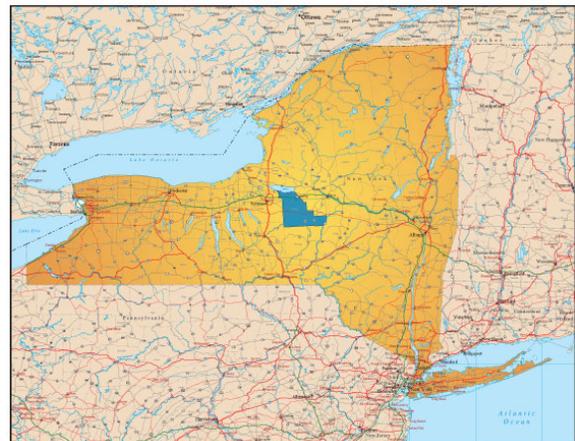


Photo credit: Madison County IDA

Figure 1: Location of Madison County in New York.

⁸ Home rule” means that local governments can take actions, such as establishing ordinances regarding land use regulation, without seeking permission from their state legislature.

⁹ State of New York, Department of State. *Local Government Handbook*. 2009. <http://www.dos.ny.gov/lg>.

¹⁰ Madison County. *A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth*. 2011.

(37.2). Like many rural communities, the loss of young adults partly explains the increasing median age. People between the ages of 25 and 39 made up 19.4 percent of the county in 2000. That figure declined to just 15 percent in 2010. In contrast, the nation as a whole has about 20 percent of its population between the ages of 25 and 39.¹¹ Meanwhile, people 65 and older are increasing as a share of the county's population. They made up about 14 percent of the population in 2010 compared to 12.5 percent in 2000. As a result, the county is looking for strategies that will allow people to age in place, while also attracting and retaining young adults.

Health trends in Madison County also reflect concerns common in many rural communities, with obesity, heart disease, asthma, cancer, and diabetes continuing to climb at high rates. More than 56 percent of Madison County's adults are overweight. The county's rates of heart disease, asthma, breast cancer, and colorectal cancer all exceed state and national averages, and more than 7 percent of residents report having diabetes.¹² The county recognizes that smart growth strategies, such as creating walkable communities, open space and recreational areas, are part of the solution to these challenges.

b) Economic Context

Agriculture has always been important to Madison County's economy. Today, however, the advancing age of farmers, many of whom are near retirement, threatens that industry. The age of the average farmer in the county was 55.5 in 2012. Meanwhile, the number of farms increased from 744 in 2007 to 838 in 2012. The county's farms cover 187,496 acres, which is nearly 45 percent of its total land area, and produced more than \$117 million worth of products in 2012.¹³ The county's high average farmer age, combined with an increase in the number of farms and farm sales, make attracting and training the next generation of farmers a critical need.

Manufacturing, higher education, and health care are also key pillars of Madison County's economy. Many of the county's manufacturing jobs, such as dairy processing, relate to agriculture. Meanwhile, Colgate University, Cazenovia College, and Morrisville State College contribute to the county's reputation as a hub of higher education. Colgate is the county's largest employer, Morrisville State



Figure 2: Wind Farm in Madison County.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Madison County MAPP Committee. *Health Improvement Planning Report for Madison County*. Oct. 2009.

¹³ U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Census of Agriculture, County Summary Highlights*. 2012. http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/New_York/.

College is third, and Cazenovia College is sixth.¹⁴ Improving quality of life through smart growth approaches to development can give Madison County an advantage in competing for workers in the education and health care fields, who tend to be highly mobile.

The county also has a growing renewable energy sector. It is home to New York's first commercial-scale wind farm and Morrisville State College has a Renewable Energy Training Center.¹⁵

c) Planning Context

Madison County has produced several reports and policy documents that are integral to understanding the baseline policy context of the county, which influenced the development of the self-assessment. The reports cover health, agriculture, transportation, and land use policies and codes.

Health

The county's emphasis on smart growth planning began with the development of the *Health Improvement Planning Report* in 2009. This plan, led by the county's health department and several volunteer and agency partners on the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships Committee, articulated the county's vision as "a place of natural beauty where families and individuals thrive."¹⁶ It highlights the connections between the built environment and public health, and emphasizes that better health leads to a more productive workforce and stronger economy.

The plan focuses on underlying systemic issues that affect health and how rural communities can address many of these issues through smart growth approaches to development. For instance, the plan discusses the transportation options that people can use to get to health care facilities, opportunities for active living, and the local economy. It advocates for strategic planning to improve the physical and social infrastructure as a way to create healthy environments, along with transportation policies that result in better road design for pedestrians and vehicles and better access to public services. The plan calls for "mechanisms for collaboration at all levels of public policy making" because "independent and uncoordinated land use development activities between municipalities could create unhealthy conditions."¹⁷ As a follow up to this document, the county's health and planning departments identified several smart growth strategies to help improve the county's health and economy in *A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth*, which will be discussed in more depth later in this report.

Agriculture

Madison County's Farmland Protection Board developed the *Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan* in 2005. The plan responds to the potential threats that spread-out residential and commercial development pose to the county's agricultural land. Among the plan's goals are protecting farmland, promoting and supporting agricultural activities, promoting public awareness of agriculture as an economic resource, and preparing Madison County agriculture for potential future threats.

¹⁴ Madison County Industrial Development Agency. *Madison County, NY Fact Sheet*. <http://madisoncountynyida.com>.

¹⁵ Madison County Industrial Development Agency. Renewables. <http://madisoncountynyida.com/renewables/>. Accessed Mar. 27, 2015.

¹⁶ Madison County. *Health Improvement Planning Report for Madison County*. Oct. 2009.

¹⁷ Madison County. *Health Improvement Planning Report for Madison County*. Oct. 2009.

The plan calls for addressing the threats to agricultural land by limiting sewer and water expansions beyond existing cities and villages, developing agricultural zoning, incorporating farmland protection into local plans, promoting the development of town comprehensive plans, supporting a transfer of development rights¹⁸ program, and developing model right-to-farm laws for municipalities to incorporate into their ordinances.¹⁹

Transportation

The 2010 *Madison County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan*, developed by the Madison County Planning Department, calls for better coordination among the entities providing county transit and paratransit services to improve efficiency and quality of service. The plan also calls for creating a Madison County Transportation Steering Committee to carry out coordination efforts and a Policy Committee that will include municipalities and agencies responsible for funding and operating transportation services. The Policy Committee will have the final say on recommendations made by the Steering Committee. This plan also calls for the development of a countywide transportation plan (*Madison County Community Transportation Plan*) that would include specific recommendations for infrastructure, policies, and programs. Consistent with other plans developed by Madison County, healthy and active living is an underlying theme.²⁰

Land use policies and codes

Through the process of drafting these planning documents, Madison County recognized that smart growth strategies could help with many of its challenges. Therefore, the county developed *A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth* in 2011. It laid out four primary goals for development in Madison County:

- Help existing places thrive.
- Support the rural landscape.
- Create great new places.
- Make livable communities for all ages.

Each goal includes four strategies the county and its local governments can pursue to achieve success, many of which entail working together more closely to implement policies and codes that support smart growth. The plan calls for municipalities to update “policies to make it easier to achieve more livable, mixed use, and multi-modal places” and “educating and informing community members about the value of smart growth.” Under each strategy are several potential tools and policies. The plan provides local examples of successful tools and policies, such as a façade improvement program in Oneida and the Partnership for Community Development in Hamilton, which is a non-profit organization that matches

¹⁸ Communities can use transfer of development rights to preserve land by allowing a property owner to sell development rights to another property owner that wants to build at a higher density. Visit the American Planning Association’s Web page to learn more: <https://www.planning.org/divisions/planningandlaw/propertytopics.htm#Transfer>.

¹⁹ Madison County Farmland Protection Board. *Madison County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan*. Jul. 2005.

²⁰ Madison County Planning Department. *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. May 2010.

businesses with downtown office and retail space in an effort to promote vitality and a mix of uses in the downtown area.²¹

Summary

Each of these plans and documents highlights different smart growth solutions to the county's challenges. However, implementation of the recommendations largely falls to the towns, villages, and the city of Oneida.

d) Political and Policy Context

Madison County faces many political and governance obstacles that are common to small towns and rural areas across the country. For example, the county's local governments have widely varying levels of staff and technical capacity. Some villages and towns lack zoning altogether. Most challenging, the county has developed strong objectives for growth but lacks the authority to implement its plans.

One major obstacle to implementing smart growth approaches to development in Madison County is a lack of policy coordination among the local governments. New York state has elements of home rule, meaning its cities, towns, and villages have discretion over land use decisions and regulations within their borders. While some of Madison County's 26 localities have used their authority to shape land use, others engage in almost no planning activities, often due to lack of staff capacity, funding, or technical abilities. This fragmentation of planning responsibilities and lack of capacity make it difficult to coordinate land use decisions throughout the county, which in turn makes it difficult for the county to implement the smart growth goals laid out in its planning documents.

Among the policy tools municipalities often use are comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and subdivision regulations or building codes. However, nearly half (11 of 26) of Madison County's municipalities have no comprehensive plan. Eight do not have a zoning ordinance, four lack subdivision regulations, five do not conduct site plan review, and four lack a planning board. While several of these communities are small and lack capacity, some are growing. The town of Brookfield (population 2,545), for example, ranked third among the county's municipalities for new residential development between 2004 and 2010, but lacks a comprehensive plan and zoning. County staff can help communities overcome their lack of planning capacity by providing technical assistance, but the municipality is not required to work with the county if they choose not to.

While New York's municipalities have home rule, the state can use the "power of the purse" to influence local governments' planning actions. In 2010, the state's Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act went into effect. This statute requires most state agencies and authorities to prepare a Smart Growth Impact Statement for each infrastructure project they approve or fund. The statement must explain how the project is consistent with smart growth principles or why it is not practical for the project to be consistent with the principles.²² New York state also adopted complete streets²³ legislation in 2011.²⁴

²¹ Madison County. *A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth*. Sep. 2011.

²² Salkin, Patricia. "NY Enacts Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act." Oct. 25, 2010. <http://lawoftheland.wordpress.com/2010/10/25/ny-enacts-smart-growth-public-infrastructure-policy-act>.

This law requires that local governments consider complete streets techniques (such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks) on all projects funded or overseen by New York’s Department of Transportation.

5) Smart Growth Planning in a Peer Community – Dryden, NY

Dryden, New York, sits about 60 miles southwest of Madison County and is a good example of a rural community applying smart growth principles in its planning and development. The town is home to about 15,000 people in New York’s Finger Lakes region and has a strong agricultural tradition.²⁵ Dryden demonstrates that smart growth policies are for both big cities and metropolitan areas, and all types and scales of rural communities.

Dryden has seen steady population growth for several decades due to its location between the college towns of Ithaca and Cortland, New York. Between 1960 and 2000, however, much of the growth occurred in undeveloped areas outside the town’s three traditional downtown centers. This trend sharpened Dryden’s focus on preserving agricultural lands, which are an important part of its economy, culture, and history. Dryden also wanted to increase housing choices, as roughly 90 percent of the town’s housing stock consists of single-family homes, which was not meeting the needs of its aging population that requires less space and close access to retail and health services.²⁶

Dryden’s planning staff and Town Board saw the potential to address the loss of agricultural land and increase housing choices through smart growth approaches to new development and set about updating its zoning and subdivision codes. The town’s residents, however, were hesitant to change the zoning regulations, and were more interested in talking about what they would like Dryden to look like in the future. The town therefore started its new approach to development in 2008 by updating its residential and commercial design guidelines for new construction and redevelopment. The design guidelines improved the community’s comfort with the planning process and allowed Dryden, in 2012, to update its outdated zoning and development codes.

The new zoning code includes many new features that support smart growth development. For example, it now includes a Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District (TNDO). The TNDO District promotes traditional design features in the areas adjacent to existing villages and hamlets, allowing higher density development if the developer adheres to traditional neighborhood design principles, such as interconnected streets, sidewalks, short block lengths, public spaces, and a mix of housing types.²⁷ The new zoning code also allowed accessory dwelling units and recognized townhomes for the first time.

Dryden has started to see the effects of its new design guidelines and zoning codes. After the town adopted the design guidelines in 2008, a developer brought a proposal before the town to redevelop a

²³ The National Complete Streets Coalition defines this term as streets that are “designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.” To learn more, visit <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>.

²⁴ New York State Department of Transportation. “Complete Streets.” <https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/completestreets>. Accessed Sep. 9, 2014.

²⁵ More detail about Dryden is in Appendix C.

²⁶ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan*. Dec. 8, 2005.

²⁷ Town of Dryden. *Zoning Law*. Aug. 6, 2012. Pages 31-34.

gas station that sits at a very visible location. The developer met with the town’s planning staff and discussed how to apply the design guidelines to the redevelopment project. Fall Creek runs near the gas station, making stormwater protection a key element in any site plan. Additionally, the gas station is adjacent to other commercial uses, but it had lacked pedestrian connections to those properties. In response to the design guidelines, the developer installed extensive landscaping, energy-efficient lighting, a swale behind the station to manage and filter stormwater runoff, and new, pedestrian-level signage. The town also made pedestrian access to the adjacent properties a condition of approval, and the developer complied.²⁸

Dryden is now nearly a decade into its efforts to take a smart growth approach to planning and development. The town’s planning staff had the following observations and recommendations for other rural communities, such as Madison County, that are looking to address similar issues. These lessons learned are instructive for communities that are using the Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities to examine their own policies and zoning and development codes:²⁹

- **Prioritize design guidelines.** Dryden preferred to start with design guidelines, and then develop zoning and development codes to be consistent with the desired designs. Nearly all residents have an interest in the look and character of development in their community. Focusing on design first can build good will and relationships between residents and the planning department. It also can bring results in a slow growth area, where deciding where growth should occur is less of an issue than influencing the form of redevelopment.
- **Incorporate view sheds into the design plans, especially in rural communities.** Views of natural features are highly valued in many rural communities. Dryden requires extensive green space in development and redevelopment to protect these views and open space.
- **Write policies, zoning ordinances, and codes in plain language.** This principle, which is relevant in communities of all types and sizes, is particularly important in smaller communities that may lack professional planning staff and the population needed to support a planning board.
- **Simplify the strategies.** Dryden’s planning officials stress the importance of avoiding overly complex regulations that require large amounts of staff and volunteer resources to implement. For example, Dryden’s planning staff prefers to purchase development rights as a strategy for conserving land, rather setting up a transfer of development rights program.
- **Consider existing water and sewer infrastructure when identifying areas for smart growth development.** Smart growth approaches to development are most suitable in areas that have existing sewer and water infrastructure.
- **Leverage technical assistance and funding from higher levels of government to achieve smart growth outcomes.** Often county goals align with local government goals. But local governments typically have authority over their own land use decisions. County planning departments can help local governments achieve their shared goals by providing technical assistance and funding smart growth plans.

²⁸ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

²⁹ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, and Jane Nicholson, Senior Planner, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

6) The Self-Assessment

Local governments can use this tool to check whether their policies and regulations will get them the type of development they want, identify gaps to fill, and policies or practices to adopt, or learn about practices they might want to include in their future plans. It also directs a user to other publications, resources, and tools.

The self-assessment does not rate local governments' planning efforts. Therefore, it does not generate a score. It helps communities identify their strengths, areas for improvement, resources, and best practices, and evaluate whether certain policies might be applicable based on the community's size. The full self-assessment is in Appendix B. However, before using the tool, users should review the information below about:

- a) Tool goal areas.
- b) Preparing to use the tool.
- c) Applying the findings.

a) Goal Areas

The tool is organized into sections based on topics or "goal areas." Madison County helped the EPA team identify these goal areas based on its countywide priorities and applicability of these topics to other rural communities. While the tool tackles topics independently, these issues are all closely related. Many strategies in one tool section can help achieve multiple goals. For example, a farmers' market can help the local economy, make it easier for residents to get locally grown food, encourage healthier eating, and support local agriculture. Tool users will get the most benefit out of the tool if they consider how individual policy changes could meet multiple goals. In the self-assessment, each goal area includes a series of questions about the community's policies and codes and strategies that might help the community achieve its goals. The goal areas for the self-assessment are:

- I. **Revitalize village and town centers.** Infill development³⁰ brings new residents and jobs to existing neighborhoods and village or town centers, sparing farmland and open space on the periphery of the community that might otherwise develop to accommodate them. By placing new houses, offices, and shops in village and town centers, communities can reduce the amount people must drive to meet their daily needs while also spending less on infrastructure by getting more out of existing streets, water pipes, and sewer lines. Thriving town centers also drive local economic development and make it easier for people to walk to stores and services. Village and town centers are unique aspects of rural communities that contribute to a sense of place for visitors and residents.
- II. **Strengthen the local economy.** Encouraging development in traditional downtowns and town centers reduces a community's infrastructure costs by maximizing the use of existing systems, which allows communities to invest in other needs or keep tax rates stable. Local governments

³⁰ Infill development is development on vacant or underused land in previously developed areas.

can support development that meets their goals by streamlining the development review process for such proposals. Incentives to attract and maintain local businesses help create a strong commercial corridor that adds to the tax base and helps keep dollars spent within the community.

- III. **Engage and connect community members.** Well-designed roads, sidewalks, buildings, public spaces, and other elements of the built environment support interaction among community members. New communications tools, cultural events and festivals, and opportunities to participate in local government can also build capital, creating a sense of ownership and pride in a community.
- IV. **Improve health and promote active living.** Building walkable and bikeable communities helps people live more active lives and supports better health. Improving transportation options and bringing different land uses, such as houses, parks, medical facilities, offices, and stores closer together improves access to recreational facilities, health care facilities, and healthy foods. More compact development patterns also protect ecosystems that are critical to clean air, soil, and water. Setting aside land for parks and green space, better connecting streets in new development to make walking and biking easier, and reducing stormwater runoff that can pollute water supplies help achieve these goals.
- V. **Protect natural habitats and ecosystems.** Directing development away from critical natural habitats and ecosystems and minimizing impacts from new development, such as increased stormwater runoff, help rural communities protect the waterways, forests, mountains, view sheds, and farmlands that are critical to their economic health, especially in places valued for their scenic or recreational assets. Providing incentives to use green infrastructure and preserve open space, along with programs to educate residents on the importance of land conservation, help communities maintain their valuable natural resources.
- VI. **Support productive agriculture for a variety of markets.** Preserving working agricultural lands supports the rural economy and can also help direct growth away from far-flung lands and back towards already-developed areas. Communities have found success through agritourism programs and developing new markets for local produce, such as local or regional farmers markets. Supporting small-scale agriculture and gardening in neighborhoods is also important for improving quality of life and providing access to fresh fruits and vegetables, especially in more rural areas where larger grocery stores are often only accessible via car.
- VII. **Meet housing needs for different ages and incomes.** Providing a wide range of housing types in the same neighborhood and close to shops, jobs, parks, medical care, and schools helps people drive less and buy or rent housing that meets their needs within their budget. Providing a mix of housing also helps communities retain residents who want to age in place, while attracting families who might have different housing needs. Increased housing options also help communities maintain a vacation- or recreation-based economy while keeping housing affordable for local residents. These types of neighborhoods can also engender more social

interaction between people of different backgrounds and incomes. Communities can accomplish these goals by allowing accessory dwelling units in residential neighborhoods and more development downtown.

- VIII. **Preserve historical and cultural resources.** Reusing buildings, especially those with historic value, contributes to a community's distinctive identity, which can attract tourists and new residents. These buildings are often in the village or town center, so redeveloping them can bring new life to these places and absorb demand for residential, office, and retail space that might otherwise be satisfied at a more distant location. Preserving a community's cultural icons can also help attract tourism while promoting healthy living, beauty, and community pride.
- IX. **Provide transportation choices.** Compact and mixed-use town and village centers can encourage walking and bicycling, and they can be served more effectively by intercity public transportation and paratransit. Making it safer and easier for people to walk and bike also helps people stay healthy and allows older residents the ability to stay within their homes and neighborhoods. Walkable, accessible downtown areas also help local economic development, as people can more easily reach their daily needs without having to leave town. Communities can provide more transportation choices through the design of new development and by retrofitting existing transportation facilities.
- X. **Invest in efficient public infrastructure systems and operations.** Compact development allows existing infrastructure to serve more people and uses public funds more efficiently. Encouraging growth in village and town centers can help reduce the need for costly infrastructure extensions into undeveloped areas and can reduce maintenance and repair costs. Many communities also use green infrastructure to reduce stormwater runoff, which brings environmental benefits and can lower costs of treating wastewater.
- XI. **Use energy efficiently and provide renewable energy.** More efficient homes and offices save money for people, businesses, and local government and can improve the environment by reducing energy demand. Locally produced renewable energy can create jobs and provide a reliable energy source. Open space and agricultural land can house wind or solar energy installations, providing additional income for farmers and ranchers.

b) Preparing to Use the Self-Assessment

The self-assessment includes 11 sections based on the goal areas. While it is not necessary for a community to use the entire self-assessment, the topics areas are connected. Communities can select the goal areas that are most relevant to their needs but can also refer to other tool sections to see how a strategy can meet multiple goals. After selecting goals, the user should identify which documents to assess. These documents will likely fall into two broad categories: plans and codes. Examples of the kinds of documents in each category include:

Plans

- Comprehensive plan.
- Area-wide growth strategy.
- Systems plan (such as a long-range transportation plan).
- Sustainability plan or local energy action plan.
- Public outreach plan.
- Interagency coordination agreements or plans.

Codes

- Zoning ordinance.
- Subdivision or land development ordinance.
- Engineering standards.
- Design guidelines.
- Building or energy code.

The self-assessment will also assess a community’s programs and policies in each goal area, which will require knowledge of county and municipal activities.

c) Structure

The self-assessment has 11 sections. Each section represents a goal that many rural communities share and lists several strategies, grouped by topics, which support that goal. Topics that are likely to be addressed through code strategies are shaded blue, those likely addressed by policy strategies are shaded green, and those likely addressed through new program strategies are shaded orange. Figure 3 lays out the basic structure of each section of the self-assessment.

Under each topic are one or more questions that are shaded in grey. These questions ask about a community’s existing codes, plans, and programs. In the first column—“Adopted: Yes or No?”— the user can indicate if the community has already adopted the code, policy, or program in question. In the second column—“Add or improve: Yes or No?”—the user can indicate if this should be an area of focus for the community.

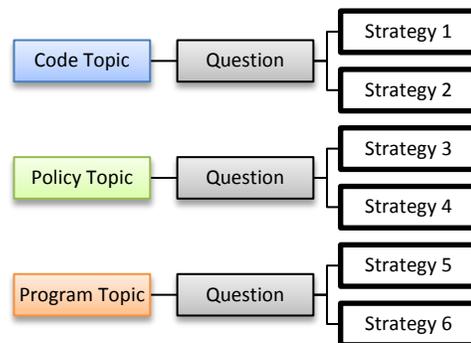


Figure 3: Basic Structure of the Self-Assessment.

Beneath each question are one or more strategies. Just as with the questions described above, the user can indicate if the community has already adopted the specific strategy and whether or not the strategy should be a focus for the community. The user might choose to label each strategy as a high, medium, or low priority based on his or her judgment of factors such as cost, time, and technical capacity.

The rightmost column helps the user find strategies that are most likely to apply to his or her community's context. Some strategies apply to larger jurisdictions and might not be suitable for smaller communities. A "1" in the "Context" column indicates that the strategy likely applies to a large town or small city with about 10,000 people or more. A "2" indicates that the strategy likely applies to a small town or village with about 10,000 people or less. A "3" indicates that the strategy likely applies to a rural area, such as low-density working lands or open spaces outside of villages, towns, and small cities.

The self-assessment also provides links in the footnotes to additional resources or examples of how other communities have implemented the strategy.

d) Applying the Findings

The self-assessment helps communities identify strengths and deficiencies in their policies and codes. While it provides some specific policies, the tool has a range of options, strategies, and best practices to address these challenges. The tool also assists a community prioritize strategies and identify low-hanging fruit, which is often critical in smaller places with limited staff capacity and planning resources. Small towns and rural communities are diverse, which means the ideal solutions will vary from community to community. But communities can follow similar steps to turn the assessment results into actions:

- Prepare an inventory of strategies to add or improve upon as identified through the assessment.
- Label each strategy as low, medium, or high priority based on feasibility and community need. Among the factors that can influence feasibility are cost, political support, technical capacity, and time required to implement.
- Upon completing the self-assessment, the user will have identified some high-priority strategies. The user can consider presenting these strategies through a workshop to staff, elected officials, key stakeholders, and the public to get further input and help target next steps.

For those strategies that staff and elected officials have decided to implement, the user will need to determine:

- Which local government official, staff person, or department will take the lead on implementing the strategy?
- Which documents or policies (such as a comprehensive plan or zoning code) need to be amended to implement the strategy?
- Which decision-making bodies (such as a planning board) need to adopt the strategy?
- What is a reasonable time frame to adopt the strategy?

Once a local government or community organization government adopts the high-priority strategies, the user might decide to go through a similar exercise with the medium- and low-priority strategies.

In Mississippi County, Arkansas, four sections of the self-assessment— Revitalizing Villages and Town Centers; Strengthen the Local and Regional Economies; Provide Transportation Choices; and Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes—were applied to three rural communities—Osceola, Blytheville, and Manila. Through the self-assessment tool, each community came up with a short list of priority strategies for each goal area, along with some regional-level strategies. Each community then held a stakeholder meeting to get feedback on those proposed strategies and get community support to focus on specific areas. Additionally, the three communities met together on a regional-level, led by a local regional development agency. In these discussions, the three towns discussed ways to attack challenges through regional collaboration, particularly in the context of economic development, access to employment, and job training, which affect the whole county through new major industries coming to the region. Ultimately, these three communities determined that the best path forward was to begin developing strategic land use plans, update land development regulations to implement more smart growth development, create incentives for housing development within the more urban parts of the county, focus on downtown revitalization, and explore the option of a regional community land bank.

The implementation table in Appendix C can help a community organize the responses to the questions in the self-assessment, which can better facilitate prioritizing next steps.

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Compact and mixed-use town and village centers can encourage walking and bicycling, and they can also encourage public transportation and paratransit. Making it safer and easier for people to walk and bike also helps their ability to stay within their homes and neighborhoods. Walkable, accessible downtown areas also help people easily reach their daily needs without having to leave town. Communities can provide more transportation development and by retrofitting existing transportation facilities.

The text shaded in blue is a **topic**. It is shaded blue because the strategies that fall beneath it address local codes. Green topics precede policy strategies and orange topics precede program strategies.

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹
Making Areas Walkable, Bikeable, and Accessible to People with Disabilities and Mobility Challenges			
Is pedestrian-oriented site design required for new development and redevelopment?			
Strategy 1: The installation of sidewalks is required when new development is constructed. ^{6,7}			1,2
Strategy 2: At least one entrance is required on the side of the building that faces the street, and public or private sidewalks must connect to that entrance. ⁸			1,2
Strategy 3: Sidewalk paths are clear of obstructions such as utility poles or mailboxes, allowing minimum clearance in pedestrian-oriented areas in new developments. ^{9,10}			1,2

One or more **questions** accompany each topic. The questions can help users decide whether or not to focus on the set of strategies that follow it.

The two columns next to the questions and strategies are where the user can indicate if their community has already adopted the strategies and whether or not the strategy should be a focus for the community.

¹ Audit topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 – village/small town (typically under 10,000) 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands and natural areas outside of towns, villages and cities).

² Georgia DOT Pedestrian & Streetscape Guide: Toolkit 10 – Site Design for Pedestrians (<http://www.dot.ga.gov/travelinggeorgia/bikepedestrian/Pages/default.aspx>)
³ Kirkland, WA Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts (http://search.cityofkirkland.net/search?q=Design%20Guidelines%20for%20Pedestrian-Oriented%20Business%20Districts%20&site=kirkland14_collection&client=Kirkland14&output=xml_no_dtd&proxystylesheet=Kirkland14&ie=&oe=&lr=&domains=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kirklandwa.gov&site=search=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kirklandwa.gov)

⁴ Green Valley Institute. Design Guidelines: Village and Gateway Districts, Town of Coventry (http://www.greenvalleyinstitute.org/planning_design.htm)

⁵ Westminster, CO Design Guidelines for Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Developments (<http://www.ci.westminster.co.us/CityGovernment/CommunityDevelopment/PlanningDivision/RegulationsandDesignGuidelines.aspx>)

⁶ Smart Growth America. Complete Streets: Local Policy Workbook (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy>)

⁷ Change Lab Solutions. Model Local Ordinance on Complete Streets (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/laws-resolutions-cs>)

⁸ Fort Worth, TX Zoning Ordinance: Urban Design/Form Based Districts (<http://fortworthtexas.gov/zoning/>)

⁹ In general, sidewalks need to be at least six feet wide for two people to comfortably pass.

¹⁰ Carrboro, NC Town Code: Streets and Sidewalks (<http://www.ci.carrboro.nc.us/139/Carrboro-Town-Code>)



Figure 4: This sample page from the “Provide Transportation Choices” goal area explains each element of the self-assessment.

7) Testing the Self-Assessment in Madison County

Local officials in Oneida, Chittenango, and Brookfield went through this self-assessment and discussed how the topics and strategies apply to their communities' codes, policies, plans, and programs. They also provided feedback on the content and layout of the self-assessment.

The Madison County workshop also provided opportunities to share information with local residents, elected officials, and planners. The planning staff of the nearby town of Dryden participated in a peer-to-peer exchange with Oneida officials. They discussed their experiences applying smart growth approaches to development through a new zoning law, design guidelines, and small area planning. The technical assistance team also held an open house in Oneida City Hall that featured a presentation on smart growth in rural communities. Among the audience at the well-attended open house were elected officials and staff from many of the county's 26 municipalities.

Appendices

[Appendix A – About EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance](#)

[Appendix B – Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities](#)

- I. *[Revitalize Village and Town Centers](#)*
- II. *[Strengthen the Local Economy](#)*
- III. *[Engage and Connect Community Members](#)*
- IV. *[Improve Health and Promote Active Living](#)*
- V. *[Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems](#)*
- VI. *[Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets](#)*
- VII. *[Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes](#)*
- VIII. *[Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources](#)*
- IX. *[Provide Transportation Choices](#)*
- X. *[Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations](#)*
- XI. *[Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy](#)*

[Appendix C – Implementation Table](#)

[Appendix D – Smart Growth Case Study from a Rural Community](#)

[Shaping Growth in Dryden, New York](#)

Appendix A: EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance

Communities around the country are looking to get the most from new development and to maximize their investments. Frustrated by development that gives residents no choice but to drive long distances between jobs and housing, many communities are bringing workplaces, homes, and services closer together. Communities are examining and changing zoning codes that make it impossible to build neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. They are questioning the fiscal wisdom of neglecting existing infrastructure while expanding new sewers, roads, and services into the fringe. Many places that have been successful in ensuring that development improves their community, economy, and environment have used smart growth principles to do so (see box). Smart growth describes development patterns that create attractive, distinctive, and walkable communities that give people of varying age, wealth, and physical ability a range of safe, convenient choices in where they live and how they get around. Growing smart also means that we use our existing resources efficiently and preserve the lands, buildings, and environmental features that shape our neighborhoods, towns, and cities.

However, communities often need additional tools, resources, or information to achieve these goals. In response to this need, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program to provide technical assistance—through contractor services—to selected communities.

The goals of this assistance are to improve the overall climate for infill, brownfields redevelopment, and the revitalization of non-brownfield sites—as well as to promote development that meets economic, community, public health, and environmental goals. EPA and its contractor assemble teams whose members have expertise that meets community needs. While engaging community participants on their aspirations for development, the team can bring their experiences from working in other parts of the country to provide best practices for the community to consider.

For more information on the SGIA program, including reports from communities that have received assistance, see www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sqia.htm.

Smart Growth Principles

Based on the experience of communities around the nation, the Smart Growth Network developed a set of 10 basic principles:

- Mix land uses.
- Take advantage of compact building design.
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable neighborhoods.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Source: Smart Growth Network. "Why Smart Growth?" <http://smartgrowth.org/why-smart-growth/>.



SMART GROWTH SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

Appendix B: Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

The Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities is a compilation of strategies, organized by 11 common “goal areas,” that villages, towns, and small cities can use to evaluate their existing policies to create healthy, environmentally resilient, and economically robust places. This self-assessment was developed as part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) project in Madison County, New York. For more information about the project, see *Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities: Madison County, New York*, available at: <http://www2.epa.gov/smart-growth/smart-growth-self-assessment-rural-communities-madison-county>.

What does it do?

This self-assessment helps communities identify gaps in their policies, plans, codes, and zoning regulations by asking a series of “Yes” or “No” questions. All communities begin by completing the self-assessment’s Revitalize Village and Town Centers section, which gives a baseline indication of smart growth development policies within the jurisdiction. It goes beyond regulatory issues to help communities take stock of their local initiatives, strategies, and plans. Rural communities are not all the same, and this tool shares practices that a variety of rural places have used to improve their economies, environment, health, and quality of life. It includes resources and examples from communities around the country.



Figure 5: The main street in the town of Chittenango.

Photo credit: Renaissance Planning Group

Who should use it?

This self-assessment tool is broad and interdisciplinary. Each section focuses on a specific set of issues and will likely require input from multiple parts of the local government, as well as from community residents and other stakeholders. Although a community does not necessarily need to complete all sections of the self-assessment, this tool works best when communities use it comprehensively and a local leader facilitates the process, such as a mayor, city manager, town planner, or anyone with a broad community focus.

How can this tool help rural places?

This tool addresses the challenges that face smaller communities. Rural communities often lack staff capacity and resources. This tool helps prioritize strategies and identify low-hanging fruit that can move a community closer to its economic, social, and environmental goals. Because rural communities often do not have zoning or development codes, this self-assessment focuses on policies, programs, and initiatives rather than strictly regulatory measures.

Goal Areas

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers (mandatory) | VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes |
| II. Strengthen the Local Economy | VIII. Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources |
| III. Engage and Connect Community Members | IX. Provide Transportation Choices |
| IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living | X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations |
| V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems | XI. Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy |
| VI. Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets | |

Instructions

This self-assessment is a checklist of smart growth strategies that are relevant to a wide variety of small cities and rural communities. Users can use it to identify gaps in existing policies, codes, and programs; or simply to learn more about common smart growth practices.

The self-assessment has 11 sections. Each section represents a common goal of small cities and rural communities. Each community must begin the self-assessment with the Revitalize Village and Town Centers section (mandatory). After completing that mandatory section, a community can complete only those that are relevant to the community's goals. The other sections are optional.

The self-assessment provides the 11 sections described below separately from these instructions:

- I. [Revitalize Village and Town Centers \(mandatory\)](#)
- II. [Strengthen the Local Economy](#)
- III. [Engage and Connect Community Members](#)
- IV. [Improve Health and Promote Active Living](#)
- V. [Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems](#)
- VI. [Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets](#)
- VII. [Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes](#)
- VIII. [Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources](#)
- IX. [Provide Transportation Choices](#)
- X. [Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations](#)
- XI. [Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy](#)

As a community completes the sections, it is important to keep the following in mind:

- Wherever possible, coordinate across relevant departments and agencies to provide accurate responses.
- Reference relevant plans and policy documents where appropriate.
- Identify instances in which there may be conflicting perspectives or policies on an issue.
- Note when information for a response is not available.

The self-assessment is not intended to rate the planning efforts of a community. It does not enable a user to score policies, codes, or programs based on adherence to smart growth strategies. The following sections provide some additional information on how to use the self-assessment.

Preparing to Use the Self-Assessment

A user should select the sections of the self-assessment that are most relevant to your community's needs. After selecting the sections, it is important to identify which policy or planning documents to review. These documents will likely fall under two broad categories – plans and codes. Some specific examples of the kind of documents included in each category are listed below. Many sections of the tool, however, go beyond plans and codes to ask questions about policies, programs, initiatives, and

public outreach within the community. For these questions, there may not be a document to reference, and responses may come from a variety of municipal offices or community-led groups.

Plans

- Comprehensive Plan
- Area Wide Growth Strategy
- Systems Plan (such as a Long-Range Transportation Plan)
- Sustainability Plan (or Local Energy Action Plan)
- Public Outreach Plan
- Interagency Coordination Agreements

Codes

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision or Land Development Ordinance
- Engineering Standards
- Design Standards
- Building or Energy Code

Structure

The self-assessment organizes each section by three levels of content. The broadest level is goal. These are color coded to indicate whether the sub-topic (under that goal) is most likely to be addressed through a community's codes (blue), policies (green), or programs (orange).

Under each sub-topic are one or more questions that are shaded in grey. To the right of each question are three important columns.

- **“Adopted: Yes or No?”** Provides a space to indicate if a community has adopted the code, policy, or program in question.
- **“Add or improve: Yes or No?”** Provides a space where to indicate if this should be an area of focus for a community. A user should complete this column based on whether or not the community has already adopted the strategy and whether or not it is consistent with the community's goals. Cost and technical feasibility are limiting factors to consider. A user may choose to label each strategy as a high, medium, or low priority based on their judgment and knowledge of the community. Beneath each question is a series of strategies that can help a community implement smart growth approaches. The columns to the right provide a space where a user can indicate if this is an adopted strategy, and if not, if it is a strategy that the community may want to consider.
- **Context.** The self-assessment is comprehensive. As a result, some communities, particularly those with smaller populations, will find a lot of strategies that do not apply to them as they are for much larger jurisdictions. The rightmost column helps a community find strategies that are most likely to apply to the community's context. A “1” in this column indicates that the strategy likely applies to a large town or small city with about 10,000 people or more. A “2” in this

column indicates that the strategy likely applies to a small town or village with about 10,000 people or less. A “3” in this column indicates that the strategy likely applies to a rural area, such as low density working lands or open spaces outside of towns and cities.

While the self-assessment helps a community evaluate existing codes, policies, and programs, it also provides some examples and resources for communities that want to work towards implementing new approaches. They are described in the footnotes and are often accompanied by a link to additional information.

Applying the Findings

The self-assessment assists a community identify strengths and gaps in policies, codes, and programs. While it provides examples of specific suggested strategies, the tool does not emphasize prescribing strategies to address shortcomings. Small cities and rural communities are diverse, which means the ideal solutions will vary from community to community. After the self-assessment, a community may find it helpful to hold a workshop to identify strategies that respond to a community’s unique goals, challenges, and needs. The workshop will focus on the high and medium priority strategies identified through the self-assessment, plus additional strategies that may come up during discussions with the community.

A workshop is an opportunity to review these strategies with the community, key stakeholders, and elected officials. However, a workshop is not necessary to move forward on implementing the strategies of the self-assessment. Ultimately, the user should aim to create an action plan that for each high priority strategy that identifies:

- Which official, staff person, or department of the local government will take the lead on advancing the strategy?
- Which documents (such as a comprehensive plan or zoning law) need to be amended to advance the strategy?
- Which decision-making bodies (such as a planning board) will need to adopt the strategy?
- What is a reasonable time frame to adopt the strategy?

Glossary of Key Terms

The self-assessment includes several terms that planners commonly use. This section provides definitions and information for some key terms.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units** – The American Planning Association uses the following definition: “accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are small, self-contained living units that typically have their own kitchen, bedroom(s), and bathroom space. Often called granny flats, elder cottage housing opportunities (ECHO), mother-daughter residences, or secondary dwelling units, ADUs are apartments that can be located within the walls of an existing or newly constructed single-family home or can be an addition to an existing home. They can also be freestanding cottages on the same lot as the principal dwelling unit or a conversion of a garage or barn.”³¹
- **Cluster Development** – Cluster development is a technique where homes are clustered on a portion of a site and the rest of the land is preserved as open space. This can be an effective technique for creating a buffer between new development and rural land uses, such as agriculture, but cluster developments are often stand-alone subdivisions in the countryside surrounded by open space and requiring residents to drive long distances to get to daily destinations. Learning from this experience, local governments are beginning to direct cluster development to the periphery of existing towns and villages or are limiting their size (e.g., no more than 10 residential lots) to control the impact they have on rural character, agricultural operations, and wildlife habitat.
- **Form Based Codes** – The Form-Based Codes Institute uses the following definition: “A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation.”³²
- **Priority Growth Areas** – Rural communities may decide to identify specific areas intended for growth and those that are to be preserved. The community should identify these areas through a public process, and they may be described in the community’s comprehensive plan. Communities can then review individual development proposals with an eye toward how they connect to comprehensive planning goals.
- **Planned Unit Development** – Local zoning codes in many areas permit negotiated developments, usually called Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). Communities often use PUDs for large areas that are master-planned by single or multiple property owners or developers. PUDs typically allow greater flexibility in layout, design, and land use than existing zoning and subdivision regulations. But PUDs can also present problems. For example, rural jurisdictions may lack staff capacity to negotiate development agreements; and codes may have insufficient standards or processes for governing PUDs and lack controls to ensure they are properly located, well designed, provide adequate infrastructure and community benefits, or are linked to the rest of the community.

³¹ American Planning Association. Accessory Dwelling Units. QuickNotes #19.

³² Form-Based Codes Institute. Form-Based Codes Defined. <http://formbasedcodes.org/definition>. Accessed Feb. 27, 2015.

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Infill development³³ brings new residents and jobs to existing neighborhoods and village or town centers, sparing farmland and open space on the periphery of the community that might otherwise develop to accommodate them. By placing new houses, offices, and shops in village and town centers, communities can reduce the amount people must drive to meet their daily needs while also spending less on infrastructure by getting more out of existing streets, water pipes, and sewer lines. Thriving town centers also drive local economic development and make it easier for people to walk to stores and services. Village and town centers are unique aspects of rural communities that contribute to a sense of place for visitors and residents.

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁴
Using Codes to Encourage Infill Development			
Do codes define the requirements for infill development?			
Strategy 1: Codes specifically identify infill / redevelopment areas and set clear standards for evaluating and approving development within these areas.” ^{35, 36}			1,2,3
Strategy 2: Codes and ordinances differentiate between areas with and without existing infrastructure by requiring developer participation in the cost of extending infrastructure to serve new development. ^{37,38}			1,2,3
Do development policies provide incentives for infill development?			
Strategy 3: In close consultation with the public, designate growth areas for future development. ³⁹			1,2
Strategy 4: Impact fees are set and/or public utilities are priced according to the project’s distance from the downtown core and designated growth areas. ^{40,41}			1,2

³³ Infill development is development on vacant or underused land in previously developed areas.

³⁴ Self-Assessment topics and policy options apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population is approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population is typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low-density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

³⁵ Jupiter, Florida Zoning Definitions (<http://www.jupiter.fl.us/index.aspx?NID=693>).

³⁶ Infill development can be difficult if it is subject to requirements for new development (e.g., on-site parking minimums, on-site stormwater facilities, and large setbacks).

³⁷ Explanation of Development Exactions and Incentives (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/toolkit/m1/ftools/dei.shtml>).

³⁸ Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances (<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?nid=214>).

³⁹ Designated Growth Area policy guidance (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/guides/smart-growth-at-the-state-and-local-level/comprehensive-approaches/require-state-facilities-to-be-located-within-designated-growth-areas-and-downtowns/>).

⁴⁰ The Georgia Development Impact Fee Act (<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/impactfees.asp>).

⁴¹ Explanation of Impact Fees, Duncan Associates (<http://impactfees.com/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Strategy 5: Provide density bonuses for mixed-use and/or residential development in downtowns and village centers. ^{42,43,44}			1,2
Strategy 6: Expedited permit review and/or lower development fees encourage mixed-use, residential, or infill development in downtowns and village centers. ^{45,46}			1,2
Strategy 7: Use overlay zoning to encourage mixed-use and infill development. ^{47,48}			1,2
Strategy 8: Provide property tax abatements for mixed-use and residential development in downtowns and village centers. ⁴⁹			1,2
Strategy 9: Provide incentives to rehabilitate existing structures. ⁵⁰			1,2
Do zoning regulations remove barriers to infill development?			
Strategy 10: Establish minimum lot size that aims to preserve the rural character of the community for permitted development in agricultural areas, and encourage clustering of housing units. ^{51,52,53}			2,3
Strategy 11: Adopt agricultural/open space zone policies that ensure developed parcels are large enough to preserve the character and function of farms and sensitive lands. ⁵⁴			1,2

⁴² Density bonuses allow more development on a site in exchange for an amenity.

⁴³ Planning Implementation Tools: Density Bonus (<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Pages/publications-resources/PlanImplementation.aspx>).

⁴⁴ Woodlake Zoning Ordinance: Density Bonus (<http://www.cityofwoodlake.com/planning-documents/>).

⁴⁵ Phoenix Priority Expedited Plan Review Policy (<https://www.phoenix.gov/pdd/topics/priority-expedited-plan-review>).

⁴⁶ San Diego Affordable/In-Fill housing and Sustainable Buildings Expedite Program (<http://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/news/archive/ah.shtml>).

⁴⁷ Infill Development Overlay District Bylaw: Town of Ware (http://www.townofware.com/pages/warema_planning/siteplanapproval).

⁴⁸ City of Chesapeake: Mixed Use and Infill Development in the Suburban Overlay District. Chapter 2 (http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/government/City-Departments/Departments/Planning-Department/Planning-Library/plans_studies/design-guidelines.htm).

⁴⁹ Cincinnati Community Reinvestment Area Residential Tax Abatement (<http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/community-development/housing-assistance/residential-property-tax-abatement/>).

⁵⁰ Vermont Downtown and Village Tax Credit (http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/downtown_village_tax_credit).

⁵¹ Explanation of Large Lot Zoning, Vermont Natural Resources Council (<http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/large-lot-zoning/>).

⁵² The American Farmland Trust has developed guides to planning for agriculture in several states. An explanation of zoning tools for preserving greenfields and farmland begins on page 35 of *Planning for Agriculture in New York*. <http://www.farmland.org/resources/publications/default2.asp>.

⁵³ Cluster provisions in rural areas often focuses on securing expanses of open space consistent with rural character, or protecting environmentally sensitive areas and natural resource lands. Clustered development in rural areas remains compact and rural in character, while the open space tracts are generally permanently preserved. Spokane County, Washington, presents issues for rural residential cluster development (<http://www.spokanecounty.org/bp/content.aspx?c=2639>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁴
Strategy 12: Sites identified for new schools are within municipal service areas. ⁵⁵			1,2
Strategy 13: Zoning requires a minimum density in mixed-use districts. ⁵⁶			1,2
Strategy 14: Reduce or eliminate minimum lot sizes in areas targeted for infill development. ^{57,58}			1,2
Encouraging Mixed Land Uses in Villages and Town Centers			
Do codes allow mixed land uses in appropriate areas?			
Strategy 15: Clearly define the downtown area.			1,2
Strategy 16: Zoning defines “mixed-use development.” ⁵⁹			1,2
Strategy 17: Designate mixed-use zones in town and village centers. ⁶⁰			1,2
Strategy 18: A form-based code or performance-based standards regulate the design and orientation of new buildings, allowing more flexibility in the uses. ^{61,62}			1,2
Encouraging Street-Level Activity in Village and Town Centers			
Do codes require pedestrian-oriented design in village and town centers?			

⁵⁴ Fauquier County Rural Land Use Plan (<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/commdev/index.cfm?action=compplan1>).

⁵⁵ Maryland Smart Growth Planning for Public School Construction (<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurWork/publicSchoolConstruction.shtml>).

⁵⁶ Williston, Vermont: Mixed Use Residential Zoning District Standards – Chapter 38 (http://www.town.williston.vt.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={26EA4BDF-4482-4523-B051-394E7ACEDA5C}&DE={4F5C3286-90D3-4CA7-A1F1-315C465E42BE}).

⁵⁷ “Relaxing zoning restrictions to reduce or eliminate minimum lot-size requirements gives developers the flexibility to build smaller, more affordable homes on smaller, more affordable lots for a variety of consumer groups who need and desire such options, including empty nesters, elderly adults, younger individuals with disabilities, young single workers, childless couples, and others” (Livable New York Resource Manual <http://www.aging.ny.gov/LivableNY/ResourceManual/Index.cfm>).

⁵⁸ Explanation of Residential Infill Development from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs: Planning & Quality Growth (<https://www.dca.ga.gov/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/documents/Part7gResidentialInfillDevelopment.doc>).

⁵⁹ Model Downtown Mixed-Use District: provides basic language for creating a deliberately mixed use and dense development pattern geared to urban downtown areas (<http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/modelOrdinances.cfm>).

⁶⁰ Salem, Oregon: Draft Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use (NCMU) Zone: a planning project intended to encourage the development of appropriately scaled and pedestrian friendly neighborhood center developments (http://www.cityofsalem.net/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Planning/mixed-use_neighborhood_center_zone/Pages/default.aspx).

⁶¹ Form Based Codes: Implementing Smart Growth (<http://www.lgc.org/form-based-codes>).

⁶² City of Winters Form Based Code for Downtown (http://www.cityofwinters.org/community_dev/community_reports.htm).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Strategy 19: Minimize setback of buildings from sidewalks in village and town centers. ^{63,64}			1,2
Strategy 20: Codes encourage ground-floor retail space in village and town centers through tools such as density bonuses.			1,2
Strategy 21: Policies and codes ensure windows or active uses on building facades in village and town centers.			1,2
Strategy 22: Codes establish appropriate sizes and aesthetic standards for signs in village and town centers.			1,2
Do codes specify parking lot design and placement standards?			
Strategy 23: Screen parking areas from sidewalks with landscaping and/or use green infrastructure techniques to make parking lots more attractive.			1,2
Strategy 24: Locate parking lots behind or alongside buildings in pedestrian-oriented areas.			1,2
Do codes allow outdoor markets or street festivals?			
Strategy 25: Codes allow street closures for outdoor markets or street festivals.			1,2
Do codes allow outdoor dining areas?			
Strategy 26: Codes allow outdoor dining. ⁶⁵			1,2
Strategy 27: Codes allow mobile food vendors. ⁶⁶			1
Improving Pedestrian Safety in Village and Town Centers			
Do codes require pedestrian-oriented street design?			
Strategy 28: Minimize curb cuts and driveways in village and town centers. ⁶⁷			1,2

⁶³ Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts (<http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/kirklandpreview/html/KirklandZ92/KirklandZ92.html>).

⁶⁴ City of Lathrup Village, Michigan: Design Guidelines (<http://www.lathrupvillage.org/DocumentCenter/View/1021>).

⁶⁵ Alexandria, Virginia: King Street Outdoor Dining Regulations / Design Guidelines (http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/outdoor_dining_ordinance.pdf).

⁶⁶ City of Longmont, Colorado: Mobile Retail Food Vending Permit (<http://longmontcolorado.gov/departments/departments-n-z/planning-and-development-services/development-applications-and-permits/mobile-retail-food-vending-permit>).

⁶⁷ Fayetteville, Arkansas: Case Study on Eco Modern Flats with Design Standards (<http://uli.org/case-study/uli-case-studies-eco-modern-flats-fayetteville-arkansas/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Strategy 29: Encourage alleys in new residential and mixed-use development to reduce the number of curb cuts and driveways. ^{68,69}			1,2
Strategy 30: Codes set a maximum number of curb-cuts per block in pedestrian-oriented or mixed-use districts. ⁷⁰			1,2
Strategy 31: Street design standards set appropriate lane widths and use traffic-calming measures to ensure safe vehicle speeds in pedestrian-Oriented areas. ⁷¹			1,2
Providing Appropriate Parking Options in Village and Town Centers			
Do codes set parking requirements based on community context and actual parking demand?⁷²			
Strategy 32: Allow on-street parking in village and town centers.			1,2
Strategy 33: Count shared or off-site parking toward parking minimums.			1,2
Strategy 34: Buildings can reduce the amount of parking they need to supply if they are close to public transit or have bicycle parking, nearby public parking, or on-street parking. ⁷³			1,2
Strategy 35: Waive or reduce parking minimums in village and town centers and mixed use districts. ^{74,75}			1,2
Do codes require amenities that encourage bicycling?			
Strategy 36: Encourage new development in village and town centers to include bike racks or other bike parking facilities. ⁷⁶			1,2

⁶⁸ Example: alley widths are 10 to 12 feet for residential, 24 feet for commercial.

⁶⁹ Overland Park, Kansas: Planned Residential Neighborhood Design Guidelines (<http://www.opkansas.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/planned-residential-design-guidelines.pdf?&redir=1>).

⁷⁰ Prince William County, Virginia requires a special use permit for drive-throughs (<http://www.pwccgov.org/government/dept/planning/Pages/Forms,-Permits-and-Applications.aspx>).

⁷¹ The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission includes recommendations for slowing traffic speeds on page 12 of its report “Design Manual for Small Towns” (<http://www.tipdc.org/community/designManual.asp>).

⁷² EPA offers a Parking Spaces / Community Places guide through its Smart Growth Program (<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/parking.htm>).

⁷³ City of Cheyenne “Unified Development Code – Article 6 Design Regulations” (<http://www.cheyennecity.org/index.aspx?nid=1824>).

⁷⁴ Reducing Off-Street Parking Requirements Application (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-137879.pdf>).

⁷⁵ Nashville, Tennessee removed parking requirements for downtown development. Downtown Code (<http://www.nashville.gov/Planning-Department/Community-Planning-Design/Community-Plans/Downtown.aspx>).

⁷⁶ City of Cambridge Bicycle Parking Guide (<http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Transportation/gettingaroundcambridge/bybike/Parking.aspx>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Revitalizing Village and Town Centers Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Are financing mechanisms available to promote development in village and town centers?			
Strategy 37: A business improvement district or similar special taxing district funds enhanced services, such as landscaping, maintenance, and marketing, for village and town centers. ⁷⁷			1,2
Strategy 38: Value capture strategies, such as tax-increment financing, provide financial assistance for redevelopment in village and town centers and other specified areas with significant redevelopment potential. ⁷⁸			1,2
Strategy 39: Local government has adopted one or more strategies to address the issue of vacant properties including affordable home repair funds, land banks, and Vacant Property Registration Ordinances (VPROs) ⁷⁹			1,2
Do plans and policies support constructing or relocating municipal buildings in village and town centers?			
Strategy 40: Identify potential central sites for major civic destinations such as city hall, a library, a post office, or a performing arts center. ⁸⁰			1,2
Strategy 41: Locate public facilities, particularly destinations that attract visitors, in developed areas rather than on the fringes of the community. ⁸⁰			1,2
Do plans and policies promote efficient use of infrastructure?			
Strategy 42: Infrastructure policies prioritize rehabilitation or improvement of existing systems over system expansion. ⁸¹			1,2,3
Strategy 43: Upgrade utilities and public amenities in infill locations to make them more attractive for development. ⁸²			1,2
Strategy 44: Level of service standards for public facilities guide rezoning applications. ³⁸			1,2

⁷⁷ The Heart of Brevard in western North Carolina is a business improvement district that supports downtown revitalization and organizes events that attract visitors (<http://brevardnc.org>).

⁷⁸ Tax Increment Financing Districts in Vermont are used as a public infrastructure financing tool (http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/funding/tif).

⁷⁹ Mayor's Resource Guide on Vacant and Abandoned Properties (<http://community-wealth.org/content/united-states-conference-mayors-resource-guide-vacant-and-abandoned-properties>).

⁸⁰ City of Aspen, Colorado: Civic Master Plan (<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Portals/0/docs/businessnav/ApprovaltoDevelop/Civic%20Master%20Plan.pdf>).

⁸¹ Strategies for Enhancing Community Character, Mississippi Gulf Coast (<http://smartgrowth.dmr.ms.gov/community-character>).

⁸² Lafayette, Louisiana: Infill Development Incentives (<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Development-Types-and-Land-Uses/Infill-Development-Completing-the-Community-Fabric.aspx>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Strategy 45: Prices or time limits encourage a sufficient turnover of parking spaces and availability in village and town centers. ⁸³			1,2
Strategy 46: A parking inventory identifies the number and location of parking spaces in village and town centers. ⁸⁴			1,2
Do plans and policies support infill development?			
Strategy 47: Purchase and make available tax-delinquent properties for rehabilitation or redevelopment. ⁸⁵			1,2
Strategy 48: Financial incentives are available for brownfield redevelopment. ⁸⁶			1,2
Strategy 49: New schools are located as close as possible to existing development. ⁵⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 50: Identify preferred areas for development or revitalization. ⁸⁷			1,2
Are a variety of transportation options supported?			
Strategy 51: Adopt a multimodal mobility plan that includes policies and strategies for all modes including bicycling, walking, transit, and driving. ⁸⁸			1,2
Strategy 52: Convert one-way streets to two-way streets to improve access, reduce car speeds, and encourage greater pedestrian and bike mode-share. ⁸⁹			1,2
Strategy 53: Wayfinding signs help pedestrians and bicyclists find key destinations. ⁹⁰			1,2
Strategy 54: Install pedestrian-scale signs and lighting in pedestrian-oriented areas. ⁹¹			1,2

⁸³ City of Redwood, California: Downtown Parking Management Plan (<http://www.redwoodcity.org/bit/transportation/parking/parkingbigpicture.htm>).

⁸⁴ Puget Sound Regional Council: Parking Inventory Analysis (<http://www.psrc.org/data/transportation/parking-inventory/>).

⁸⁵ Facilitate Reuse of Abandoned, Vacant, and Tax-Delinquent Properties (http://www.housingpolicy.org/policy_print.php?policyid=63).

⁸⁶ Brownfield Redevelopment Financial Incentives in Michigan (http://www.michigan.gov/deg/0,4561,7-135-3311_4109_29262---,00.html).

⁸⁷ City of Syracuse, New York: Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area Plan (http://www.syracuse.ny.us/neighborhood_and_business_development.aspx).

⁸⁸ City of Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (<http://www.cityofevanston.org/public-works/transportation-engineering/multi-modal-transportation-plan/>).

⁸⁹ Converting One-way Streets to Two-way (<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/2002/06/converting-one-way-to-two-way.html>).

⁹⁰ Rochester, New York: Center City Visitor Circulation and Pedestrian Wayfinding Study (<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/article.aspx?id=8589948735>).

⁹¹ Medford, Oregon: Street Lighting and Pedestrian-Scale Street Lighting (<http://www.ci.medford.or.us/CodePrint.asp?CodeID=3927>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

I. Revitalize Village and Town Centers

Goal: Revitalize Village and Town Centers	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁴
Revitalizing Village and Town Centers Through Programs and Services			
Are there programs to improve or preserve the aesthetics of village and town centers?			
Strategy 55: Establish a Main Street program to promote and enhance the town center.			1,2
Strategy 56: A program provides funds and assistance for building façade renovations. ⁹²			1,2
Strategy 57: A fund provides matching grants or low-interest loans for storefront façade improvements and/or interior renovations. ⁹³			1,2
Strategy 58: Identify vacant and underused buildings, and collect data to help market the properties for occupancy or redevelopment.			1,2
Strategy 59: The local government partners with businesses or civic groups for small beautification projects, such as flower plantings or holiday decorations. ⁹⁴			1,2

⁹² Village of Hamburg, New York: Façade improvement program (http://www.townofhamburgny.com/Hamburg_Development_Corporation_-117158.html). Funding came in part from New York's Main Street Program (<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYMainStreet/>).

⁹³ Portland, Maine: Façade Improvement Program (<http://portlandmaine.gov/557/Facade-Improvement-Program>).

⁹⁴ Junction, Texas: Main Street Beautification Project Grant Assistance (<http://www.cityofjunction.com/jtedc/financial-assist.html>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

II. Strengthen the Local Economy

Encouraging development in traditional downtowns and town centers reduces a community’s infrastructure costs by maximizing the use of existing systems, which allows communities to invest in other needs or keep tax rates stable. Local governments can support development that meets their goals by streamlining the development review process for such proposals. Incentives to attract and maintain local businesses help create a strong commercial corridor that adds to the tax base and helps keep dollars spent within the community.

Goal: Strengthen the Local Economy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁹⁵
Strengthening the Local Economy Through Efficient Current Planning Practices ⁹⁶			
Do development review procedures efficiently process development proposals?			
Strategy 1: Development review procedures have an established and well-publicized timeline for processing and review milestones. ⁹⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 2: New development proposals go through a coordinated interdepartmental review procedure. ^{98,99}			1,2,3
Strategy 3: Development review procedures have an established and expedited timeline for processing and review milestones. ⁹⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 4: Pre-submittal counseling to educate applicants about local requirements is available and encouraged. ¹⁰⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 5: The municipality’s website includes information and educational materials to help applicants learn about the review process. ¹⁰¹			1,2,3
Strengthening the Local Economy Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies ¹⁰²			

⁹⁵ Self-Assessment topics and strategies likely apply to: 1 – large town or small city (approximately 10,000 or more residents); 2 – village or small town (typically under 10,000 residents); 3 – rural (very low density place, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

⁹⁶ Developers prefer a clear, predictable development proposal review process because an unclear process and unanticipated delays cost them money. Having a coordinated interdepartmental review process helps the local government keep the process moving smoothly and ensure that all relevant departments have their chance to review the proposal.

⁹⁷ Portland, Oregon Development Services Process and Timelines for zoning and land use reviews (<http://www.portlandonline.com/bds/index.cfm?c=37275>).

⁹⁸ A team of designated staff from different departments convenes to discuss and coordinate review comments for applicants seeking development permits.

⁹⁹ Hamilton, Ohio Interdepartmental Review Committee for development and site plans (<http://www.hamilton-city.org/index.aspx?page=164>).

¹⁰⁰ Snohomish County, Washington Land Use Pre-Application Meeting (<http://snohomishcountywa.gov/1303/Pre-Application-Meeting>).

¹⁰¹ Pleasanton, California Development Review Application and Informational Guides (<http://www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/depts/cd/permit/process/planning.asp>).

¹⁰² Targeting growth areas and identifying conservation areas in a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance indicate to developers and private investors the long-range vision for land use and industry. By identifying priorities and strategies for achieving goals, cities can make private investments less risky and more attractive for developers and business owners.

II. Strengthen the Local Economy

Goal: Strengthen the Local Economy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁹⁵
Is economic development adequately covered in communitywide and comprehensive plans?			
Strategy 6: The comprehensive plan includes an economic development element covering the issues and opportunities for strengthening the local economy. ¹⁰³			1,2 ¹⁰⁴
Strategy 7: Communitywide plans include performance measures that demonstrate the financial benefits and costs of project recommendations. ^{105,106}			1,2
Is there an inventory of local products, resources, or areas prime for development?			
Strategy 8: Align local policy documents with county or regional economic development strategies and targeted industries or industry clusters. ¹⁰⁷			1,2
Strategy 9: The local economic development strategy includes an inventory of “shovel-ready” development sites with relevant details and contact information. ¹⁰⁸			1,2
Strengthening the Local Economy Through Programs and Services¹⁰⁹			
Do local government officials meet regularly with business groups to discuss the local business climate?			
Strategy 10: Local government staff visit local businesses periodically to discuss their needs, challenges, and opportunities, which the local government could address with a business retention and expansion program. ^{110,111}			1,2,3
Strategy 11: The local government participates in chamber of commerce and other local business organizations’ events to build connections with the business community. ¹¹²			1,2,3

¹⁰³ The city of Ranson, West Virginia, updated its comprehensive plan in 2012. The new plan includes economic development trends, objectives, and actions (pp. 91-102)

http://ransonrenewed.com/?page_id=348.

¹⁰⁴ States do not always require comprehensive plans, but many large towns and small cities in rural areas have them. Villages and small towns typically do not have comprehensive plans unless required by states.

¹⁰⁵ Jefferson County 2012 Adopted Budget (<http://jeffco.us/budget-and-risk-management/adopted-budgets/2012-adopted-budget/>).

¹⁰⁶ City of Middletown Master Plan: Future Land Use (<http://www.cityofmiddletown.org/planning/masterplan.aspx>).

¹⁰⁷ Eugene, Oregon Regional Economic Development Plan (<http://www.eugene-or.gov/index.aspx?NID=815>).

¹⁰⁸ The Caldwell County, North Carolina, Economic Development Commission has information about target sectors and shovel-ready development sites (<http://www.caldwelledc.org>).

¹⁰⁹ Municipalities can create programs and services to help local businesses thrive and expand. By creating public/private partnerships of offering incentives, localities can boost their local economy and benefit from ongoing feedback from business owners and would-be investors.

¹¹⁰ A business retention plan can be designed and implemented by a local government, economic development agency, or business association.

¹¹¹ Richland, Washington Business Retention and Expansion Survey Analysis and Report (<http://www.ci.richland.wa.us/documentcenter/view/941>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

II. Strengthen the Local Economy

Goal: Strengthen the Local Economy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁹⁵
Strategy 12: Local and regional planning agencies keep track of local development projects and incorporate them into their planning efforts.			1,2,3
Strategy 13: The local government has quantitatively assessed key existing employment sectors to understand the industry mix and the sectors' relative importance.			1,2,3
Are funding mechanisms or incentives available for business owners, property owners, or developers?			
Strategy 14: Local government or a governmental entity such as a redevelopment authority has a low-interest, revolving loan fund for businesses that want to expand or locate in the community, or for other economic development purposes. ¹¹³			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Local government or a redevelopment authority offers gap financing for new development projects or building rehabilitation projects, and this policy is well communicated. ¹¹⁴			1,2
Strategy 16: The local government offers temporary property tax or one-time fee abatement for projects in desired growth areas or established centers. ¹¹⁵			1,2
Strategy 17: The local government or a partner organization offers and funds a program to help property owners make façade improvements in the downtown area. ¹¹⁶			1,2
Are there business assistance programs to promote local businesses and jobs?			
Strategy 18: The municipality or other public- or private-sector entities have workforce development programs such as job training.			1,2,3
Strategy 19: Organize local business alliances to foster community-wide marketing, networking, new business development, and governmental coordination.			1,2,3

¹¹² Stafford, Virginia Business Support (<http://www.gostaffordva.com/existing-business-support>).

¹¹³ Brown County, Wisconsin, has established an economic development revolving loan program capitalized with federal Community Development Block Grant funds (<http://www.co.brown.wi.us/departments/?department=2317176c7f00&subdepartment=56759f503d09>). Another example comes from Binghamton, New York, which has established a revolving fund that provides "gap" financing and a micro enterprise loan program (<http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/departments.asp?zone=dept-economic-development&pid=6&pm=page>).

¹¹⁴ Washtenaw County, Michigan Gap Financing for Manufacturing Company Expansion (<http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community-and-economic-development/workforce-development/economic-development-programs/news/eastern-washtenaw-county-gap-financing-fund-pilot-program>).

¹¹⁵ Cincinnati Community Reinvestment Area Residential Tax Abatement (<http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/community-development/housing-assistance/residential-property-tax-abatement/>).

¹¹⁶ Portland, Maine Façade Improvement Program (<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/557/Facade-Improvement-Program>).

II. Strengthen the Local Economy

Goal: Strengthen the Local Economy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁹⁵
Strategy 20: Local government contracting procedures include incentives or requirements to buy local products and services. ¹¹⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 21: A local vendor program exists to encourage and help local companies pursue government contracts. ¹¹⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 22: Business incubator space is available with reduced or temporarily abated rent for startup companies. ¹¹⁹			1
Is there an organized and developed system to foster community development through public-private partnerships?			
Strategy 23: The local government works with a local nonprofit organization focused on implementing programs and projects independently and through public-private partnerships. ¹²⁰			1,2
Strategy 24: The community has adopted a Main Street Program as a strategy for downtown revitalization. ^{121,122}			1,2
Strategy 25: A volunteer, staff person, or nonprofit organization is responsible for tracking grant opportunities and applying for appropriate funding sources to advance community development.			1,2,3
Does the community have business educational programs?			
Strategy 26: Training programs for skills that are in demand are available through local employers, community colleges, and other state and local vocational resources. ¹²³			1,2,3
Strategy 27: Local high schools and employers have cooperative educational programs to provide on-the-job experience for students who do not plan to attend college. ¹²⁴			1,2,3

¹¹⁷ Cedar Rapids, Iowa Local Preference Purchasing Policy (<http://www.cedar-rapids.org/government/departments/purchasing/pages/buylocal.aspx>).

¹¹⁸ Santa Barbara Association of Governments Local Vendor Program (<http://www.sbcag.org/documents.html>).

¹¹⁹ Neshoba County, Mississippi: business incubator that provides space to startup businesses for up to 3 years (<http://www.neshoba.org/businessenterprise.html>).

¹²⁰ St. Louis Community Development Administration (<http://stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/community-development/>).

¹²¹ The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Streets Program helps small towns and cities revitalize their downtowns (<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/#.URqfkx1OzdM>).

¹²² Montpelier Main Street Program, Montpelier Alive (<http://www.montpelieralive.com/>).

¹²³ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund Program (<http://www.mass.gov/lwd/employment-services/business-training-support/wtffp/>).

¹²⁴ The Upper Valley Career Center provides career and technical education to students and adults (<http://www.uppervalleycc.org/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

II. Strengthen the Local Economy

Goal: Strengthen the Local Economy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁹⁵
Is there a local or regional marketing or promotion program?			
Strategy 28: A “buy local” program is established to promote shopping at locally owned businesses. ^{125,126}			1,2
Strategy 29: Encourage former residents to return to the region through events such as job fairs held during holiday periods (i.e., “reverse brain drain”). ¹²⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 30: The community has monthly, bimonthly, or weekly farmers’ markets or street fairs featuring local businesses, goods, and services. ¹²⁸			1,2,3

¹²⁵ Examples include the 3/50 Project (<http://www.the350project.net/home.html>) or ShopCity (<http://www.shopcity.com/>).

¹²⁶ This program can also help connect residents to their community; see the “Engage and Connect Community Members” tool section.

¹²⁷ Asheville, North Carolina, held a “homecoming job fair” on January 3, 2013, that targeted former residents in town during the holiday season, among other groups (<http://www.ashevillechamber.org/asheville/work/job-fair>).

¹²⁸ Norwich, Vermont Farmers Market (<http://www.norwichfarmersmarket.org/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

III. Engage and Connect Community Members

Well-designed roads, sidewalks, buildings, public spaces, and other elements of the built environment support interaction among community members. New communications tools, cultural events and festivals, and opportunities to participate in local government can also build capital, creating a sense of ownership and pride in a community.

Goal: Engage and Connect Community Members	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹²⁹
Engaging the Public in the Planning Process			
Are public participation activities required during the planning process?			
Strategy 1: The City/Town establishes a formal group and a robust and meaningful public engagement process to provide good planning advice to elected officials. ^{130,131,132}			1,2,3
Strategy 2: A public design meeting or charrette is required for planned unit development projects. ¹³³			1,2,3
Strategy 3: Codes require abutting property owners to be notified about potential rezoning, subdivision, or redevelopment proposals so that they can attend the public meetings if they have opinions or concerns. ¹³⁴			1,2,3
Strategy 4: A public review process is required for rezoning. ¹³⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 5: Public participation is required in development of neighborhood plans, comprehensive plan updates, and long-range transportation plans. ^{136,137}			1
Using Design Elements That Encourage Interaction			

¹²⁹ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

¹³⁰ New York's Department of State, Division of Local Government Services has developed a set of local government planning guidance documents. One provides information on conducting public meetings. Another describes establishing a Zoning Board of Appeals. They are available at: (<http://www.dos.ny.gov/lg/publications.html#Planning>).

¹³¹ Jacksonville, Florida Citizens Planning Advisory Committee ([http://www.coj.net/departments/housing-and-neighborhoods/neighborhood-initiatives-\(1\)/citizen-planning-advisory-committees-\(cpacs\).aspx](http://www.coj.net/departments/housing-and-neighborhoods/neighborhood-initiatives-(1)/citizen-planning-advisory-committees-(cpacs).aspx)).

The Mayor appoints CPAC members. Members are nominated through a variety of community, civic, or government organizations located in their district. Eligibility for appointment is determined by the Chief of the Housing and Community Development Division, Planning and Development Department. Committee chairs meet with and advise the Mayor.

¹³² Primer on Local Government Citizen Advisory Boards (<http://mrsc.org/getmedia/72061479-9BA8-48B4-AB1F-CFA62CF7D4F1/lgcab08.aspx>).

¹³³ Bartlesville Metropolitan Planning Area Planned Unit Development Procedure (<http://www.cityofbartlesville.org/page.php?page=1150>).

¹³⁴ Fayetteville Code of Ordinances: Notification and Public Hearings (http://www.cityoffayetteville.org/planning_department/rezoning.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1).

¹³⁵ Gwinnett County Rezoning and Special Use Permit Application Process (<http://www.gwinnettcounty.com/portal/gwinnett/Departments/PlanningandDevelopment/Rezoning-SUP/Process>).

¹³⁶ Public Participation Plan for the Town of Farmington Comprehensive Plan Process (<http://www.co.washington.wi.us/departments.im?Detail=281&Detail=290&Detail=289>).

¹³⁷ Southeastern Wisconsin RPC: Public Participation in the Transportation Planning Process (<http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/Transportation/PublicParticipationintheTransp.htm>).

III. Engage and Connect Community Members

Goal: Engage and Connect Community Members	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹²⁹
Do codes require design elements that promote community interaction?			
Strategy 6: Zoning includes a traditional neighborhood zoning overlay district that requires design elements that encourage interaction such as sidewalks, front porches, and community parks. ¹³⁸			1,2
Strategy 7: Subdivision regulations require sidewalks on new streets. ¹³⁹			1,2
Strategy 8: Subdivision regulations ensure good street connectivity by requiring connections in and between neighborhoods. ¹⁴⁰			1,2
Strategy 9: Codes establish minimum standards for parks and open space in new developments, which includes developing around existing civic gathering spaces. ^{141,142,143}			1,2
Engaging and Connecting Community Members Through Planning and Policies			
Do planning documents or local government policies support development of community-shared spaces?			
Strategy 10: Plans identify potential areas for traditional neighborhood development. ¹⁴⁴			1,2
Strategy 11: Plans encourage a mix of uses and space for social gatherings, such as parks, churches, community centers, schools, and other facilities, in new neighborhood developments. ¹⁴⁵			1,2
Strategy 12: The community owns or has a long-term lease on properties for a centrally located venue such as a stage, farmers' market, park, or other gathering space.			1,2
Strategy 13: Identify or provide public space for a community garden. ¹⁴⁶			1,2

¹³⁸ The town of Dryden, New York's zoning ordinance includes a traditional neighborhood development overlay district. The zoning ordinance is available at: (<http://dryden.ny.us/departments/planning-department/>).

¹³⁹ Model Sidewalk Regulations – Zoning & Subdivision (http://www.pvpc.org/val_vision/html/toolbox/Part%20III%20Strategies/Model%20Bylaws/Model%20Sidewalk%20Regulations.rtf).

¹⁴⁰ Street Connectivity: Zoning and Subdivision Model Ordinance (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/land_use/land_use_tools/page04.cfm).

¹⁴¹ Model Conservation Subdivision / Open Space Development Ordinance (<http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/communityassistance/ModelOrdinancesGuides.htm>).

¹⁴² Madison County, Idaho: Open Space Development Ordinance (<http://www.co.madison.id.us/index.php/depts/planning-a-zoning/41-ordinances>).

¹⁴³ Open Space Incentive Zoning in Saratoga Springs, New York (http://www.saratoga-springs.org/index.php?option=com_remository&Itemid=67&func=startdown&id=1345).

¹⁴⁴ Madison, Wisconsin: Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/planning/pumpkinhollow.html>).

¹⁴⁵ Parkville, Missouri: Master Plan: Park, Civic and Open Spaces (<http://parkvillemo.gov/departments/community-development-department/master-plan/>).

¹⁴⁶ Williamson, West Virginia, has provided public land for a community garden through its Sustainable Williamson program (<http://cityofwilliamson.org/Projects.html>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

III. Engage and Connect Community Members

Goal: Engage and Connect Community Members	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹²⁹
Do planning processes or government policies promote strong community engagement?			
Strategy 14: Hold regular community meetings, in locations and at times that allow people on different schedules and in different parts of the community to attend, to encourage public participation in developing plans and other land use regulations. ¹⁴⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Translate public meeting materials into the languages used by predominant minority populations in the community.			1,2,3
Strategy 16: Translation services are available for meetings where attendees speak English as a second language.			1,2,3
Strategy 17: The local government or a partner conducts community assessments, such as walking audits, to collect information about local needs and opportunities. ¹⁴⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 18: Form citizen advisory councils community-wide, or for individual neighborhoods to provide input on development review and policy decisions. ¹³²			1,2
Strategy 19: Surveys elicit feedback from residents on various community issues. ¹⁴⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 20: Websites, social media tools, or public access television stations provide broadcasts or recordings of community meetings for those unable to attend in person. ¹⁵⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 21: The local government or a partner distributes a weekly bulletin of community meetings via email, local paper, direct-mailers, or others forms of communication accessible to everyone. ¹⁵¹			1,2,3
Engaging and Connecting Community Members Through Programs and Services			
Are community, cultural, or business coordination events supported through programs or services?			
Strategy 22: Local school clubs or groups engage in civic activities to build interest in and commitment to improving the community. ¹⁵²			1,2,3

¹⁴⁷ Clackamas County Land Use Meetings Best Practices (<http://www.clackamas.us/citizenin/communicating.html>).

¹⁴⁸ The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center provides information on walking audits (<http://www.walkinginfo.org/problems/audits.cfm>).

¹⁴⁹ Benson Hill Community Plan and Survey Results (http://rentonwa.gov/uploadedFiles/Business/CED/planning/2013/1120_BensonPlan_DRAFT_2013-03-11.pdf).

¹⁵⁰ Plan 2040 Public Outreach will Utilize Online Public Meetings (<http://landmatters.wordpress.com/2010/04/22/plan-2040-public-outreach-will-utilize-online-public-meetings/>).

¹⁵¹ Kirkland Planning Public Meeting Calendar with email updates (http://www.kirklandwa.gov/depart/planning/Planning_Public_Meeting_Calendar.htm).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

III. Engage and Connect Community Members

Goal: Engage and Connect Community Members	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹²⁹
Strategy 23: The local government designates a special events coordinator to support seasonal community activities. ¹⁵³			1,2
Strategy 24: The local government works with local civic youth groups (e.g., YMCA or Big Brothers) to identify community health and social needs. ¹⁵⁴			1,2,3
Strategy 25: The community provides programs and incentives to help residents share resources, co-produce, and create their own jobs through a sharing economy. ^{155,156}			1,2,3
Are there programs to facilitate better community interaction?			
Strategy 26: The local government or a partner hosts periodic community meals to bring together residents to discuss topical local issues. ¹⁵⁷			1,2, 3
Strategy 27: Local events such as fairs or school sports games include a kiosk or information booth to provide information about upcoming planning activities or other community issues. ¹⁵⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 28: Bulletins and newsletters of local organizations, such as churches, provide information about upcoming planning activities or other community issues. ¹⁵⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 29: The community has walking tours to inform residents about community history and assets. ¹⁶⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 30: Coordinate with downtown merchants on seasonal or locally relevant downtown window display themes. ¹⁶¹			1,2

¹⁵² In Brownsville, Pennsylvania, the Students in Action club at the high school is leading a project to transform a vacant lot downtown into a community park with a performing arts space. Many small towns and rural communities are concerned about retaining younger residents. Groups like Student in Action can help young people feel invested in their community (<https://sites.google.com/site/ofrstudentsinaction/>).

¹⁵³ Examples of seasonal community activities include Trail Days in Damascus, Virginia; Rib Fest in Salamanca, New York; and the Johnny Race in Independence, Virginia. A coalition of groups often supports such events that include the local government and the chamber of commerce.

¹⁵⁴ Ann Arbor YMCA: Youth in Government program (<http://www.annarborymca.org/youth-government.php>).

¹⁵⁵ Local Governments and the Sharing Economy Project (<http://www.oneearthweb.org/local-governments-and-the-sharing-economy.html>).

¹⁵⁶ Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders (<http://www.shareable.net/blog/new-report-policies-for-shareable-cities>).

¹⁵⁷ Richmond, California Dinner Dialogue (<http://bbk-richmond.org/iron-triangle-residents-engage-in-crucial-conversations-at-dinner-dialogues/>).

¹⁵⁸ Lawrence, Kansas Farmers' Market Community Booth (http://www.lawrencefarmersmarket.com/community_booth.php).

¹⁵⁹ Gleason Public Library Community Bulletin Board (<http://www.gleasonlibrary.org/displays.htm>).

¹⁶⁰ Orange Community Historical Society: Historical Walking Tours (<http://www.historicalorange.org/historical-walking-tours/>).

III. Engage and Connect Community Members

Goal: Engage and Connect Community Members	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹²⁹
Strategy 31: The community has buy-local and community gardening educational programs. ^{162,163}			1,2,3
Strategy 32: The community hosts monthly cleanup days. ¹⁶⁴			1,2,3
Does the local government have an online presence to educate residents and visitors about available services and foster communication?			
Strategy 33: The local government offers online information such as agendas, meeting minutes, contact information, and land use information through multiple platforms (e.g., website or Facebook) and formats (e.g., PDF documents or GIS map application). ^{165,166}			1,2
Strategy 34: The local government uses social media and a website to communicate with the public and solicit feedback. ¹⁶⁷			1,2,3

¹⁶¹ Ambler Main Street Annual Window Display Contest (http://www.montgomerynews.com/articles/2014/12/09/ambler_gazette/news/doc548735df3cc3b135054104.txt).

¹⁶² Sullivan County Shop Local Campaign (<http://sullivancountynyprod.weblinkconnect.com/shop-local.html>).

¹⁶³ Somerville, Massachusetts Community Gardens (<http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/concom/gardens>).

¹⁶⁴ Bethlehem, New York Community Cleanup Days (<http://www.townofbethlehem.org/317/Community-Clean-Up-Days>).

¹⁶⁵ A Local Official's Guide to Online Public Engagement (<http://www.ca-ilg.org/public-engagement-technology>).

¹⁶⁶ Institute for Local Government Public Engagement and Technology (<http://www.ca-ilg.org/PEandTechnology>).

¹⁶⁷ Chapel Hill, North Carolina Social Media (<http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/news-events/social-media>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Building walkable and bikeable communities helps people live more active lives and supports better health. Improving transportation options and bringing different land uses, such as houses, parks, medical facilities, offices, and stores closer together improves access to recreational facilities, health care facilities, and healthy foods. More compact development patterns also protect ecosystems that are critical to clean air, soil, and water. Setting aside land for parks and green space, better connecting streets in new development to make walking and biking easier, and reducing stormwater runoff that can pollute water supplies help achieve these goals.

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Supporting Agriculture in Cities, Towns, and Villages for Easier Access to Healthy Foods			
Do codes allow appropriately scaled food production in residential areas?			
Strategy 1: Zoning permits gardening or other small-scale plant cultivation and associated structures. ^{169,170}			1,2
Strategy 2: Zoning permits small-scale animal husbandry, including chickens, goats, ducks, rabbits, and bees, and associated structures in appropriate areas. ¹⁷⁰			1,2
Strategy 3: Zoning permits on-site composting and associated structures. ¹⁷¹			1,2
Strategy 4: Opportunities for community gardening exist on public land. ^{172,173,174}			1,2
Encouraging Opportunities for Stores That Sell Healthy Food			
Do codes encourage stores that sell healthy food?			
Strategy 5: Zoning incentives encourage healthy food retailers to locate in villages and activity centers. ^{175,176,177,178}			1,2

¹⁶⁸ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000) 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

¹⁶⁹ Promoting Urban Agriculture Through Zoning (<http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/topics/food-systems/urban-agriculture/promoting-urban-agriculture-through-zoning>).

¹⁷⁰ Cleveland, Ohio: Urban Agriculture Policies (<http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/topics/food-systems/urban-agriculture/urban-agriculture-policies-city-of-cleveland-ohio>).

¹⁷¹ Urban Agriculture, Composting, and Zoning (<http://cccfoodpolicy.org/document/ohio-epa-urban-agriculture-composting-and-zoning-zoning-code-model-promoting-composting-and>).

¹⁷² Establishing Protections for Community Gardens (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/establishing-protections-community-gardens>).

¹⁷³ Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition Land Use & Planning policy brief (<http://cccfoodpolicy.org/working-group/land-use-planning>).

¹⁷⁴ Community gardens can also help connect residents to each other and their community; see the “Engage and Connect Community Members” tool section.

¹⁷⁵ Promoting Food Access with Comprehensive Planning and Ordinances (<http://designforhealth.net/food-access/>).

¹⁷⁶ Getting to Grocery: Tools For Attracting Healthy Food Retail to Underserved Neighborhoods (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/getting-grocery>).

¹⁷⁷ Opportunities for Increasing Access to Healthy Foods in Washington, Chapter 4 (http://depts.washington.edu/waaction/tools/featured_resources/access_report.html).

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Strategy 6: Zoning allows farmers' markets, farm stands, and community-supported agriculture distribution in appropriate locations. ^{179,180,181,182}			1,2
Promoting Access to Open Space and Recreational Opportunities			
Do codes ensure access from residential areas to open space and recreation opportunities?			
Strategy 7: New residential developments are required when practical to include public open space or provide access to adjacent open space. ^{183,184,185}			1,2,3
Strategy 8: Zoning, expedited review, and other incentives encourage private recreational facilities to locate in villages and activity centers. ^{186,187}			1,2,3
Promoting Active Transportation			
Do codes make it safe and convenient to walk, bike, and take public transit?			
Strategy 9: Zoning requires compact, mixed-use development in key activity centers for new development and redevelopment. ^{188,189,190,191,192}			1,2,3

¹⁷⁸ Community Design for Healthy Eating: How Land Use and Transportation Solutions Can Help (<https://folio.iupui.edu/handle/10244/561>).

¹⁷⁹ Farmers' markets can also help support local farmers; see the "Strengthen the Local and Regional Economies" tool section.

¹⁸⁰ From the Ground Up: Land Use Policies to Protect and Promote Farmers' Markets (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/land-use-farmers-markets>).

¹⁸¹ Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Farm Stand Zoning Law (<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter40a/Section3>).

¹⁸² Urban Food Zoning Code Update (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/402598>).

¹⁸³ Metropolitan North Georgia: Model Conservation Subdivision/Open Space Development Ordinance (<http://www.northgeorgiawater.org/stormwater/model-ordinances>).

¹⁸⁴ Madison County, Idaho: Open Space Development Ordinance (<http://www.co.madison.id.us/index.php/depts/planning-a-zoning/41-ordinances>).

¹⁸⁵ Open Space Incentive Zoning in Saratoga Springs, New York (http://www.saratoga-springs.org/index.php?option=com_remository&Itemid=67&func=startdown&id=1345).

¹⁸⁶ Georgia Department of Community Affairs Opportunity Zones (<http://www.dca.ga.gov/economic/DevelopmentTools/programs/opportunityZones.asp>).

¹⁸⁷ City of Elba, Alabama: Planning and Zoning (<http://www.elbaalabama.net/government/planning-and-zoning>).

¹⁸⁸ Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes (http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/essential_fixes.htm).

¹⁸⁹ Sustainable Planning & Zoning Handbook (<http://vibrantneo.org/news/learn-and-act-sustainable-planning-and-zoning-in-stark-county/>).

¹⁹⁰ Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook: Section 1.5 Village Plan Alternative (http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/innovative_land_use.htm).

¹⁹¹ Form-Based Zoning for Small Towns and Historic Neighborhoods (<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Development-Types-and-Land-Uses/Traditional-Neighborhood-Development-and-Form-%281%29.aspx>).

¹⁹² Vermont Natural Resources Council: Mixed Use Development (<http://vnrc.org/resources/community-planning-toolbox/tools/mixed-use-development/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Strategy 10: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure is required to be considered for inclusion in all new road construction, reconstruction, or maintenance projects. ^{193,194}			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Zoning requires new developments to include pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly features, including sidewalks, maximum setbacks from the street, reduced parking, and bicycle parking. ^{195,196,197,198}			1,2,3
Strategy 12: Emphasize increased connectivity when expanding the street network by limiting cul-de-sacs and dead ends, which are disconnected and inefficient elements of urban form.			1,2,3
Strategy 13: Traffic calming and context-sensitive street design guidelines are adopted and apply to streets in downtowns, around schools, in residential neighborhoods, and in other key activity centers. ^{199,200}			1,2,3
Strategy 14: All new private sidewalks are constructed to ADA standards. ^{201,202}			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Property owners are required to keep sidewalks clear and free of obstructions, including vehicles, landscaping, and snow and ice. ^{203,204}			1,2,3
Encouraging Land Use and Building Design That Promote Health			
Do codes encourage health-related facilities to locate in villages and activity centers and communities?			
Strategy 16: Zoning, expedited review, and other incentives encourage health care providers, housing for older adults, assisted living facilities, and rehab centers to locate in villages and activity centers with transit and pedestrian facilities.			1,2

¹⁹³ Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/guides/complete-streets-local-policy-workbook/>).

¹⁹⁴ Model Local Ordinance on Complete Streets (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy/model-policy/>).

¹⁹⁵ Georgia Pedestrian & Streetscape Guide (<http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/library/details.cfm?id=87>).

¹⁹⁶ Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts (<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Specific-Planning-Subjects,-Plan-Elements/Design-Review/Design-Review-Guidelines-and-Code-Provisions.aspx>).

¹⁹⁷ Design Guidelines: Village and Gateway Districts, Town of Coventry (<http://www.coventryct.org/index.aspx?nid=189>).

¹⁹⁸ Design Guidelines for Traditional Neighborhood Developments (http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-tnd.html).

¹⁹⁹ Evaluation of Gateway and Low-Cost Traffic Calming Treatments for Major Routes in Small, Rural Communities (<http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/research/detail.cfm?projectId=-226410767>).

²⁰⁰ Town of Moraga Traffic Calming Guide (<http://www.moraga.ca.us/committees/tsac/about>).

²⁰¹ 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.htm>).

²⁰² Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalks/).

²⁰³ Common Pedestrian Problems and Solutions: Sidewalks (<http://www.walkinginfo.org/problems/problems-sidewalks.cfm>).

²⁰⁴ Carrboro Town Code: Chapter 7 - Streets and Sidewalks (<http://www.ci.carrboro.nc.us/139/Carrboro-Town-Code>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Strategy 17: Adopt healthy building design standards. ^{205,206,207}			1,2
Improving Health and Promoting Active Living Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Do local officials perform studies to identify, analyze, and reduce health threats?			
Strategy 18: City health officials conduct Health Impact Assessments on major developments and infrastructure projects to promote healthy design and reduce potential negative health and environmental impacts. ^{208,209,210}			1,2,3
Strategy 19: Identify and mitigate environmental threats such as air pollution, water pollution, toxic and chemical exposures, noise pollution, brownfield sites, and wildlife threats. ²¹¹			1,2,3
Do policies support community collaboration on plans, investments, and policies?			
Strategy 20: Local and regional planning, school, recreation, transit, transportation, and public health departments and agencies collaborate on plans, investments, and policies. ²¹²			1,2,3
Strategy 21: An accessible public involvement process engages residents in local health-related planning decisions. ²¹³			1,2
Strategy 22: The local government offers publicly owned space or establishes a shared-use agreement with a private or nonprofit facility for a community kitchen that improves access to healthy foods for low-income people and engenders community interaction. ^{214,215,216}			1,2

²⁰⁵ Healthy Buildings, Healthy People - an EPA publication addressing the future of indoor environmental quality (<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/hbhp.html>).

²⁰⁶ Housing and Building Codes (http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Coalition_briefing_paper_standards.pdf).

²⁰⁷ Laws, Rules, and Codes for Healthier Homes (<http://www.healthyhometraining.org/codes/index.htm>).

²⁰⁸ CDC's Health Impact Assessment (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>).

²⁰⁹ Health Impact Assessment: A Guide for Practice (<http://www.sfhealthequity.org/component/download/finish/18/89>).

²¹⁰ National Association of County and City Health Officials' Health Impact Assessment: (<http://www.naccho.org/topics/environmental/health-impact-assessment/>).

²¹¹ EPA's Human Health Risk Assessment (http://www.epa.gov/risk_assessment/health-risk.htm).

²¹² Intergovernmental Collaboration Goals and Objectives (<http://www.dubuquesmartplan.org/chapters/intergov/goals.cfm>).

²¹³ Developing Effective Citizen Engagement: A How-To Guide for Community Leaders (http://www.rural.palegislatore.us/publications_reports.html).

²¹⁴ Community Kitchen Program Manual (http://66.51.166.128/toolbox_kitchens07.htm).

²¹⁵ Shared-use Kitchen Planning Toolkit (<http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/09-22-2014/shared-use-kitchen-toolkit>).

²¹⁶ Playing Smart: Maximizing the Potential of School and Community Property through Joint Use Agreements (http://kaboom.org/resources/joint_use).

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Strategy 23: Seek grant funding, loans, and other financial support to build or attract medical facilities. ^{217,218,219}			1,2
Are plans in place that support and improve walking and bicycling?			
Strategy 24: Shared-use agreements expand public access to recreational facilities at schools, churches, and other locations. ^{220,221}			1,2
Strategy 25: The community offers recreational opportunities in parks, indoor facilities, and access to natural recreation opportunities. ²²²			1,2,3
Strategy 26: Critical gaps in pedestrian and bicycle networks are identified and filled in downtowns, around schools, in residential neighborhoods, and in other key activity centers. ^{223,224}			1,2
Strategy 27: Sidewalks and trails between downtowns, schools, residential neighborhoods, and other activity centers connect to form a regional pedestrian and bicycle network. ^{225,226}			1,2,3
Strategy 28: High-risk locations for pedestrians and cyclists are identified and targeted for improvement in community or neighborhood plans. ^{227,228,229}			1,2,3
Strategy 29: The local government encourages walking and biking to school by collaborating with local schools on Safe Routes to School programs. ²³⁰			1,2

²¹⁷ Capital Assistance Funding: A Rural Health Resource Guide (http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/capital_assistance.htm).

²¹⁸ Manning Regional Healthcare Center Celebrates Groundbreaking (<http://rurdev.sc.egov.usda.gov/STELPRD4017629.html>).

²¹⁹ Rural Health Funding Sources: National Foundations (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/foundat.htm>).

²²⁰ Model Joint Use Agreement Resources (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/model-JUAs-national>).

²²¹ Best Practices Tool Kit for Shared Use Agreements in Mississippi (<http://www.communitycommons.org/saresources/best-practices-tool-kit-for-shared-use-agreements-in-mississippi/>).

²²² Planning for Parks and Open Space in Your Community (<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks,-Open-Space,-and-Trails-Planning/Park-Planning,-Design,-and-Open-Space.aspx>).

²²³ Bicycle and Pedestrian Sample Plans (http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/sample_plans.cfm).

²²⁴ Kane County Pedestrian Design Guide (<http://www.manualmake.com/system/854080/>).

²²⁵ Wisconsin Rural Bicycle Planning Guide (<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/bike.htm>).

²²⁶ Scott County Rural Regional Trail Development & Design Guidelines (<http://www.co.scott.mn.us/PropertyGISLand/2030CompPlan/DetailedAreaPlanStudy/Pages/DAPRuralTrailAnalysis.aspx>).

²²⁷ Factors Contributing to Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes on Rural Highways (<http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/163774.aspx>).

²²⁸ Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System (<http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsafe/>).

²²⁹ Bicycle Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System (http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/training/webinars_PBIC_LC_021915.cfm).

²³⁰ Introduction to Safe Routes to School: the Health, Safety, and Transportation Nexus (<http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/>).

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Strategy 30: Provide transit service (equipped to transport bicycles) between village, activity, and residential centers, and users can safely and conveniently reach transit stops. ²³¹			1,2
Strategy 31: New school facilities are located in village centers or near existing communities. ²³²			1,2
Strategy 32: Health care providers, transit providers, taxi services, and nonprofits collaborate to establish reliable transportation to medical appointments for people who do not drive. ^{233,234}			1,2,3
Improving Health and Promoting Active Living Through Programs and Services			
Are there programs for health providers and employers to improve residents' access to health care?			
Strategy 33: Local and regional coalitions of government agencies, nonprofits, businesses, and institutions pool resources and expertise to design healthier communities and encourage healthier living. ^{235,236,237}			1,2,3
Strategy 34: Major employers provide health insurance, incentives for healthy living, and health promotion programs. ²³⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 35: Local employers, health care providers, state agencies, and insurance providers provide incentives/subsidies to expand health insurance coverage as broadly as possible.			1,2,3
Strategy 36: Provide health services, with an emphasis on health promotion and preventative services, to the under- or un-insured, either directly or through local care providers.			1,2,3
Strategy 37: Encourage local health care providers to establish regularly scheduled clinics in villages or activity centers near underserved populations. ²³⁹			1,2,3

²³¹ Toolkit for Rural Transit Planning (<http://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/by-topic-rural-transportation/>).

²³² Planning for Schools and Livable Communities: The Oregon School Siting Handbook (http://www.ncef.org/rl/site_selection.cfm).

²³³ Medical Transportation Toolkit and Best Practices (<http://trid.trb.org/view.aspx?id=846197>).

²³⁴ Senior Transportation: Toolkit and Best Practices (<http://webbuilder.nationalrtap.org/findanything/FreeandLowCostResources/InformationandBestPractices.aspx>).

²³⁵ Gold Country Region Healthy Eating Active Living Collaborative (<https://healthedcouncil.org/programs/nutrition-fitness/>).

²³⁶ Mount Ascutney Prevention Partnership, a prevention coalition focused on policy and community environment improvements (<http://www.mappvt.org/>).

²³⁷ California Healthier Living Coalition (<http://www.cahealthierliving.org/healthier-living-coalition/>).

²³⁸ Workplace Health Promotion Toolkit (<http://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/>).

²³⁹ Mobile Health Clinics Association (<http://www.mobilehca.org/>).

IV. Improve Health and Promote Active Living

Goal: Improve Health and Promote Active Living	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ¹⁶⁸
Are there programs promoting access to healthy food?			
Strategy 38: Incentives ensure economic access to healthy foods for low-income residents. ²⁴⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 39: Local farmers have program vehicles to serve fresh food in school lunches. ²⁴¹			1,2
Strategy 40: Local retailers and restaurants increase fresh & healthy food offerings while limiting stock, sizes, and advertising for unhealthy food and beverages, alcohol, and tobacco products. ^{242,243}			1,2
Strategy 41: Healthy eating and cooking programs are available to the community. ^{244,245}			1,2
Are there programs supporting recreation and fitness?			
Strategy 42: Recreational equipment such as bikes, snowshoes, and cross-country skis is available through a community center, school, library, or commercial partner for residents to rent or borrow. ²⁴⁶			1,2
Strategy 43: Schools provide afterschool physical activity programs for students.			1,2
Strategy 44: The community has recreational or exercise clubs and programs.			1,2
Strategy 45: Encourage or incentivize landowners to provide recreational trails and access to or through private lands. ²⁴⁷			3
Strategy 46: The local government offers education, encouragement, and incentives for residents to walk, bike, use transit, or carpool. ²⁴⁸			1,2,3

²⁴⁰ 3 SquaresVT, a federal USDA program for stretching food budgets (<http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/3SquaresVT>).

²⁴¹ Getting Started with Farm to School (<http://www.farmtoschool.org/get-started>).

²⁴² Healthy Corner Stores Network: New Orleans (<http://www.healthycornerstores.org/tag/new-orleans>).

²⁴³ State Initiatives Supporting Healthier Food Retail: An Overview of the National Landscape (<http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/resources/library/state-initiatives-supporting-healthier-food-retail>).

²⁴⁴ Community-Based Nutrition Awareness Program (<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/educational-and-community-based-programs>).

²⁴⁵ Eat Your Way to Good Health (<http://www.rocklandsteps.org/nutrition-program>).

²⁴⁶ Organizers say bike rental program for low-income adults a success (<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2010/08/26/bike-lending-program>).

²⁴⁷ Model Trail Easement Agreement and Commentary (http://conservationtools.org/libraries/1/library_items/324).

²⁴⁸ Alternative Transportation Incentive Program (<http://www.smc.edu/StudentServices/transportation/Pages/STIP-FAQ.aspx>).

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V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Directing development away from critical natural habitats and ecosystems and minimizing impacts from new development, such as increased stormwater runoff, help rural communities protect the waterways, forests, mountains, view sheds, and farmlands that are critical to their economic health, especially in places valued for their scenic or recreational assets. Providing incentives to use green infrastructure and preserve open space, along with programs to educate residents on the importance of land conservation, helps communities maintain their valuable natural resources.

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Using Water More Efficiently			
Do codes require water efficiency and stormwater runoff reduction in new development and redevelopment?			
Strategy 1: Codes require new homes to meet at least the minimum requirements of a program designed to use water more efficiently and improve water quality. ²⁵⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 2: Codes encourage re-use of gray water where some or all water used in a building is captured, treated, and used or reused on site. ²⁵¹			1,2,3
Strategy 3: Codes include incentives or requirements for green infrastructure including permeable pavement, vegetated swales near roadways, green roofs, and rain gardens. ^{252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257}			1,2,3
Strategy 4: The code includes guidelines for stormwater runoff reduction strategies, such as green infrastructure and building standards. ^{258, 5,9,6,4,11}			1,2,3

²⁴⁹ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands and natural areas outside of towns, villages and cities).

²⁵⁰ One example of a program is EPA's WaterSense New Homes Specification (http://www.epa.gov/watersense/new_homes/index.html).

²⁵¹ US EPA Region 9 Water Recycling and Reuse: The Environmental Benefits (<http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/recycling/>).

²⁵² Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership: Rain Garden and Rain Barrel Incentive Program (http://www.stormwaterelkco.org/pages.php?section=homeowners&item=Rain_Garden_and_Rain_Barrel_Incentive_Program).

²⁵³ Portland EcoRoof Incentive Program (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/48724>).

²⁵⁴ Plant Connection - Green Roof Legislation, Policies, and Tax Incentives (<http://www.myplantconnection.com/green-roofs-legislation.php>).

²⁵⁵ Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District: Stormwater BMP Incentive Program: Vegetated Swales (http://www.rwmwd.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7BAAF12B9B-AF31-48C8-B303-86C8ECA92851%7D).

²⁵⁶ Burlington, Vermont pervious pavement incentive program (<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/docs/4083.pdf>).

²⁵⁷ US EPA Green Infrastructure Library (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/index.cfm>).

²⁵⁸ Dakota County, Minnesota Low Impact Development Standards (<http://www.dakotaswcd.org/lowimpact.html>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 5: In mitigating site stormwater loads, stormwater runoff reduction strategies can be used to calculate offsets to stormwater requirements using conventional strategies such as retention ponds. ²⁵⁹			1,2,3
Do codes promote reduced water use in landscaping?			
Strategy 6: Codes provide incentives for rain barrels and cisterns. ²⁶⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 7: Climate-appropriate and native plants that use less water are encouraged or required. ^{261,262}			1,2,3
Strategy 8: Guidelines exist for climate-appropriate and native landscape design. ²⁶³			1,2,3
Regulating Development Near Water Resources			
Do codes limit new development or redevelopment on wetlands or in flood plains?			
Strategy 9: Local land use regulations require riparian and wetland buffer areas. ^{264,265, 266}			1,2,3
Strategy 10: New development is prohibited in flood plains unless it is a use that can be flooded without threatening property or human life. ^{267,268}			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Local governments evaluate development proposals near rivers for upstream and downstream impacts.			1,2,3
Strategy 12: Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land where the elevation is lower than the elevation of the 100-year flood as defined by FEMA.			1,2,3

²⁵⁹ City of Sandy, Oregon Stormwater Management Incentive Program (<http://www.ci.sandy.or.us/Stormwater-Management-Incentive-Program/>).

²⁶⁰ Cisterns can be permanent structures underground or above ground or non-permanent manufactured vessels that are typically above ground.

²⁶¹ Lake County, Florida Model Landscape Ordinance Requiring the Use and Preservation of Appropriate Native Vegetation.

(https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/departments/public_resources/agricultural_education/soil_and_water_conservation_district/model_landscape_ordinance.aspx).

²⁶² Austin, Texas WaterWise Landscape Rebate program (<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/waterwise-landscape-rebate>).

²⁶³ USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Living Landscapes in Minnesota: A Guide To Native Plantscaping

(<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/publications/plantmaterials/pmc/central/ndpmc/pub/>).

²⁶⁴ An example of a buffer would be a 50-foot undisturbed buffer from the top of bank.

²⁶⁵ River Basin Center. Model Riparian Buffer Ordinance (http://www.rivercenter.uga.edu/research/tools/buffers/model_buffer_ordinance.htm).

²⁶⁶ Association of State Wetland Managers. Model Ordinances for Regulating Wetlands and Riparian Habitats/Stream Buffers (<http://www.aswm.org/watersheds/streams/897-publications>).

²⁶⁷ Knox County, Tennessee Floodplain Management Regulations (<http://www.knoxcounty.org/stormwater/volume2.php>).

²⁶⁸ US EPA. Planning for Flood Recovery and Long-Term Resilience in Vermont: Smart Growth Approaches for Disaster-Resilient Communities (<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/disaster-recovery-resilience.htm>).

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V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 13: Regulations require restoration of degraded riparian or wetland areas of a development site. ²⁶⁹			1,2,3
Do codes regulate uses to protect source water for wellheads or sensitive aquifers?			
Strategy 14: The community has wellhead and/or aquifer protection regulations or zones to prevent incompatible development and uses. ^{270,271}			1,2,3
Do codes require stormwater management and monitoring on site in new developments or redevelopments?			
Strategy 15: Codes include provisions exist to minimize or reduce the amount of impervious surface. ²⁷²			1,2,3
Strategy 16: Stormwater quality and quantity performance standards exist for development sites. ^{273,274}			1,2,3
Strategy 17: Measures are required to limit waste during construction from flowing into water bodies and the stormwater system to protect water quality. ²⁷⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 18: Pollution monitoring and mitigation strategies reduce harm to natural resources during construction. ²⁷⁶			1,2,3
Protecting Open Spaces for Agriculture, Recreation, and Wildlife			
Do codes require land use regulations to protect open spaces or natural resources?			
Strategy 19: Critical water resource areas cannot be counted in calculating allowable density on a site. ²⁷⁷			1,2
Strategy 20: Prohibit development on previously undeveloped land within a setback to any endangered or protected fish and wildlife habitat or wetland conservation area. ²⁷⁸			1,2,3

²⁶⁹ Pima County, Arizona Regulated Riparian Habitat Mitigation Standards and Implementation Guidelines (http://webcms.pima.gov/government/flood_control/rules_and_procedures/).

²⁷⁰ Norway, Maine Wellhead Protection Ordinance for Norway Maine (http://norwaymaine.com/n/?page_id=301).

²⁷¹ Town of Canton, Connecticut Aquifer Protection Regulations (<http://www.townofcantonct.org/content/19174/120/17179/3546/default.aspx>).

²⁷² Town of Washington, Connecticut Zoning Regulations, Maximum Lot Coverage (http://www.riversalliance.org/ModelOrdinances/Town_of_Washington_Zoning_Reg_Impervious_Surface.htm).

²⁷³ An example would be the restriction on sedimentation levels.

²⁷⁴ Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. Model Ordinance for Post-Development Stormwater Management for New Development and Redevelopment.

(<http://www.northgeorgiawater.org/stormwater/model-ordinances>).

²⁷⁵ Wisconsin Construction Site Storm Water Permits (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/stormwater/construction/>).

²⁷⁶ City of Gilroy, California Storm Water & Urban Runoff Management (http://www.cityofgilroy.org/cityofgilroy/city_hall/community_development/engineering/storm_water/default.aspx).

²⁷⁷ EPA Water Quality Scorecard: Incorporating Green Infrastructure Practices at the Municipal, Neighborhood, and Site Scale (http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/water_scorecard.htm).

V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 21: Land development regulations protect steep slopes, hillsides, and other sensitive areas. ^{279,280}			1,2,3
Strategy 22: Street lights and commercial lighting directs light to the streets to preserve dark skies. ²⁸¹			1,2,3
Are there open space creation or preservation requirements?			
Strategy 23: The local government uses open space or recreation impact fees to preserve open space. ²⁸²			1,2,3
Strategy 24: Open space dedication and/or set-aside requirements exist and are based on the demand generated by new development. ^{283,284}			1,2
Do codes support appropriate development in agricultural areas?			
Strategy 25: There are agricultural, ranching, or forestry zoning districts that allow large minimum lot size. ^{285,286}			1,2,3
Protecting the Tree Canopy			
Do codes require tree protection strategies during construction?			
Strategy 26: Public trees removed or damaged during construction of private development are required to be replaced on- or off-site with an equivalent amount of tree caliper. ^{287,288}			1,2

²⁷⁸ Clallam County, Washington Critical Areas Code (<http://www.clallam.net/Permits/criticalarea.html>).

²⁷⁹ For example, by limiting development on slopes greater than 30 percent or requiring large lot sizes in sensitive areas.

²⁸⁰ Town of Boone, North Carolina Steep Slope Regulations Brochure. (http://www.townofboone.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=94:planning-a-inspections&catid=82:important-links&Itemid=463).

²⁸¹ The Maricopa County, Arizona Dark Sky Ordinance is a zoning ordinance controlling use of outdoor artificial illuminating devices (<http://www.maricopa.gov/planning/Resources/Ordinances/DarkSkyOrdinance.aspx>).

²⁸² Town of Cumberland, Maine Recreational Facilities and Open Space Impact Fee Ordinance (http://cumberlandmaine.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Impact_Fee_2nd_Amendments_current_adopted_7_23_12_fillable_application1.pdf).

²⁸³ For example, the National Parks and Recreation Association recommends 10 acres of community and neighborhood parks for every 1,000 persons in a development.

²⁸⁴ Creating Open Space in Clifton Park (<http://www.cliftonpark.org/townhall/open-space-trails-and-riverfront-advisory-committee/>).

²⁸⁵ Ranges for minimum lot sizes could vary from 5 to 80 acres depending on the context and the purpose behind establishing the particular development pattern.

²⁸⁶ Farmland Information Center. Agricultural Protection Zoning (<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/agricultural-protection-zoning>).

²⁸⁷ For example, if a developer removes a 24-inch diameter tree, he would replace it with six 4-inch diameter trees.

²⁸⁸ Round Rock, Texas Tree Ordinance (<http://www.roundrocktexas.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/forestry/tree-ordinance/>).

V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 27: Construction protection rules exist, covering all public trees. ^{289,290}			1,2,3
Protecting Natural Habitats and Ecosystems Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Does the local government provide incentives to landowners to conserve land?			
Strategy 28: A transfer of development rights program exists and enables transactions between well-defined sending and receiving areas. ²⁹¹			1,2,3
Strategy 29: Local tax credits are available for land conservation. ²⁹²			1,2,3
Are there policies to create designated growth areas and preserve rural areas?			
Strategy 30: Designated growth areas and preservation areas are defined by a municipal services area, municipal development area, or similar designation. ^{293,294}			1,2,3
Strategy 31: Urbanized, town center policies allow for more dense development in the core downtown area of the community. ²⁹⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 32: Designate and protect critical natural lands outside of the town centers, identifying areas that have a strong rural legacy. ²⁹⁶			3
Are there cleanup or restoration requirements to preserve or restore biological diversity?			
Strategy 33: Brownfield and other contaminated sites have been successfully remediated. ²⁹⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 34: Consider restoration and preservation of regional biodiversity in plans, with a focus on promoting native species and avoiding and eliminating invasive species. ²⁹⁸			1,2,3

²⁸⁹ Construction protection rules might include fencing around trees and avoiding cutting into root zones.

²⁹⁰ Norfolk, Virginia Zoning Ordinance, Trees and Other Vegetation (https://www.municode.com/library/va/norfolk/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodid=COCL_CH45TROTV).

²⁹¹ King County, Washington Transfer of Development Rights Program (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/stewardship/sustainable-building/transfer-development-rights/overview.aspx>).

²⁹² Land Trust Alliance. Tax Incentives (<http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/tax-matters/campaigns/state-tax-incentives>).

²⁹³ Albemarle County, Virginia Urban/Development Area (<http://www.albemarle.org/department.asp?department=cdd&relpage=3214>).

²⁹⁴ Montgomery County, Virginia Urban Development Areas (<http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/content/15989/16031/16767/default.aspx>).

²⁹⁵ Dennis Township Master Plan – Land Use Plan (<http://www.dennistwp.org/pdfdoc2012/DTMasterPlanRevisedFinal2012-12-12.pdf>).

²⁹⁶ Albemarle County, Virginia Rural Areas Plan (<http://www.albemarle.org/department.asp?department=cdd&relpage=3213>).

²⁹⁷ Missouri Department of Natural Resources Brownfields/Voluntary Cleanup Program (<http://www.dnr.mo.gov/env/hwp/bvcp/hwpvcp.htm>).

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V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 35: Measures are in place to minimize the use of water pollutants, including pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers by both public and private entities. ^{299,300}			1,2,3
Are there regional and local green infrastructure investments?			
Strategy 36: Inventory the community's current tree cover, and complete plans to protect and expand the tree canopy. ³⁰¹			1,2
Strategy 37: A green infrastructure plan, developed with a range of public- and private-sector partners, connects habitats to protect habitat. ³⁰²			1,2,3
Strategy 38: Encourage green infrastructure strategies to collect and treat stormwater runoff, such as rain gardens, vegetated swales, and permeable pavements, through incentives in new developments or redevelopments.			1,2,3
Strategy 39: Road construction or reconstruction projects implement green infrastructure strategies when possible. ³⁰³			1,2,3
Protecting Natural Habitats and Ecosystems Through Programs and Services			
Are there programs to allow community-managed land?			
Strategy 40: Public programs exist to support fee simple acquisition of sensitive land. ³⁰⁴			1,2,3
Strategy 41: The community has transfer of development rights or purchase of development rights programs for conservation easements. ³⁰⁵			1,2,3

²⁹⁸ Honeoye, New York Lake Watershed Management Plan (<http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/DocumentCenter/View/1276>).

²⁹⁹ Oceanside, California Pesticides and Fertilizers effects on water quality (http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/gov/water/services_programs/clean/residential/pesticides.asp).

³⁰⁰ Connecticut General Assembly. State Laws Banning Phosphorous Fertilizer Use (<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/rpt/2012-R-0076.htm>).

³⁰¹ Austin, Texas Urban Forestry Program (<http://austintexas.gov/department/urban-forestry>).

³⁰² Kansas City, Missouri/Kansas MetroGreen Regional Greenway System (<http://www.terrain.org/unsprawl/26/>).

³⁰³ Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Green Infrastructure (<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/green-infrastructure>).

³⁰⁴ San Antonio Water System. Sensitive Land Acquisition Program (http://www.saws.org/environment/ResourceProtComp/aquifer_protection/acquisition.cfm).

³⁰⁵ Northhampton County, Virginia Purchase of Development Rights Program (http://www.co.northampton.va.us/departments/Purchase_of_Development_Rights.html).

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V. Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems

Goal: Protect Natural Habitats and Ecosystems	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context²⁴⁹
Strategy 42: A community land trust supports managed open space. ³⁰⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 43: Prioritize community-owned lands, such as community gardens or community open space held in a land trust, to be protected from development.			1,2,3
Is there a water quality and preservation program?			
Strategy 44: The local government has a system for ongoing monitoring and reporting of water quality in the watershed. ³⁰⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 45: The community has systems for reclaiming and reusing water. ³⁰⁸			1,2
Are there conservation education programs in place?			
Strategy 46: The school system teaches students about water quality and conservation. ³⁰⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 47: The school system teaches students about the unique natural habitat in which they live. ³¹⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 48: The school system teaches students about waste reduction, recycling, and the effects of polluting. ³¹¹			1,2,3
Strategy 49: The local government provides online information on green infrastructure, energy efficiency, and water conservation. ³¹²			1,2,3

³⁰⁶ Upper Valley Land Trust (New Hampshire) community based land conservancy (<http://www.uvlt.org/>).

³⁰⁷ Tomales Bay (California) Water Quality Monitoring Plan (<http://www.tomalesbaywatershed.org/library.html>).

³⁰⁸ Manatee County, Florida Reclaimed Water Program (<https://www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/utilities/wastewater-system/reclaimed-water.html>).

³⁰⁹ Redwood City, California Water Conservation Education for Schools (<http://www.redwoodcity.org/publicworks/water/conserv%20water%20education.html>).

³¹⁰ US Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific Southwest Region. Schoolyard Habitat Program (<http://www.fws.gov/cno/conservation/schoolyard.cfm>).

³¹¹ Boulder/Broomfield County, Colorado School Recycling and Environmental Education Program (<http://www.ecocycle.org/schools/overview>).

³¹² US EPA. Why Green Infrastructure? (http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/gi_why.cfm).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VI. Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets

Preserving working agricultural lands supports the rural economy and can also help direct growth away from far-flung lands and back towards already-developed areas. Communities have found success through agritourism programs and developing new markets for local produce, such as local or regional farmers markets. Supporting small-scale agriculture and gardening in neighborhoods is also important for improving quality of life and providing access to fresh fruits and vegetables, especially in more rural areas where larger grocery stores are often only accessible via car.

Goal: Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³¹³
Preserving Agricultural Lands and Open Space			
Do zoning regulations and plans identify and preserve agricultural lands and uses?			
Strategy 1: Zoning includes an agricultural district with established permitted uses. ^{314,315,316}			2,3
Strategy 2: Zoning defines “agriculture,” “agricultural land,” “farm,” “farm building,” “farm dwelling,” “livestock,” “crops,” and other important terms. ³¹⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 3: Zoning does not limit the size of the parcel on which agricultural uses are allowed, thereby enabling smaller scale production of vegetables, fruits, and other products close to local markets where they may be consumed. ³¹⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 4: Zoning allows small-scale farming of crops in developed areas. ^{319,320,321}			1,2,3
Strategy 5: Define and allow uses that support the regional food system in land use plans and development regulations. ³²²			1,2,3

³¹³ Self-assessment and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

³¹⁴ Lancaster County Planning Commission. Agricultural and Rural Lands Planning Program (<http://www.lancastercountypanning.org/137/Agricultural-Rural-Lands-Planning-Progra>).

³¹⁵ New Hampshire Agricultural Incentive Zoning (<http://www.nh.gov/oepr/resource-library/agriculture/index.htm>).

³¹⁶ Plainfield, Illinois Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 9, Article VIII, is an example (<http://www.plainfield-il.org/pages/municipalcode.php>).

³¹⁷ North Hampton, New Hampshire Agricultural Zoning Ordinance (http://www.northhampton-nh.gov/Public_documents/NorthHamptonNH_PZDept/article5).

³¹⁸ Urban Farming and the Michigan Right to Farm Act (http://www.bsmlawpc.com/blog/Municipal_Law_Grand_Rapids_Michigan/post/Urban_Farming_and_the_Michigan_Right_to_Farm_Act/).

³¹⁹ The purpose of this strategy is to enable small-scale farming or community gardening on vacant property in small cities and towns. Often, local ordinances prohibit these uses. The local government can require that at least one other viable use is allowed by right if it wants to ensure that agricultural uses do not preclude future development.

³²⁰ North Carolina Cooperative Extension. Urban Agriculture – Policy (<http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/localfood-urban-ag-policy/>).

³²¹ National League of Cities. Sustainable Cities Institute. Promoting Urban Agriculture through Zoning. (<http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/topics/food-systems/urban-agriculture/promoting-urban-agriculture-through-zoning>).

³²² Uses include cold storage, processing and aggregation facilities, value-added processing, farmers’ markets, and composting operations, among others.

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VI. Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets

Goal: Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³¹³
Strategy 6: Agricultural district zoning establishes minimum lot size large enough to avoid fragmentation of farming areas. ³²³			2,3
Strategy 7: Agricultural district zoning establishes a maximum number of dwelling units permitted on each lot. ³²⁴			2,3
Strategy 8: Protect existing farms from nuisance complaints through tools such as a “Right to Farm” ordinance. ^{325,326}			2,3
Strategy 9: New developments are assessed impact fees that are used to preserve open space and productive agricultural lands. ³²⁷			1,2,3
Supporting Agritourism			
Do codes and policies promote agritourism?			
Strategy 10: Ordinance defines “agritourism” and encourages standards for an agritourism enterprise related to parking, signs, food and beverage sales, hours of operation, and other considerations. ³²⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Codes and policies allow roadside farm stands to sell produce directly to consumers. ³²⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 12: Zoning allows farmers markets as a primary or secondary use. ³³⁰			1,2
Supporting Agriculture Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Are systems in place to support informed decisions on agricultural preservation?			
Strategy 13: Establish a board or commission to address agricultural issues in the community. ³³¹			1,2,3

³²³ Plainfield, Illinois Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 9, Article VIII, is an example (<http://www.plainfield-il.org/pages/municipalcode.php>).

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Farmland Information Center. Right to Farm Laws (<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/right-farm-laws>).

³²⁶ Seneca, New York Right to Farm Law (<http://www.townofseneca.com/town-laws.html>).

³²⁷ Cheyenne, Wyoming allows developers to meet open space requirements by dedicating land to a public entity. Article 4.2 of the city’s Unified Development Code approved in 2012 details these rules (<http://www.cheyennecity.org/index.aspx?nid=1824>).

³²⁸ Franklin County, North Carolina Agritourism Zoning Ordinances (<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/franklin-county-nc-agritourism-zoning-ordinances>).

³²⁹ New York Model Zoning Law for Roadside Stands and Farm Markets (<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/new-york-model-local-zoning-law-roadside-stands-and-farm-markets>).

³³⁰ Michigan Healthy Communities. Establishing Land Use Protections for Farmers’ Markets (<http://mihealthtools.org/mihc/FarmersMarkets.asp>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VI. Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets

Goal: Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³¹³
Strategy 14: Parcel-level information about agricultural land use is available in a GIS database. ³³²			2,3
Are there financial incentives for preserving agricultural lands?			
Strategy 15: Tax agricultural land at current use value, rather than at its highest value on the real estate market, to help agriculture remain economically viable. ³³³			2,3
Strategy 16: Use purchase of development rights to protect farmland. ^{334,335}			1,2,3
Are there marketing strategies or policies to support local agriculture?			
Strategy 17: A marketing strategy or plan for local farming identifies potential markets and addresses potential gaps in production or processing (for example, lack of cool storage, transportation, or processing facilities). ³³⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 18: The local government has established programs to promote consumption of locally grown food. ³³⁷			1,2,3
Supporting Agriculture Through Programs and Services			
Are there programs that support local produce and agritourism?			
Strategy 19: Establish an agricultural district program. ³³⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 20: Establish a food policy council for the county or region. ³³⁹			1,2,3

³³¹ Town of Dartmouth, Massachusetts Agricultural Commission - Smart Growth Smart Energy Toolkit: Agricultural Preservation Case Study (http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/CS-ag-dartmouth.html).

³³² North Dakota Digital Parcel File Standards for Agricultural Property Assessment (<http://www.nd.gov/gis/resources/standards/docs/11-13-2007-version-1.1--nd-digital-parcel-file-standard.doc>).

³³³ Okanogan County, Washington Current Use/Open Space Agriculture (<http://www.okanogancounty.org/Assessor/designat.htm>).

³³⁴ Farmland Information Center. Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/purchase-agricultural-conservation-easements>).

³³⁵ Peninsula Township, Michigan Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance (<http://www.peninsulatownship.com/ordinances.html>).

³³⁶ Pierce County, Washington Agriculture Strategic Plan Summary Report (<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/index.aspx?NID=3257>).

³³⁷ Center for Environmental Farming Systems. The North Carolina 10% Campaign is a strategy for building a sustainable local food economy (<http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/whatwedo/foodsystems/10percent.html>).

³³⁸ Agricultural district laws provide incentives to farmers who enroll their land in special areas where commercial farming is encouraged and protected. Incentives typically include property tax relief and protection from private nuisance lawsuits, among other things. For more information, visit the Farmland Information Center's page on the topic: <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/agricultural-district-programs>.

³³⁹ The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health Food Policy Council Directory (<http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/projects/FPN/directory/index.html>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VI. Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets

Goal: Support Productive Agriculture for a Variety of Markets	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³¹³
Strategy 21: Agricultural tourism is supported through marketing, facilities development, and local education. ^{340,341}			1,2,3
Strategy 22: The local government targets local purchasing of agricultural products (for example, school lunches). ^{342,343}			1,2,3
Strategy 23: A farmers market sells locally grown food. ³⁴⁴			1,2,3
Strategy 24: The community's products are marketed in nearby metropolitan areas. ^{345,346}			1,2,3
Strategy 25: A local food hub connects local producers with retail outlets and local institutional buyers, such as school districts, universities, and hospitals. ³⁴⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 26: Market local farms, farm stands, and products through a website, maps, brochures, and other educational materials. ³⁴⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 27: Encourage and support community gardening and farming by making public land in cities, towns, and villages available to local groups. ³⁴⁹			1,2,3

³⁴⁰ Michigan State University Extension. The Role of Agri-Tourism in Rural Communities (http://productcenter.msu.edu/news_events/nvac_presentations_2012).

³⁴¹ Oklahoma's Growing Adventure agritourism program (<http://www.oklahomaagritourism.com/>).

³⁴² National Farm to School Network. Getting Started with Farm to School (<http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/getting-started-with-farm-to-school?A=SearchResult&SearchID=524728&ObjectID=4647144&ObjectType=35>).

³⁴³ The Sustainable Food Purchasing Policy Project helps institutional and commercial food buyers develop purchasing policies that support social and environmental responsibility in agriculture and the food industry (<http://www.sustainablefoodpolicy.org/>).

³⁴⁴ USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. How to Start a Farmers Market (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3022129>).

³⁴⁵ Penn State Extension. Farm and Food Business Marketing Strategies (<http://extension.psu.edu/business/farm/marketing>).

³⁴⁶ Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. Wisconsin Local Food Marketing Guide (<http://www.wistatedocuments.org/cdm/ref/collection/p267601coll4/id/3152>).

³⁴⁷ USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Food Hubs: Building Stronger Infrastructure for Small and Mid-Size Producers (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/foodhubs>).

³⁴⁸ The Loudoun County, Virginia Department of Economic Development maintains the Loudoun Farms website, which provides information about local farmers markets, farm stands, producers, and wineries (<http://www.loudounfarms.org>).

³⁴⁹ Williamson, West Virginia has provided public land for a community garden through its Sustainable Williamson program (<http://cityofwilliamson.org/Projects.html>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes

Providing a wide range of housing types in the same neighborhood and close to shops, jobs, parks, medical care, and schools helps people drive less and buy or rent housing that meets their needs within their budget. Providing a mix of housing also helps communities retain residents who want to age in place, while attracting families who might have different housing needs. Increased housing options also help communities maintain a vacation- or recreation-based economy while keeping housing affordable for local residents. These types of neighborhoods can also engender more social interaction between people of different backgrounds and incomes. Communities can accomplish these goals by allowing accessory dwelling units in residential neighborhoods and more development downtown.

Goal: Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes³⁵⁰	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁵¹
Expediting Local Government Processing of Affordable Housing Proposals			
Do codes expedite processing of affordable housing developments?			
Strategy 1: Expedited permit review and/or reduced development fees for projects that incorporate affordable housing near existing town centers. ³⁵²			1,2,3
Strategy 2: Older adult housing developments receive expedited permit review and/or reduced development fees. ³⁵³			1,2,3
Providing Incentives and Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development			
Do codes provide incentives for affordable housing developments?			
Strategy 3: Incentives encourage owner investment in older or historic apartment buildings or homes. ^{354, 355, 356}			1,2,3
Strategy 4: Carefully evaluate building code requirements that increase construction costs (such as requirements pertaining to exterior materials).			1,2,3

³⁵⁰ EPA's smart growth website has a page with more information and resources on smart growth and affordable housing: (<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/topics/ah.htm>).

³⁵¹ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000) 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

³⁵² Fort Collins, Colorado Affordable Housing Programs (<http://www.fcgov.com/socialsustainability/other.php>).

³⁵³ Gardena, California Senior Citizen Housing Incentives (<http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Gardena/mobile/?pg=Gardena18/Gardena1843.html>).

³⁵⁴ For more strategies to encourage reinvestment in historic buildings, please see the "Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources" tool section.

³⁵⁵ Gresham, Oregon Apartment Rehabilitation Grant Program (<http://greshamoregon.gov/city/city-departments/urban-renewal/grant-programs/template.aspx?id=7308>).

³⁵⁶ Westminster, Maryland 2009 Comprehensive Plan: Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization (<http://www.westgov.com/162/Comprehensive-Plan>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes

Goal: Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes³⁵⁰	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁵¹
Strategy 5: Locate affordable housing in village and town centers to give residents easier access to jobs, stores, services, and amenities. ³⁵⁷			1,2
Supporting Development of Affordable Housing for Older Adults			
Do codes facilitate housing types that accommodate older adults?			
Strategy 6: Allow accessory units in single-family residential areas. ³⁵⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 7: Allow age-restricted communities, including facilities with varying levels of care. ³⁵⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 8: Allow elder cohousing development and retrofitting buildings for cohousing. ³⁶⁰			1,2,3
Do codes require ADA accessibility?			
Strategy 9: Commercial and residential properties are accessible by wheelchair, which encourages “visitability.” ³⁶¹			1,2,3
Strategy 10: Codes identify the concept of universal design in new buildings, calling for features that allow everyone, regardless of age, ability, or circumstance, to live in or use the building. ³⁶²			1,2,3
Allowing a Mix of Housing Types and Lot Sizes			
Do codes allow a wide range of housing types?			
Strategy 11: Codes allow townhomes. ³⁶³			1,2
Strategy 12: Codes allow two-family housing units. ³⁶⁴			1,2,3

³⁵⁷ Altamonte Springs City Plan 2030: Housing Element (<http://www.altamonte.org/index.aspx?NID=410>).

³⁵⁸ Medford, Oregon: Accessory Dwelling Units (<http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Code.asp?CodeID=3942>).

³⁵⁹ East Norriton, Pennsylvania. Creation of Age-Targeted Residential District (<http://www.eastnorritontwp.org/home/resources/ordinances/ordinances-400-present.aspx>).

³⁶⁰ The Cohousing Association of the United States provides information about cohousing on its website: (http://www.cohousing.org/what_is_cohousing).

³⁶¹ The Access Board's ADA Standards are available at its website: (<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards>).

³⁶² North Carolina State University's Center for Universal Design provides resources on universal design: (http://www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/quicklinks_ql/quicklinks.htm).

³⁶³ Belgrade, Montana Zoning Ordinance: Townhouse Standards (<http://ci.belgrade.mt.us/zoning/11-32.htm>).

³⁶⁴ Keller, Texas Zoning Districts (<http://www.cityofkeller.com/index.aspx?page=531>).

VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes

Goal: Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes³⁵⁰	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁵¹
Strategy 13: Codes allow multifamily housing in villages and town centers. ³⁶⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 14: Allow manufactured homes in all zones where residential uses are allowed. ³⁶⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Allow home-sharing ³⁶⁷ on single-family lots.			1,2,3
Strategy 16: Zoning encourages a mix of housing types and sizes to accommodate households with a wide range of income levels. ³⁶⁸			1,2,3
Do codes allow varied lot and dwelling unit sizes?			
Strategy 17: Reduce or eliminate minimum single-family lot sizes.			1,2,3
Strategy 18: Reduce or eliminate multifamily development parking requirements in pedestrian-oriented districts such as town and village centers. ³⁶⁹			1,2
Strategy 19: Codes encourage a variety of dwelling unit sizes to allow smaller, affordable units. ^{370,371}			1,2,3
Allowing a Mix of Uses in New Development			
Do codes allow a mix of uses?			
Strategy 20: Zoning regulations allow residential units above commercial uses in appropriate districts. ³⁷²			1,2
Strategy 21: Zoning regulations allow residential units by right in commercial districts. ³⁷³			1,2

³⁶⁵ Pierce County, Washington Development Regulations (<https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5333>).

³⁶⁶ Longview, Washington Manufactured Homes permitted in all Single Family Districts (<http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/longview/html/Longview16/Longview1638.html>).

³⁶⁷ Home-sharing is generally defined as people who are not from the same immediate family living in one house. Many towns, especially college towns, restrict unrelated people from living together to prevent student housing from taking over neighborhoods. Communities should implement this practice with an understanding of how shared housing is affected. The National Shared Housing Resource Center provides additional information about shared housing: (<http://nationalsharedhousing.org>).

³⁶⁸ Mendocino County, California General Plan: Housing Element - a required element designed to facilitate the development of housing capable of meeting the needs of all County residents (<http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning/plans/planGeneralTOC.htm>).

³⁶⁹ Niwot, Colorado Rural Community District (<http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/lucodeupdatedc120004.aspx>).

³⁷⁰ Albemarle County, Virginia Neighborhood Model: Mixture of Housing Types and Affordability (<http://www.albemarle.org/department.asp?department=cdd&relpage=3981>).

³⁷¹ Sacramento, California Mixed Income Housing Ordinance (<http://www.shra.org/Housing/MultifamilyHousing/InclusionaryHousing.aspx>).

³⁷² Wake Forest, North Carolina Unified Development Ordinance Handbook (<http://www.wakeforestnc.gov/planning.aspx>).

³⁷³ Montgomery County, Maryland Commercial Residential Zones (http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/development/com_res_zones.shtm).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes

Goal: Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes³⁵⁰	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁵¹
Meeting Housing Needs Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Do new developments for older adults consider access to everyday needs?			
Strategy 22: Older adult housing developments are encouraged in locations where residents can reach shops, amenities, and services by walking or taking transit. ³⁷⁴			1,2,3
Are there programs to inventory locations of new affordable housing developments?			
Strategy 23: Publicly owned land is identified that could be used for affordable homes. ^{375,376}			1,2,3
Strategy 24: Affordable homes are encouraged in locations near employment centers and with good transit access to reduce residents' transportation costs. ³⁷⁷			1,2
Does the local government encourage more rental housing to meet demand?			
Strategy 25: The local government encourages inclusion of affordable units in new market-rate rental housing to increase the supply and reduce rents. ³⁷⁸			1,2,3
Meeting Housing Needs Through Programs and Services			
Are tax incentive programs available?			
Strategy 26: The local government offers property tax abatements, rehabilitation funding, and/or other financial support to existing mixed-income rental housing in return for a commitment to affordable rent levels. ³⁷⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 27: A property tax abatement program is available for lower-income homeowners. ³⁸⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 28: Affordable housing developments receive support applying for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. ³⁸¹			1,2,3

³⁷⁴ Atlanta Regional Commission's Lifelong Communities Program (<http://www.atlantaregional.com/aging-resources/lifelong-communities>).

³⁷⁵ Center for Housing Policy. Prioritize the use of suitable publicly-owned land for affordable homes (http://www.housingpolicy.org/toolbox/strategy/policies/public_land.html?tierid=157).

³⁷⁶ Washington State Legislature. Affordable Housing – Inventory of State-Owned Land (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=43.63A.510>).

³⁷⁷ The Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing + Transportation Affordability Index provides information on the combined cost of transportation and housing for several regions across the United States. More information on the index is available on their website: (<http://htaindex.cnt.org/about/>).

³⁷⁸ Minnesota House of Representatives. Tools for Increasing and Preserving the Current Supply of Affordable Rental Housing (<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/fiscal/moneymatters.asp>).

³⁷⁹ Buncombe County, North Carolina Workforce Housing Incentive Policy for Rental Development (<http://www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/Planning/Housing.aspx>).

³⁸⁰ New Hampshire Low and Moderate Income Homeowner's Property Tax Relief Program (<http://revenue.nh.gov/assistance/low-moderate.htm>).

VII. Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes

Goal: Meet Housing Needs for Different Ages and Incomes³⁵⁰	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context³⁵¹
Are there educational or technical assistance programs that help residents buy a home?			
Strategy 29: Homebuyer education programs are available. ³⁸²			1,2,3
Strategy 30: Provide support for nonprofit housing organizations that address housing needs, affordability, provide education and training for renters and first time homebuyers, etc. ³⁸³			1,2,3
Strategy 31: A homeowner assistance program helps owners comply with code enforcement requirements if they cannot afford to comply on their own. ³⁸⁴			1,2,3
Are there programs that increase the supply of affordable housing stock?			
Strategy 32: A rehabilitation program invests funds in older housing stock while preserving its architectural integrity. ³⁸⁵			1,2,3
Strategy 33: The local government encourages churches and civic institutions to identify land they own that could be used for affordable housing. ³⁸⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 34: A home-sharing program allows older adults to identify people who live in centrally located, walkable, and mixed-use places near transit, and are interested in leasing space in their homes. ³⁸⁷			1,2

³⁸¹ Michigan State Housing Development Authority. Low Income Housing Tax Credits (http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-5587_5601---,00.html).

³⁸² Neighborhood Housing Services of San Antonio, Texas. Home Buyer Education Program (<http://www.nhsofsa.org/en/home-buyer-resources/homebuyer-education-program.aspx>).

³⁸³ Washtenaw County, Michigan Housing Education Partners (<http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community-and-economic-development/housing-and-community-infrastructure/home-buyer-program/whp/Homebuyer%20Education%20Program>).

³⁸⁴ Upper Darby Township, Pennsylvania Homeowner Improvement Code Compliance Program: Guidelines and Procedures (http://www.upperdarby.org/Gov/Community_Development/HICCP.html).

³⁸⁵ Cary, North Carolina's Housing Rehabilitation Program provides federal funds to assist residential property owners to undertake home repairs and improvements (http://www.townofcary.org/Departments/Planning_Department/Housing/Affordable_Housing_Initiative/Housing_Rehabilitation_Program.htm).

³⁸⁶ MWCOC Washington Area Housing Partnership: Toolkits for Affordable Housing Advocacy and Development (<http://www.wahpdc.org/>).

³⁸⁷ New Orleans, Louisiana: The Shared Housing of New Orleans program helps elderly and disabled individuals stay out of nursing homes (<http://sharedhousingofneworleans.org/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VIII. Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources

Reusing buildings, especially those with historic value, contributes to a community’s distinctive identity, which can attract tourists and new residents. These buildings are often in the village or town center, so redeveloping them can bring new life to these places and absorb demand for residential, office, and retail space that might otherwise be satisfied at a more distant location. Preserving a community’s cultural icons can also help attract tourism while promoting healthy living, beauty, and community pride.

Goal: Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁸⁸
Preserving Sites and Areas of Historical Significance			
Do codes create a process for designating and protecting historic properties and districts? ³⁸⁹			
Strategy 1: A local administrative body is established to oversee historic preservation. ^{390,391}			1,2,3
Strategy 2: Codes or guidelines establish criteria for designating a property or neighborhood as historic. ³⁹²			1,2
Strategy 3: A local historic district or overlay zone has been adopted by ordinance. ^{393,394}			1,2
Strategy 4: The administrative body reviews proposed additions, demolitions, new construction, rehabilitation projects, or other alterations to sites or buildings in the historic district. ³⁹⁵			1,2
Strategy 5: Codes establish criteria for issuing demolition permits for historic structures. ³⁹⁵			1,2
Respecting Important Historic and Cultural Resources			
Do codes establish design guidelines for new development?			
Strategy 6: Design standards apply to new residential and commercial development in historic or cultural districts to require design features that are consistent with the historic architecture or natural features of the area. ^{396, 397}			1,2

³⁸⁸ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

³⁸⁹ The New York State Historic Preservation Office provides information on a wide range of topics related to historic preservation (<http://nysparks.com/shpo/>).

³⁹⁰ This body is typically a historic preservation review commission or design review board for a designated historic district. An administrative review by local government staff is also an option.

³⁹¹ Montpelier Historic Preservation Commission (<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/group/68/Historic-Preservation-Commission.html>).

³⁹² Rockville, Maryland Historic Designation Criteria (<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?NID=625>).

³⁹³ A Model Historic District Ordinance for Local Governments in Pennsylvania (http://conservationtools.org/libraries/1/library_items/944-A-Model-Historic-District-Ordinance-for-Local-Governments-in-Pennsylvania).

³⁹⁴ Lynchburg, Virginia Historic Districts Ordinance, Guidelines, Descriptions, and Maps (<http://www.lyncburgva.gov/historic-districts-ordinance-guidelines-descriptions-and-maps>).

³⁹⁵ Boulder County, Colorado: Permit Process for Demolition and Alteration of Historic Structures (<http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/historicdemo.aspx>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

VIII. Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal: Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁸⁸
Strategy 7: Design standards apply to the renovation of historic properties to ensure complementary features are integrated into new elements of the building. ^{398,7}			1,2
Do codes and policies encourage reuse or redevelopment of historic buildings?			
Strategy 8: Codes allow rezoning to allow historic buildings be repurposed for a mix of uses. ³⁹⁹			1,2
Do codes protect views of natural, historic, or culturally significant features?			
Strategy 9: Establish a review process for development in protected viewsheds (areas with views of attractive features such as ridge lines, water bodies, or landmarks). ⁴⁰⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 10: Local codes regulate the height and size of signs and billboards in protected viewsheds. ⁴⁰¹			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Subdivision codes encourage techniques, such as cluster subdivisions, to protect viewsheds. ^{402,403}			1,2,3
Preserving Historic and Cultural Resources Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Have significant historic or cultural features been identified?			
Strategy 12: Develop an inventory of historic buildings, landmarks, and neighborhoods. ⁴⁰⁴			1,2

³⁹⁶ The Town of Dryden, New York has developed commercial and residential design guidelines. They are available from the town's website (<http://dryden.ny.us/departments/planning-department/planning/design-guidelines>).

³⁹⁷ Context sensitive zoning and development standards based on analysis of historic development patterns (http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={D87C20DD-AE9B-41D5-84A7-D29CAD93E9F3}).

³⁹⁸ The strategy refers to renovations of historic buildings, where substantive changes to or additions of doors, windows, façade elements, ceilings, and interior materials need to complement, but not necessarily match, the structure's historic elements.

³⁹⁹ Duvall, Washington Old Town – Mixed Use Zoning District (<http://www.duvallwa.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/519>).

⁴⁰⁰ Napa, California has a Viewshed Protection Program that aims to protect views of the area's ridges. Chapter 18.06 of the city's zoning ordinance describes it and it can also be found in the viewshed permit (<http://www.countyofnapa.org/pages/departmentcontent.aspx?id=4294968649>).

⁴⁰¹ Keuka Lake Waterfront Revitalization and Scenic Viewshed Protection Plan (http://www.stcplanning.org/usr/Program_Areas/Water_Resources/KeukaLake/Waterfront%20Revitalization%20and%20Scenic%20Viewshed%20Protection%20Plan_opt.pdf).

⁴⁰² Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Model Zoning Ordinance for Rural Cluster Development (<http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/communityassistance/ModelOrdinancesGuides.htm>).

⁴⁰³ Conservation Subdivision Design Handbook (http://conservationtools.org/libraries/1/library_items/349-Conservation-Subdivision-Design-Handbook).

⁴⁰⁴ Santa Monica, California: Historic Resources Inventory (<http://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Historic-Resources-Inventory/>).

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VIII. Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources

Goal: Preserve Historic and Cultural Resources	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ³⁸⁸
Strategy 13: The local government has established a historic district recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. ⁴⁰⁵			1,2
Strategy 14: Develop an inventory of significant viewsheds. ⁴⁰⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Develop an inventory of cultural heritage tourism sites. ⁴⁰⁷			1,2,3
Preserving Historic and Cultural Resources Through Programs and Services			
Does the local government promote the rehabilitation and enjoyment of historic and cultural resources?			
Strategy 16: Historic structures and sites have interpretative signs and are included in the community's wayfinding signs. ⁴⁰⁸			1,2,3
Strategy 17: A self-guided historical walking tour is available to the community. ⁴⁰⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 18: A façade improvement and landscaping grant program is available for historic properties. ^{410,411}			1,2,3
Strategy 19: A tax credit or tax abatement is available to buy and/or renovate historic properties. ⁴¹²			1,2,3
Strategy 20: A revolving loan fund is available to buy and/or renovate historic properties. ⁴¹³			1,2,3
Strategy 21: Offer tax incentives to developers who redevelop historic buildings in city and town centers and maintain their historic character. ⁴¹⁴			1,2

⁴⁰⁵ The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources (<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/>).

⁴⁰⁶ Hancock County Scenic Assessment Inventory and Analysis (<http://www.hcpcme.org/environment/view/>).

⁴⁰⁷ State of Utah Cultural Heritage Tourism Planning (<http://www.planning.utah.gov/CRMPHeritageTourism.htm>).

⁴⁰⁸ Best Practices for Developing Interpretive Signs (<http://www.watershedco.com/blog/interpretive-program-from-start-to-finish/>).

⁴⁰⁹ Alexandria Walking & Guided Tours (<http://www.visitalexandriava.com/things-to-do/tours/>).

⁴¹⁰ Portland, Maine Façade Improvement Program (<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/557/Facade-Improvement-Program>).

⁴¹¹ City of Yreka, California: The Miner Street Grant Program (<http://ci.yreka.ca.us/business/miner-street-grant-program>).

⁴¹² Rockville, Maryland: Historic Tax Credit Program (<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/index.aspx?NID=627>).

⁴¹³ City of Dubuque Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund (<http://www.cityofdubuque.org/index.aspx?NID=773>).

⁴¹⁴ Creating American Prosperity through Preservation Act of 2013 (<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s1141>).

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IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Compact and mixed-use town and village centers can encourage walking and bicycling, and they can be served more effectively by intercity public transportation and paratransit. Making it safer and easier for people to walk and bike also helps people stay healthy and allows older residents the ability to stay within their homes and neighborhoods. Walkable, accessible downtown areas also help local economic development, as people can more easily reach their daily needs without having to leave town. Communities can provide more transportation choices through the design of new development and by retrofitting existing transportation facilities.

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context⁴¹⁵
Making Areas Walkable, Bikeable, and Accessible to People with Disabilities and Mobility Challenges			
Is pedestrian-oriented site design required for new development and redevelopment? ^{416,417,418,419}			
Strategy 1: The installation of sidewalks is required when new development is constructed. ^{420,421}			1,2
Strategy 2: At least one entrance is required on the side of the building that faces the street, and public or private sidewalks connect to that entrance. ⁴²²			1,2
Strategy 3: Sidewalk paths are clear of obstructions such as utility poles or mailboxes, allowing minimum clearance in pedestrian-oriented areas in new developments. ^{423,424}			1,2
Strategy 4: In pedestrian-oriented areas, maximum setbacks ensure that new buildings are close to sidewalks. ⁴²⁵			1,2
Strategy 5: Building façades have a minimum percentage of window space, ⁴²⁶ such as clear glass on at least 50 percent of the façade between 3 and 8 feet above grade. ⁴²⁷			1,2

⁴¹⁵ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000) 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

⁴¹⁶ Georgia DOT Pedestrian & Streetscape Guide: Toolkit 10 – Site Design for Pedestrians (http://www.bikewalk.org/pdfs/sopgeorgia_ped_streetscape_guide.pdf).

⁴¹⁷ Kirkland, Washington Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts (<http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Planning/Planning+PDFs/Design+Guidelines.pdf>).

⁴¹⁸ Green Valley Institute. Design Guidelines: Village and Gateway Districts, Town of Coventry (http://www.greenvalleyinstitute.org/planning_design.htm).

⁴¹⁹ Westminster, Colorado Design Guidelines for Traditional Mixed Use Neighborhood Developments (<http://www.ci.westminster.co.us/CityGovernment/CommunityDevelopment/PlanningDivision/RegulationsandDesignGuidelines.aspx>).

⁴²⁰ Smart Growth America. Complete Streets: Local Policy Workbook (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy>).

⁴²¹ Change Lab Solutions. Creating Complete Streets (<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/laws-resolutions-cs>).

⁴²² Fort Worth, Texas Zoning Ordinance: Urban Design/Form Based Districts (<http://fortworthtexas.gov/zoning/>).

⁴²³ In general, sidewalks need to be at least six feet wide for two people to pass comfortably.

⁴²⁴ Carrboro, North Carolina Town Code: Streets and Sidewalks (<http://www.ci.carrboro.nc.us/139/Carrboro-Town-Code>).

⁴²⁵ Ideally the maximum setback is 20 feet. The ideal sidewalk zone is 10 to 15 feet in “main street” areas, to include tree planting and furniture zone at the back of curb.

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Strategy 6: Windows, doors, and murals are encouraged, on the sides of buildings that extend along sidewalks. ⁴²⁸			1,2
Strategy 7: Screen parking areas from sidewalks with landscaping or low walls. ⁴²⁹			1,2
Strategy 8: Require shared driveways for adjacent commercial properties.			1,2
Strategy 9: Parking lots are behind buildings in pedestrian-oriented areas.			1,2
Strategy 10: Apply designs that improve access for the disabled to sidewalks, crosswalks, and transit facilities when reconstruction or redevelopment takes place ⁴³⁰			
Strategy 11: Clear guidance indicates what entity is responsible for maintaining sidewalks.			1, 2
Strategy 12: Allow and encourage a mix of uses in pedestrian-oriented areas.			1,2
Do codes require bicycle parking?			
Strategy 13: Secure, public bicycle parking is required for new developments or redevelopments in village and town centers. ^{431,432}			1,2
Do codes set parking requirements based on demand and community context?			
Strategy 14: Shared, off-site, or reduced parking for new development and rezoned uses is allowed in village and town centers. ^{433,434}			1
Strategy 15: Buildings can reduce the amount of parking they need to supply if they are close to public transit or have bicycle parking, nearby public parking, or on-street parking. ⁴³⁵			1,2

⁴²⁶ Commerce, Michigan Zoning Ordinance: Building Form and Composition (<http://www.commercetwp.com/sites/default/files/zoning/Article%2027%20-%20Form%20&%20Composition.pdf>).

⁴²⁷ Avoiding large stretches of windowless walls is important to creating sidewalks that feel safe and inviting.

⁴²⁸ When blank wall space is present, use murals or other façade improvements to create interest.

⁴²⁹ Park Ridge, Illinois Landscaping and Screening Ordinance (http://www.parkridge.us/assets/1/Documents/Section_13_Landscaping_and_Screening.pdf).

⁴³⁰ Boulder, Colorado Transportation Master Plan (<https://bouldercolorado.gov/transportation/tmp>).

⁴³¹ Bicycle racks will ideally have a minimum of three spaces in a given location. Larger developments or parking decks will have somewhere between one per 20 vehicle spaces and one per 50 vehicle spaces.

⁴³² Victoria Transport Policy Institute. Bicycle Parking (<http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm85.htm>).

⁴³³ Madison, Mississippi Shared Parking Ordinance (<http://www.madisonthecity.com/communitydevelopment/planninganddevelopment.html>).

⁴³⁴ Shared parking fact sheet (<https://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/SharedParkingFactSheet.pdf>).

⁴³⁵ Cheyenne, Wyoming Unified Development Code – Article 6 Design Regulations (<http://www.cheyennecity.org/index.aspx?nid=1824>).

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Making Street Connections Within New Developments and Redevelopments and to Adjacent Neighborhoods			
Do codes require or encourage adequate pedestrian connections?			
Strategy 16: Encourage street patterns with greater pedestrian connectivity by providing incentives for smaller blocks and more sidewalk coverage. ^{436,437}			1,2
Strategy 17: Encourage or require pedestrian connections and bicycle paths between abutting cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets. ⁴³⁶			1,2
Strategy 18: New subdivisions require a minimum connectivity measure for streets, such as a connectivity index, block lengths, block acreage, or length of space between intersections. ^{438,439,440}			1,2
Do codes require or encourage connections between new developments and adjacent neighborhoods?			
Strategy 19: New subdivisions require multimodal connections to adjacent neighborhoods or developments. ^{441,436}			1,2,3
Strategy 20: Dead-end street “stubs” are required to allow connections to future adjacent development. ⁴³⁶			1,2
Strategy 21: Access management strategies are required to connect adjacent non-residential developments along commercial corridors and to encourage shared driveways. ⁴⁴²			1,2,3
Build and Retrofit Streets for All Users ^{443,444,445}			

⁴³⁶ Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. Street Connectivity Model Ordinance (<http://transportation.ky.gov/congestion-toolbox/pages/connectivity.aspx>).

⁴³⁷ Add Street-Connectivity Minimums into Subdivision Ordinances (<http://walksteps.org/tactics/add-street-connectivity-minimums-into-subdivision-ordinances/>).

⁴³⁸ Network connectivity can be measured either through a connectivity index represented by link-to-node ratio for new development. For example, VTPI identifies ratios of 1.4 and greater as desirable for improved walkability (<http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm116.htm>). Alternatively, some communities have required minimum spacing standards intersections, where the average intersection for local streets cannot average greater than 300 to 400 feet.

⁴³⁹ Litman, Todd. “Evaluating Accessibility for Transportation Planning.” (<http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm84.htm>).

⁴⁴⁰ Cheyenne, Wyoming Unified Development Code – Article 4 Subdivision Regulations (<http://www.cheyennecity.org/index.aspx?nid=1824>).

⁴⁴¹ Victoria Transport Policy Institute. Roadway Connectivity (<http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm116.htm>).

⁴⁴² FHWA. Access Management. Access management techniques, such as shared driveways and inter-parcel connections, are particularly important along linear commercial corridors, both for safety and preserving roadway function (http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/access_mgmt/what_is_accsmgmt.htm).

⁴⁴³ This section pertains primarily to street construction or reconstruction rather than requirements for site development.

⁴⁴⁴ Smart Growth America. Overview of the National Complete Streets Coalition (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>).

⁴⁴⁵ Florida Department of Transportation Quality/Level of Service Handbook (<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/programs/sm/los/>).

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Do engineering or street design guidelines encourage or require infrastructure to support walking on new and existing streets?			
Strategy 22: Adopt sidewalk design, grading, and construction standards. ⁴⁴⁶			1,2, 3
Strategy 23: Require sidewalk design based on the street’s intended use and context (for example, wider sidewalks and planting strips might be required in an activity center). ⁴⁴⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 24: Require minimum sidewalk setbacks from the curb or pavement edge when adjacent to a road with a greater than 35 mph posted speed, and not separated by street parking. ^{448,449}			1,2,3
Strategy 25: Require sidewalks on both sides of the streets in village and town centers. ^{450,451}			1,2
Strategy 26: Require signalized intersections to include walk signals that give pedestrians adequate crossing time. ⁴⁵²			1,2
Strategy 27: Intersections use high-visibility crosswalk striping and street signs. ^{453,454,455}			1,2,3
Strategy 28: Allow unsignalized crossings with guidance on their location and design and signs to alert drivers. ^{453,454,455}			1,2
Strategy 29: New or reconstructed bridges in cities and towns include sidewalks, as well as bicycle lanes and multimodal on/off ramps where appropriate. ⁴⁵⁶			1,2

⁴⁴⁶ FHWA Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalk2/contents.cfm).

⁴⁴⁷ Institute of Transportation Engineers and Congress for the New Urbanism. “Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach.” (<http://www.ite.org/css/>). Table 6.4 offers Design Parameters for Walkable Urban Thoroughfares based on place type.

⁴⁴⁸ Kane County, Illinois Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (<http://kdot.countyofkane.org/Publications/Forms/AllItems.aspx>).

⁴⁴⁹ Durham, North Carolina DurhamWalks Pedestrian Plan: Standards and Guidelines (http://www.bikewalkdurham.org/BPAC_pedplan.html).

⁴⁵⁰ Kirkland, Washington Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts (<http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Planning/Planning+PDFs/Design+Guidelines.pdf>).

⁴⁵¹ Cookeville, Tennessee Sidewalk Requirements (<http://www.cookeville-tn.gov/planning/zoning-code/>).

⁴⁵² Tucson, Arizona Traffic Signal Design Manual (<http://www.tucsonaz.gov/tdot/traffic-engineering-division>).

⁴⁵³ Boulder, Colorado Pedestrian Crossing Treatments website (<https://bouldercolorado.gov/transportation/pedestrian-crossing-treatments>).

⁴⁵⁴ Massachusetts Highway Department. Traffic Safety Toolbox Series: Crosswalks (<http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/safetytoolbox/>).

⁴⁵⁵ North Central Section Institute of Transportation Engineers. Guidance for the Installation of Pedestrian Crossing Facilities (http://www.nc-ite.org/images/files/Crosswalk-Guidelines-w-appendices_021909.pdf).

⁴⁵⁶ Oregon DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines (<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/Pages/planproc.aspx>).

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IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Strategy 30: Permit on-street parking in pedestrian-oriented areas such as village and town centers.			1,2
Strategy 31: Require traffic calming and context-sensitive street design for streets in downtowns, around schools, in residential neighborhoods, and in other pedestrian activity centers. ^{457,458}			1
Do engineering or street design guidelines encourage or require infrastructure to support biking on new and existing streets?			
Strategy 32: New or reconstructed bridges include a wide shoulder or bicycle lane on both the bridge and on/off ramp. ⁴⁵⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 33: Bicycle facilities, such as dedicated lanes, share-the-lane markings, and/or signs are required on roads heavily used by bicycles and potential bike routes. ^{459,420,421}			1,2
Strategy 34: Rural highways include shoulders that provide sufficient space for bicyclists and have “share the road” signs to alert drivers. ⁴⁶⁰			3
Do engineering or street design guidelines encourage or require infrastructure to support transit use?			
Strategy 35: Provide shelters at bus stops. ⁴⁶¹			1
Strategy 36: Locate transit stops near crosswalks. ⁴⁶²			1
Strategy 37: Placement of a transit stops ensures pedestrian and bicycle safety by reducing interactions with high volume / high speed roads. ^{461,462}			1
Are impact fees assessed to help pay for multimodal transportation improvements in existing town centers?			
Strategy 38: An impact fee program or parking district revenues allocate funds to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements. ⁴⁶³			1

⁴⁵⁷ Iowa State University Institute for Transportation. Evaluation of Gateway and Low-Cost Traffic Calming Treatments for Major Routes in Small, Rural Communities (<http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/research/detail.cfm?projectID=-226410767>).

⁴⁵⁸ Moraga, California Traffic Calming Guide (<http://www.moraga.ca.us/Default.aspx?PageID=6957156&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11070014&ObjectID=6957156&ObjectType=1>).

⁴⁵⁹ NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide (<http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>).

⁴⁶⁰ Valley Transportation Authority. Bicycle Technical Guidelines: Bikeways on Major Roads (<http://www.vta.org/projects-and-programs/planning/bikes-bicycle-technical-guidelines-btg>).

⁴⁶¹ Pima County, Arizona DOT Transit Guidelines for Roadway Design and Construction

(http://webcms.pima.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/Government/Transportation/Roadway%20Design/Transit%20Guidelines.pdf).

⁴⁶² American Public Transportation Association. Bus Stop Design and Placement Security Considerations (<http://www.apta.com/resources/standards/Documents/APTA-SS-SIS-RP-008-10.pdf>).

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Strategy 39: An impact fee program or parking district revenues allocate funds to transit infrastructure and service improvements. ^{464,465}			1
Creating a Comfortable Environment for Walking and Biking			
Do codes require or encourage pedestrian- and bicyclist-oriented street lighting and signs?			
Strategy 40: Require pedestrian-oriented street lighting, with bases designed to reduce risk of injury to vehicle occupants and pedestrians, in village and town centers. ⁴⁶⁶			1,2
Strategy 41: Business signs hang perpendicular to sidewalks and streets so they can be seen more easily.			1,2
Strategy 42: Scale commercial and wayfinding signs to the pedestrian environment. ⁴⁶⁷			1,2,3
Do codes include requirements for street trees?			
Strategy 43: Specify appropriate locations for street trees, including surrounding development context and placement within the right of way. ⁴⁶⁸			1,2
Strategy 44: Require street tree planting to be appropriate type and size so that they have enough space to grow and not disturb the sidewalk. ⁴⁶⁹			1,2
Strategy 45: Designate minimum sizes for street tree planting areas. ⁴⁶⁹			1,2
Improving Transportation Choices Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Do planning documents call for the integration of multimodal improvements in all infrastructure projects?			
Strategy 46: Require projects to consider pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure for inclusion in all road construction, reconstruction, or maintenance projects. ^{420,421}			1,2,3

⁴⁶³ Bellingham, Washington Transportation Impact Fees (<http://www.cob.org/services/planning/transportation/transportation-impact-fees.aspx>).

⁴⁶⁴ Teton County, Wyoming Transit Impact Fee Study (<http://www.tetonwyo.org/plan/docs/SpecialReports/TransitImpactFeeStudy.pdf>).

⁴⁶⁵ Municipal Research and Services Center. Impact Fees (<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Land-Use-Administration/Impact-Fees.aspx>).

⁴⁶⁶ Medford, Oregon Street Lighting and Pedestrian-Scale Street Lighting Requirements (<http://www.ci.medford.or.us/CodePrint.asp?CodeID=3927>).

⁴⁶⁷ Rochester, New York Center City Tourist – Visitor Circulation and Pedestrian Wayfinding Study (<http://www.cityofrochester.gov/article.aspx?id=8589948735>).

⁴⁶⁸ Orange, California Master Street Tree Master Plan (http://www.cityoforange.org/depts/publicworks/street_tree_information.asp).

⁴⁶⁹ Burlington, Vermont Street Design Guidelines (<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/Transportation-Plan>).

IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Strategy 47: Prepare a greenway trails plan in conjunction within transportation or parks and recreation plans. ^{470,471}			1,2,3
Strategy 48: Develop a pedestrian master plan to prioritize future investments. ^{472,473}			
Strategy 49: Develop a bicycle master plan to prioritize future investments. ^{474,475}			
Do planning documents identify priority areas for multimodal improvements?			
Strategy 50: Prioritize financing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements in downtowns and activity centers, around transit stops, and in areas that connect activity centers. ^{476,477}			1,2,3
Strategy 51: Amenities such as lighting, route and system maps, benches, and landscaping are provided at transit stops. ^{50,51}			1
Do planning documents make connections between land development and transportation?			
Strategy 52: Clearly prioritize development in areas already served by existing transportation infrastructure in policy documents. ⁴⁷⁸			1,2,3
Improving Transportation Choices Through Programs and Services			
Are sidewalk improvements allocated funding on a regular basis?			
Strategy 53: Sidewalk construction and maintenance programs identify and invest in areas in need of improvements on a regular basis. ⁴⁷⁹			1,2

⁴⁷⁰ Wisconsin DOT Rural Bicycle Planning Guide (<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/bike.htm>).

⁴⁷¹ Scott County, Minnesota Rural Regional Trail Development & Design Guidelines (<http://www.co.scott.mn.us/PropertyGISLand/2030CompPlan/DetailedAreaPlanStudy/Pages/DAPRuralTrailAnalysis.aspx>).

⁴⁷² Conduct a sidewalk inventory to assess areas lacking sufficient sidewalks, and focus investment in sidewalks in these areas.

⁴⁷³ Lee's Summit, Missouri Public Sidewalk Inventory Analysis Report (<http://cityofls.net/Public-Works/Street-Programs-and-Maintenance/Sidewalk-Maintenance.aspx>).

⁴⁷⁴ Conduct a bicycle facilities inventory to assess areas lacking sufficient bicycle facilities, and focus investment in bicycle facilities in these areas.

⁴⁷⁵ Penfield, New York Bicycle Facilities Master Plan (http://www.penfield.org/index.php?pr=Plans_and_Studies).

⁴⁷⁶ Boulder, Colorado Multimodal Corridor Prioritization (<https://bouldercolorado.gov/transportation/multimodal-corridors-prioritization>).

⁴⁷⁷ Wheat Ridge, Colorado Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (<http://www.ci.wheatridge.co.us/1204/Bicycle-Pedestrian-Master-Plan>).

⁴⁷⁸ Carroll County, Maryland Rural Villages: Boundaries & Villages Designated as Priority Funding Areas (<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/compplan/ruralvillage/>).

⁴⁷⁹ Naperville, Illinois 2015 Sidewalk Removal and Replacement Program (<http://www.naperville.il.us/sidewalkreplace.aspx>).

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IX. Provide Transportation Choices

Goal: Provide Transportation Choices	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴¹⁵
Strategy 54: Perform an audit and create a follow-up program to rebuild older sidewalks and crosswalks to better meet the needs of disabled users. ^{480,430}			1,2
Strategy 55: Perform an annual walkability audit for streets in town and village centers. ⁴⁸¹			1,2
Are there walking and biking educational programs and incentives?			
Strategy 56: Offer cycling safety and operational education programs for children. ⁴⁸²			1,2
Strategy 57: Provide pedestrian safety campaigns for pedestrians and motorists. ⁴⁸³			1,2
Strategy 58: Encourage employers to provide incentives or accommodations for walking or bicycling to work including incentive payments and showers in office buildings for bike commuters. ^{484,485}			1,2
Strategy 59: Establish, publish, and promote walking and biking routes in the community.			1,2,3
Strategy 60: Adopt a program to work with businesses in town centers to update and improve their street.			1,2

⁴⁸⁰ United States Access Board. Public Rights of Way (<http://www.access-board.gov/prowac>).

⁴⁸¹ Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. Audits (http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/tools_audits.cfm).

⁴⁸² Bicycle Coalition of Maine. Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education Program (<http://www.bikemaine.org/safety-education/bike-ped-safety-education>).

⁴⁸³ North Carolina Department of Transportation. Watch For Me NC, statewide pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign (<http://www.watchformenc.org/>).

⁴⁸⁴ Pima Association of Governments (Arizona) Travel Reduction Program (<http://www.pagnet.org/Programs/TransportationPlanning/TravelReductionProgram/tabid/220/Default.aspx>).

⁴⁸⁵ US DOT Commuter Choice Primer (http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/jpodocs/repts_pr/13669.html).

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X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

Compact development allows existing infrastructure to serve more people and uses public funds more efficiently. Encouraging growth in village and town centers can help reduce the need for costly infrastructure extensions into undeveloped areas and can reduce maintenance and repair costs. Many communities also use green infrastructure to reduce stormwater runoff, which brings environmental benefits and can lower costs of treating wastewater.

Goal: Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴⁸⁶
Encouraging Cluster Development			
Do codes provide incentives to developers that promote cluster development?⁴⁸⁷			
Strategy 1: Developers receive density bonuses in exchange for clustering new development. ^{488,489}			1,2
Strategy 2: Subdivision ordinance promotes cluster subdivisions. ^{490,491}			1,2,3
Do codes encourage efficiency in water and sewer infrastructure?			
Strategy 3: Allow shared or clustered septic systems. ⁴⁹²			3
Encouraging Growth in and Next to Existing Development			
Do codes encourage development in or next to village or town centers?			
Strategy 4: Codes provide incentives for developers to develop within or next to existing village or town centers. ^{493,494}			1,2
Reducing Stormwater Runoff⁴⁹⁵			

⁴⁸⁶ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000); 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

⁴⁸⁷ Cluster development creates efficiencies in the initial capital cost of infrastructure and the long-term maintenance costs as well.

⁴⁸⁸ Elmore County, Idaho: Zoning and Development Ordinance: Cluster Subdivision Requirements and Regulations (<http://www.elmorecounty.org/Land%20Use/Z&DOOrdinance.html>).

⁴⁸⁹ Newton, New Hampshire: Zoning Ordinance: Residential Open Space – Cluster Development (http://www.newton-nh.gov/Pages/NewtonNH_Planning/zoning/Archives/2011ZoningOrdinance/index).

⁴⁹⁰ Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Model Zoning Ordinance for Rural Cluster Development (<http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/communityassistance/ModelOrdinancesGuides.htm>).

⁴⁹¹ Conservation Subdivision Design Handbook (http://conservationtools.org/libraries/1/library_items/349-Conservation-Subdivision-Design-Handbook).

⁴⁹² EPA has case studies about how some communities in the United States are managing wastewater, including clustered wastewater treatment units (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/demos.cfm>).

⁴⁹³ California Resources for Sustainability. Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency: Infill Development - Barriers and Incentives (<http://cares.ucdavis.edu/resource/truckee-meadows-regional-planning-agency-infill-development-barriers-and-incentives>).

⁴⁹⁴ Tulsa Development Authority. Examples of Infill Development Incentives and Projects (http://www.tulsadevelopmentauthority.org/plans_brady_infill.html).

⁴⁹⁵ EPA's "Water Quality Scorecard" is a good resource for policy options for protecting and improving water quality.

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

Goal: Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴⁸⁶
Do codes require or allow pervious surfaces in appropriate locations?			
Strategy 5: The subdivision ordinance requires strategies that reduce impervious surface cover. ⁴⁹⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 6: Street design guidelines require permeable paving for sidewalks and other appropriate surfaces such as bike lanes and parking lanes. ^{497,498}			1,2
Strategy 7: A portion of parking lots, alleys, and roads in a new development are constructed with pervious material that is based on a prescribed proportion of the square footage.			1,2,3
Do codes encourage reducing impervious surfaces?			
Strategy 8: Require green infrastructure elements (such as trees, vegetated islands, swales, and rain gardens) to manage stormwater runoff from parking lots. ^{499,500}			1,2,3
Strategy 9: Allow two-track driveways. ⁵⁰¹			3
Strategy 10: Permit shared driveways or require for single-family residential developments. ⁵⁰²			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Permit shared parking lots for a mix of commercial, office, and institutional uses. ^{503,504}			1,2
Strategy 12: Codes encourage driveway width requirements (for example, minimum driveway width is no more than 9 feet). ⁵⁰⁵			1,2,3
Do codes encourage green infrastructure to reduce stormwater runoff?			

⁴⁹⁶ Nashua, Massachusetts: Maximum Impervious Surface Zoning (<http://www.nashuariverwatershed.org/what-we-do/protect-communities/lid-and-stormwater.html>).

⁴⁹⁷ Olympia, Washington has used pervious pavement in several municipal projects. Cost/benefits associated with using pervious pavement can be found at: (<http://olympiawa.gov/city-utilities/storm-and-surface-water/science-and-innovations/science-and-innovations-porous-pavement>).

⁴⁹⁸ Burlington, Vermont: Low Impact Development (LID) Amendment to CDO provides incentives for pervious paving (<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/PZ/CDO>).

⁴⁹⁹ EPA case studies on green infrastructure has been planning, design, and construction (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/>).

⁵⁰⁰ EPA. Managing Wet Weather with Green Infrastructure: Municipal Handbook and Incentive Mechanisms (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/index.cfm#tabs-3>).

⁵⁰¹ Minneapolis, Minnesota: Code of Ordinances: Off-Street Parking and Loading (http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/projects/cped_parking).

⁵⁰² Bolton, Massachusetts: Rules and Regulations for Single and Shared Driveways (http://www.townofbolton.com/pages/BoltonMA_Planning/Rules%20and%20Regulations?textPage=1).

⁵⁰³ City of Madison, Mississippi: Shared Parking Ordinance (<http://www.madisonthecity.com/communitydevelopment/planninganddevelopment.html>).

⁵⁰⁴ Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Shared Parking (<http://www.mapc.org/resources/parking-toolkit/strategies-topic/shared-parking>).

⁵⁰⁵ Evanston, Illinois: Driveway Policies (<http://cityofevanston.org/public-works/transportation-engineering/policies/>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

Goal: Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴⁸⁶
Strategy 13: Specify the types of trees and shrubs to use in landscaped areas based on which will best reduce stormwater runoff. ⁵⁰⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 14: The code requires a minimum percentage of parking lots to be landscaped (for example 10 percent). ⁵⁰⁷			1,2,3
Strategy 15: Permit infiltration approaches that use soil and plants, such as rain gardens, planter gardens, and permeable and porous pavements. ^{508,500}			1,2,3
Do codes encourage stormwater management infrastructure as part of buildings?			
Strategy 16: Permit green roofs. ^{509,510}			1,2,3
Strategy 17: Water-harvesting devices, such as rain barrels and cisterns, are permitted. ⁵¹¹			1,2,3
Expanding the Tree Canopy			
Do codes require tree plantings as part of new developments and street retrofits?			
Strategy 18: Private and public developments are required to include street trees. ⁵¹²			1,2
Strategy 19: Street designs require the necessary surface area and volume of soil for the tree species selected. ^{513,514}			1,2
Encouraging Green Infrastructure			
Do codes require the construction and expansion of green infrastructure?			

⁵⁰⁶ Virginia Tech's Tree Ordinance Database includes sample code language from cities and towns around Virginia, including language on desirable species: (<http://www.web2.cnre.vt.edu/vtodd/>).

⁵⁰⁷ Glenview, Illinois: Parking Lot Landscaping Ordinance & Design Guidelines (<http://glenview.il.us/government/Pages/OrdinancesCodes.aspx>).

⁵⁰⁸ Virginia Department of Forestry: Rain Gardens overview (<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/manage/riparian/rain-gardens.htm>).

⁵⁰⁹ Plant Connection, Inc. Green Roof Legislation, Policies, and Tax Incentives (<http://www.myplantconnection.com/green-roofs-legislation.php>).

⁵¹⁰ Portland, Oregon: Ecoroof Incentive Program (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/48724>).

⁵¹¹ Crystal Lake, Illinois: ordinances include rain barrels. The small city also has a rain barrel incentive program that provides a water/sewer utility credit for residents who purchase rain barrels (<http://www.crystallake.org/departments/engineering/green-initiatives>).

⁵¹² City of Orange, California: Master Street Tree Plan (<http://www.cityoforange.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=3500>).

⁵¹³ Seattle, Washington: Street Trees and Landscape Architectural Standards (http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual/manual/4_14.asp).

⁵¹⁴ Burlington, Vermont: Street Design Guidelines (<http://www.burlingtonvt.gov/DPW/Transportation-Plan>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

Goal: Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴⁸⁶
Strategy 20: A minimum amount of a local road project cost goes towards green infrastructure elements. ^{515,516}			1,2,3
Strategy 21: Codes set green infrastructure retrofit standards for street rehabilitation, streetscaping, and road widening projects. ^{517,518}			1,2,3
Studying Fiscal Impacts of Development and Expediting Projects With Less Impact			
Do codes provide incentives for lower impact development?			
Strategy 22: Require a fiscal impact analysis for major development projects. ⁵¹⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 23: Up-to-date information about the cost of government services, such as roads, water, and sewer, is available for fiscal impact analyses. ⁵²⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 24: Require new developments in undeveloped areas to pay the full cost of required new offsite water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure. ^{521,522}			3
Strategy 25: Projects that include green infrastructure elements can go through an expedited review process (“green tape”). ⁵²³			1,2,3
Investing in Efficient Public Infrastructure Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Do policies direct development to areas with existing infrastructure and away from environmentally sensitive areas?			
Strategy 26: Identify and prioritize areas with existing development for infrastructure investment. ⁵²⁴			1,2,3

⁵¹⁵ EPA. Green Infrastructure Case Studies: Municipal Policies for Managing Stormwater with Green Infrastructure (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/index.cfm>).

⁵¹⁶ Portland, Oregon: Green Streets (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/BES/44407>).

⁵¹⁷ Seattle Department of Transportation. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual/manual/6_4.asp).

⁵¹⁸ Center for Neighborhood Technology. Upgrade Your Infrastructure: A Guide to the Green Infrastructure Portfolio Standard and Building Stormwater Retrofits (<http://www.cnt.org/publications/upgrade-your-infrastructure-a-guide-to-the-green-infrastructure-portfolio-standard-and>).

⁵¹⁹ The International City/County Management Association has a primer on fiscal impact analysis (http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301983/Fiscal_Impact_Analysis_How_Todays_Decisions_Affect_Tomorrows_Budget).

⁵²⁰ Hooksett, New Hampshire: Cost of Community Services Study (http://www.snhpc.org/index.php?page=eco_dev).

⁵²¹ Montana Department of Transportation. Development Exactions and Incentives (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/research/toolkit/m1/ftools/dei.shtml>).

⁵²² PolicyLink. Developer Exactions (<http://policylink.info/EDTK/Exactions/>).

⁵²³ Chicago, Illinois: Overview of the Green Permit Program (http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/bldgs/provdrs/green_permit.html).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

X. Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations

Goal: Invest in Efficient Public Infrastructure Systems and Operations	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁴⁸⁶
Strategy 27: Identify highly efficient locations. ⁵²⁵			1,2
Strategy 28: Identify priority areas for conservation or land preservation. ⁵²⁶			1,2,3
Strategy 29: Establish a service fee to pay for inspection and maintenance of decentralized wastewater treatment systems. ⁵²⁷			3
Investing in Efficient Public Infrastructure Through Programs and Services			
Are waste and wastewater management services or programs in place?			
Strategy 30: Establish a program to manage decentralized wastewater treatment systems. ⁵²⁸			3
Strategy 31: The local government supports and promotes composting. ⁵²⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 32: The local government establishes a recycling program. ⁵³⁰			1,2,3
Strategy 33: The local government offers household hazardous waste collection for items such as electronics, batteries, and light bulbs. ⁵³¹			1,2,3
Strategy 34: A “pay-as-you-throw” waste management program encourages recycling and composting. ⁵³²			1,2,3
Strategy 35: Materials generated during construction, renovation, and demolition activities are salvaged, reused, and recycled. ⁵³³			1,2,3

⁵²⁴ Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. Community Character: Fixing it First (<http://smartgrowth.dmr.ms.gov/community-character>).

⁵²⁵ An efficient location would be well-connected to existing development and within walking distance of activities, shopping, and services.

⁵²⁶ Carroll County, Maryland: priority preservation areas that identify agricultural and forestry resource land for preservation (<http://ccgovernments.carr.org/ccg/compplan/PPA/>).

⁵²⁷ University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Center for Decentralized Wastewater Management (<http://onsite.tennessee.edu/>).

⁵²⁸ EPA. Handbook for Managing Onsite and Clustered (Decentralized) Wastewater Treatment Systems (<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/septic/manuals.cfm>).

⁵²⁹ Sonoma County Waste Management Agency. Municipal composting program operations (http://www.recyclenow.org/disposal/municipal_composting.asp).

⁵³⁰ United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Information Center, provides information on the alternatives to waste disposal in rural areas (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/waste.html>).

⁵³¹ Hanover, New Hampshire Household Hazardous Waste & Unwanted Medicine Collection (http://www.hanovernh.org/Pages/HanoverNH_PublicWorks/Recycle/2014haz).

⁵³² EPA provides information on “pay as you throw” programs across the United States (<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/payt/index.htm>).

⁵³³ San Mateo County Salvage & Reuse of Construction Materials (http://www.recycleworks.org/con_dem/salvage.html).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

XI. Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy

More efficient homes and offices save money for people, businesses, and local government and can improve the environment by reducing energy demand. Locally produced renewable energy can create jobs and provide a reliable energy source. Open space and agricultural land can house wind or solar energy installations, providing additional income for farmers and ranchers.

Goal: Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context ⁵³⁴
Improving Energy Efficiency in New Construction and Renovations			
Are energy efficiency standards required for new construction and renovations?			
Strategy 1: The building code has minimum requirements for building insulation. ^{535,536}			1,2,3
Strategy 2: The building code requires measures in new construction to limit air exchange around and through doors, windows, and where exterior walls meet to reduce indoor to outdoor air exchange. ^{536,537}			1,2,3
Strategy 3: The building code encourages high solar reflectivity in roof materials. ^{538,539}			1,2,3
Strategy 4: The building code sets standards for the energy efficiency of heating and cooling equipment. ^{540,541}			1,2,3
Strategy 5: Provide incentives for builders who install ENERGY STAR or similarly efficient appliances. ⁵⁴²			1,2,3
Strategy 6: The building code requires ducts and pipes to be insulated. ^{543,544}			1,2,3
Do site development requirements promote energy efficiency?			
Strategy 7: Guidelines are available for climate-appropriate building orientation to maximize natural solar heat and minimize cooling loads in buildings. ⁵⁴⁵			1,2,3

⁵³⁴ Self-assessment topics and recommendations apply to one or more of the following scales: 1 – large town/small city (population of approximately 10,000 or greater); 2 - village/small town (population typically under 10,000) 3 – rural (very low density places, working lands, and natural areas outside of towns, villages, and cities).

⁵³⁵ Minnesota State Residential Energy Code Requirements (<https://www.energycodes.gov/adoption/states/minnesota>).

⁵³⁶ Daly City Municipal Requirements (http://www.dalycity.org/City_Hall/Departments/ECD/building.htm).

⁵³⁷ U.S. Department of Energy. Guide to Air Sealing (http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/guide_to_air_sealing.pdf).

⁵³⁸ EPA. Cool Roofs: Urban Heat Island Mitigation (<http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/mitigation/index.htm>).

⁵³⁹ California Title 24 and Cool Roofs (<http://www.title24express.com/what-is-title-24/title-24-cool-roof/>).

⁵⁴⁰ New York State Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning standards (<http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/>).

⁵⁴¹ California Building HVAC Requirements (CEC-400-2013-001) (http://www.energy.ca.gov/2008publications/CEC-400-2008-016/rev1_chapters/RCM_Chapter_4_HVAC.pdf).

⁵⁴² State Appliance Efficiency Standards (http://www.epa.gov/statelocalclimate/documents/pdf/guide_action_chap4_s4.pdf).

⁵⁴³ Virginia Mechanical Code: Duct Systems (http://www2.iccsafe.org/states/virginia/Mechanical/Mech_Frameset.html).

⁵⁴⁴ 2012 North Carolina Residential Energy Code (<http://ncenergystar.org/energy-code>).

⁵⁴⁵ U.S. Green Building Council. Solar Orientation Guidelines (<http://www.usgbc.org/credits/ea51>).

Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities

XI. Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy

Goal: Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context⁵³⁴
Strategy 8: Site lighting and lighted signs are required to be energy efficient. ⁵⁴⁶			1,2,3
Producing Renewable Energy Locally			
Do codes allow small-scale renewable energy production?			
Strategy 9: Allow solar photovoltaics on commercial and residential structures and sites. ^{547,548}			1,2,3
Strategy 10: Allow solar water heaters on commercial and residential structures and sites. ⁵⁴⁹			1,2,3
Strategy 11: Allow wind turbines on or near commercial and residential structures and sites. ⁵⁵⁰			1,2,3
Do codes allow large-scale renewable energy production?			
Strategy 12: Allow renewable energy production at different scales in rural, residential, commercial, and industrial districts. ^{551,552}			1,2,3
Strategy 13: Allow renewable energy production operations on agricultural land. ⁵⁵³			1,2,3
Using Energy Efficiently Through Comprehensive Plans and Local Government Policies			
Do land use plans and policies support compact development and redevelopment of existing town centers?⁵⁵⁴			
Strategy 14: Major government offices are located in village or town centers. ⁵⁵⁵			1,2
Strategy 15: Require an analysis on the impact of new development on energy use prior to annexing new land into the city or town. ⁵⁵⁶			1,2
Strategy 16: Identify future potential areas for annexation. ⁵⁵⁶			1,2
Does the local government promote and monitor energy efficiency?			

⁵⁴⁶ U.S. Department of Energy. Outdoor Lighting Resources (<http://energy.gov/eere/ssl/outdoor-lighting-resources>).

⁵⁴⁷ Cape Coral Photovoltaic Solar Permit Guidelines (http://www.capecoral.net/department/community_development/permitting/documents_required_for_permits.php#.VPTe2fnF9gg).

⁵⁴⁸ American Planning Association. Model Solar Ordinances and Commentary (<https://www.planning.org/pas/infopackets/open/eip30.htm>).

⁵⁴⁹ U.S. Department of Energy. Solar Water Heaters. (<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/solar-water-heaters>).

⁵⁵⁰ Oregon Department of Energy. Residential Wind Systems (<http://www.oregon.gov/energy/renew/pages/wind/small.aspx>).

⁵⁵¹ Natural Resources Defense Council. Renewable Energy for America (<http://www.nrdc.org/energy/renewables/>).

⁵⁵² Accomack County Draft Industrial Zoning District permits alternative energy and biofuels production (http://accomackcounty.eregulations.us/code/coord_apxid1370_ch106_artvi).

⁵⁵³ Sonoma County. Renewable Energy: Zoning For Renewable Energy (http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/docs/renewable_energy/).

⁵⁵⁴ EPA. Study on Location Efficiency and Housing Type – Boiling it Down to BTUs (http://www.epa.gov/dced/location_efficiency_BTU.htm).

⁵⁵⁵ City of Aspen Civic Master Plan (<http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Results?search=civic+master>).

⁵⁵⁶ Fort Worth Annexation Policy, Program, and Plan (<http://fortworthtexas.gov/planninganddevelopment/misc.aspx?id=8662>).

XI. Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy

Goal: Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context⁵³⁴
Strategy 17: Implement a green roofs program to reduce the amount of energy needed to cool buildings. ⁵⁵⁷			1,2
Strategy 18: Create and institute a recommissioning plan for public facilities. ⁵⁵⁸			1,2
Strategy 19: Conduct a municipal energy use inventory and identify investments to improve efficiency. ⁵⁵⁹			1,2
Strategy 20: The local government has adopted a goal for increasing energy efficiency in public facilities. ⁵⁶⁰			1,2
Strategy 21: Conduct a community-wide energy use inventory and identify public or private investments to improve efficiency. ⁵⁶¹			1,2
Strategy 22: Adopt a community-wide goal for improving energy efficiency and track progress toward the goal over the long term. ⁵⁶²			1,2
Using Energy Efficiently Through Programs and Services			
Is electricity from renewable sources available locally?			
Strategy 23: Local public utilities have committed to producing a certain percentage of energy with renewable resources. ⁵⁶³			1,2
Strategy 24: Local public utilities provide a renewable energy purchase program. ⁵⁶⁴			1,2
Strategy 25: The local government produces energy from renewable sources or as a part of standard operations. ^{565,566}			1,2
Does the community support transportation using less-polluting energy sources?			

⁵⁵⁷ Portland Ecoroof Program (<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/44422>).

⁵⁵⁸ Minnesota State Public Buildings Enhanced Energy Efficiency Program Reports (<https://mn.gov/commerce/energy/businesses/financial/Energy-Savings-Programs/Government/Public-Buildings-Enhanced-Energy-Efficiency-Program/PBEEEP-State-Reports.jsp>).

⁵⁵⁹ City of Bloomington, Indiana 2010 Local Government Operations: Energy Use and Emissions Inventory (<http://bloomington.in.gov/energyresources>).

⁵⁶⁰ Charles County Energy Action Plan for County Facilities (<http://www.charlescounty.org/green/>).

⁵⁶¹ City of Knoxville, Tennessee. Energy and Sustainability Initiative: 2014 Work Plan & Emissions Inventory Update (<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/sustainability/>).

⁵⁶² City of Asheville, North Carolina. Reducing Energy Use in the East of the Riverway (<http://www.ashevilenc.gov/portals/0/city-documents/communitydevelopment/community%20energy%20reduction%20policy%20analysis%202012%2006%2012.pdf>).

⁵⁶³ Massachusetts Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) & Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard Programs (APS) (<http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy-utilities-clean-tech/renewable-energy/rps-aps/>).

⁵⁶⁴ Estes Park, Colorado Renewable Energy Purchase Program (<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/townofestespark/renewable-energy-purchase-program>).

⁵⁶⁵ Examples of this include solar power, wind power, yard waste to energy, solid waste to energy, and methane capture from landfills.

⁵⁶⁶ EPA Top 30 On-site Generation list – represents partners generating and consuming the most green power on-site within the Green Power Partnership (<http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/toplists/top30onsite.htm>).

XI. Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy

Goal: Use Energy Efficiently and Provide Renewable Energy	Adopted? (Yes or No)	Add or Improve? (Yes or No)	Context⁵³⁴
Strategy 26: Electric vehicle charging stations are available in public parking areas. ⁵⁶⁷			1,2
Strategy 27: The local government fleet uses alternative fuel vehicles such as natural gas or electric vehicles. ⁵⁶⁸			1,2
Strategy 28: Natural gas fueling stations are available and open to the public. ⁵⁶⁹			1,2
Are energy conservation strategies considered in government programs and purchases?			
Strategy 29: Implement and establish a lighting retrofit program for public facilities and a plan for replacing fixtures with energy efficient options. ⁵⁷⁰			1,2
Strategy 30: Vehicle purchasing decisions consider the fuel efficiency of the municipal fleet. ⁵⁷¹			1,2
Strategy 31: Perform energy audits on public buildings and identify actions to improve their efficiency. ⁵⁷²			1,2
Are energy efficiency programs available to the general public?			
Strategy 32: The city or county provides energy audits through the local public utility. ⁵⁷³			1,2
Strategy 33: The local public utility provides programmable thermostats. ⁵⁷⁴			1,2
Strategy 34: Grant or revolving loan programs are available for energy-efficiency upgrades. ^{575,576,577}			1,2

⁵⁶⁷ City of Tacoma Public Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

(https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/environmentalservices/office_of_environmental_policy_and_sustainability/green_living_resources_and_map/transportation/electric_vehicles).

⁵⁶⁸ MARTA Sustainability Program: Compressed Natural Gas bus fleet (<http://www.itsmarta.com/textver/update.aspx?id=9981>).

⁵⁶⁹ California Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition. Fueling Station Directory and Locators (<http://www.cngvc.org/news-and-resources/fueling-stations.php>).

⁵⁷⁰ King County, Washington Energy Efficient Lighting Implementation Plan

(http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/procurement/Services/~media/operations/procurement/documents/EP_Products_Lighting.ashx).

⁵⁷¹ Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. Green your Fleet Strategies (<http://www.morpc.org/Search/index?s=green%20your%20fleet>).

⁵⁷² New Jersey Local Government Energy Audits: Guidelines and Application Forms (<http://www.njcleanenergy.com/LGEA>).

⁵⁷³ Fort Collins Home Efficiency Audit Services and Rebates (<http://www.fcgov.com/utilities/residential/conservation/home-efficiency-program/>).

⁵⁷⁴ The Austin Energy Power Saver Program (http://powersaver.austinenenergy.com/wps/portal/psp/about/!ut/p/a1/iZBfb4lwFMU_yx7o26QUZbqkWRB1og7HjH_gxRTsElcU20Ljtx_qy0w0s8lNe3N_p-fm6KG-0sOcVgICZMpykp360FpD1EZDByK3bfcRdD3YNyd9H05dqwaCv8B0-tmC7ssXmvgz02jPiQf1d44N_9Mv9fAaubHBBbhvMXpgSTuPzHaih5x-U055o-R1OFspi1cNaIAp1UgYSzLaiNleg_X0TRAsAY8l3oEDBITwGAsgWMIjhhWNQLzBCFR0g6HjuP5gZ3dBLCOnPzXDtDUDDU5VMEV5lFxtSUoh05zmlCfHs089VoW4UFyS7PwSxekiESsloCluentnESyDKT3OhD8bqwnSPQVKkWB74O8c7525w0B46aaTSyMW6Ygsmutk2LJ-LB-INEF4aQ2P1jlbT7pOTSU-NT7480CBqNriqGp0LNq0bkWOZULq-qto9G1_X8FdK6sm9tMvtuGwUQ!!/dl5/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/).

⁵⁷⁵ Eligible improvements typically include insulation, weatherization, and upgrades to outdated equipment and fixtures.

⁵⁷⁶ Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Financing and Tax Incentives for Homeowners (<http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy-utilities-clean-tech/energy-efficiency/ee-for-your-home/financing-and-tax-incentives-for-homeowners.html>).

⁵⁷⁷ Lansing, Michigan Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund Information, Guidelines, and Application.

Appendix C: Implementation Table

Strategy	Priority Level	Lead Person or Entity	Decision Making Body	Documents to Amend	Time Frame
Goal Area:					
Goal Area:					
Goal Area:					
Goal Area:					
Goal Area:					

Appendix D: Smart Growth Case Study from a Rural Community Shaping Growth in Dryden, New York

Overview

The story of Dryden, New York, demonstrates how a rural community can use smart growth strategies to tackle common challenges, such as a lack of affordable housing and loss of agricultural land. The town of Dryden adopted design guidelines in 2008 and revised its zoning ordinance in 2012 in response to these concerns. Other communities might decide to take similar steps after using the Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities.

The town of Dryden's economy is closely linked to Ithaca, New York, which lies only 10 miles to the west and is home to Ithaca College and Cornell University. The colleges provide steady employment and support a population growth rate for the region that has easily outpaced New York state during the last decade.⁵⁷⁸ However, large parts of Dryden and much of the surrounding county are still fairly rural, and residents have grown concerned about the character of new development and its spread into rural areas.

In response to these concerns and the risks that development can pose to agricultural land and open space, the town created residential and commercial design guidelines and amended its zoning and subdivision ordinances. The new design guidelines and codes have already brought environmental and economic benefits.

Many of the environmental benefits come from building more compact neighborhoods that disturb less land, produce fewer impervious surfaces that contribute to polluted stormwater runoff, and make it easier for residents to drive less by mixing land uses and including sidewalks and paths. The town's new approaches to development also help protect agricultural and natural assets. Agriculture has long supported the region's economy, and the natural assets contribute to the region's reputation as a good place to live and visit. Meanwhile, the updated ordinances also support the economy by adding new housing choices, such as townhomes and accessory dwelling units, for people with moderate and below median incomes.

This case study explores the town's approaches to shaping development that supports local goals and offers solutions that other rural communities might be able to use.



Photo credit: Town of Dryden

Figure 6: The Town of Dryden has abundant farmland.

⁵⁷⁸ New York State Department of Labor. "Population Data and Projections." <http://labor.ny.gov/stats/nys/statewide-population-data.shtm>. Accessed Aug. 13, 2014.

Background

Dryden's population growth has been steady since 1970, rising from 9,770 people in 1970 to 14,435 in 2010, an increase of nearly 50 percent.⁵⁷⁹ However, Dryden remains a largely rural community.

Geography

Much of the town's agricultural activity is concentrated in the northern part of the town. Active farming occurs on about 22 percent of Dryden's land.⁵⁸⁰ The southern half of the town is covered by the Allegheny Plateau, with woodlands and steep slopes that are poorly suited for agriculture or development. A large part of Dryden's land drains to Fall Creek, a major tributary of Cayuga Lake and a well-known feature of Cornell University's Ithaca campus. Fall Creek and Cayuga Lake are important recreational assets and protecting their water quality is vital to residents and motivates the town to reduce polluted stormwater runoff.⁵⁸¹

Economy

Agriculture has long been an important part of Dryden's economy and culture. The town is home to several dairy operations, including the largest organic dairy farm in the northeastern United States.⁵⁸² Education is also important to the town's economy. Dryden's location on New York State Route 13, between the college towns of Ithaca and Cortland, has attracted large amounts of residential development for employees of the two schools. Cornell University and Ithaca College are the largest and third largest employers in Tompkins County, respectively.⁵⁸³

Government and Policy Context

Dryden is one of nine towns in Tompkins County. A five-person town board governs the town. Within Dryden are two villages, Freeville and Dryden, which are the historical population centers of the town. Village residents pay taxes and receive services from the town and village governments and are considered residents of both entities. Both villages have their own governing board of trustees, which consists of three trustees, a mayor, and deputy mayor.

The villages in Dryden conduct their own planning, guided by their own planning boards and zoning boards of appeals. The town is responsible for planning in the areas outside of the villages. However, the town and villages cooperate on site plan reviews and village annexations, and the town provides code enforcement services for the villages.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁷⁹ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan*. 2005.

⁵⁸⁰ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan*. 2005.

⁵⁸¹ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan*. 2005.

⁵⁸² Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County. "2011 Jerry Dell Farm." <http://cctompkins.org/farm-city-day/2011-jerry-dell-farm>. Accessed Dec. 5, 2012.

⁵⁸³ Town of Dryden. *A Community Snapshot: The Dryden Sustainability Inventory*. 2011. P. 11.

⁵⁸⁴ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

The relationship between Tompkins County and the town of Dryden is important contextual information for other communities in home rule states. The fragmentation of land use authority among the various local governments in a county, and the lack of a strong role in land use planning for the county, can hinder cohesive and strategic planning and development in regions. Sixteen different local governments regulate land use in the county. Tompkins County has a planning department, but its authority over land use decisions is fairly limited. For example, the county reviews any proposed development within 500 feet of a county facility, such as a highway. The town, however, can override county recommendations with a supermajority vote of its board. The county, therefore, plays more of an advisory or coordinating role with the town and village governments.⁵⁸⁵ In this role, it promotes municipal policies that are consistent with the county's goals for growth and development.⁵⁸⁶

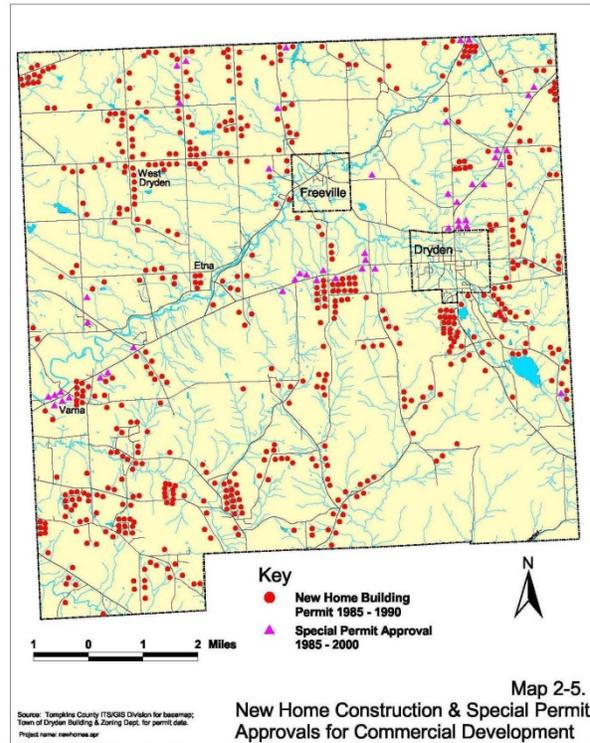


Figure 7: Development spread throughout the town of Dryden between 1985 and 2000.

Figure credit: Town of Dryden

Since 2000, Tompkins County developed several countywide plans, including a comprehensive plan in 2004 and a Development Focus Areas Strategy and Conservation Strategy in 2012. The Development Focus Areas Strategy identifies priority areas for development based on access and proximity to water and sewer infrastructure and public transportation. The Conservation Strategy identifies natural features focus areas and agricultural resource focus areas and lays out 11 actions to protect them. Portions of eight natural features and one agricultural resource focus area are within Dryden. While these two plans identify areas and strategies for development and preservation, local governments are not required to follow their policy recommendations.

Catalysts for Changes to Development Policies

Dryden has experienced steady growth for several decades. As the demand for workforce housing has grown, development has occurred on agricultural land and open space. The town's emphasis on smart growth approaches to development are motivated in part by this increased housing demand and the increasing development pressure on open space and agricultural land.

The prevailing growth pattern in the town over the last few decades concerned residents and elected officials. The county's and town's rural areas are attracting much more of the growth than the developed areas. Between 1960 and 2000, the majority of the town's development happened outside of its villages. This development pattern caused the population in Dryden's two villages to fall from 24 percent to 17

⁵⁸⁵ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

⁵⁸⁶ Tompkins County. *Building Vibrant Communities in Tompkins County...a Development Focus Areas Strategy*. Oct. 2, 2012. Page 10.

percent of the town's total population over this time period. Figure 2, from the town's comprehensive plan, illustrates how growth spread out in the 1980s and 1990s.

The town's growth pattern has increased the development pressure on open space and agricultural land. The Northeast Agricultural Resource Focus Area, about half of which is located in Dryden, lost 24 percent of its agricultural land between 1969 and 2007.⁵⁸⁷

Dryden also needs more homes that middle-income people can afford.⁵⁸⁸ Housing development has catered more to the higher and lower ends of Dryden's housing market. About 90 percent of the housing stock in Dryden is single-family homes marketed to higher-income residents, many of whom work at the nearby colleges. The town also has many manufactured homes marketed to lower-income people. Housing options for middle-income buyers, such as townhomes, are less abundant.⁵⁸⁹

Community Planning Response

Dryden's planners and town board saw the potential to use smart growth strategies to preserve land and encourage mid-range housing options.⁵⁹⁰ Dryden's plans and codes did not align with these overarching goals, so the town developed design guidelines and amended its zoning and subdivision regulations.

The town's residents were initially interested in talking about their visions for the future of their community but were hesitant about zoning regulations. Rather than jump immediately into a zoning overhaul, the town hired a consultant to develop residential and commercial design guidelines. The guidelines allowed residents and elected officials to express their aspirations for development without placing strict new requirements on development proposals.

The town board approved the guidelines in December 2008.⁵⁹¹ Dryden's website states, "the use of the guidelines will help achieve the goals expressed in the town's comprehensive plan including provision of a variety of house options, protection of agricultural resources, and maintaining town rural character and land values."⁵⁹² The guidelines convey a vision for development that does not typically come across through zoning requirements.⁵⁹³ Since 2008, the town has used the design guidelines to evaluate site plan proposals and ensure that new development is in line with the community's long-term goals.

The town uses the Residential Design Guidelines to advance the following goals from its comprehensive plan:

- "Integrating new growth in a way that respects and protects existing natural and cultural resources in a reasonable manner.
- "Provide reasonable examples of appropriate design concepts for landowners who choose to subdivide their property.
- "Protect and where possible, enhance public safety along roadways.

⁵⁸⁷ Tompkins County. *Conservation Strategy*. 2012.

⁵⁸⁸ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

⁵⁸⁹ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan*. Dec. 8, 2005. Page 16.

⁵⁹⁰ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

⁵⁹¹ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

⁵⁹² Town of Dryden. "Design Guidelines." <http://dryden.ny.us/departments/planning-department/planning/design-guidelines>. Accessed Dec. 3, 2012.

⁵⁹³ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Commercial Development Design Guidelines*. 2008.

- “Establish development patterns that are cost-effective for the town and developers while creating a land use pattern that protects and strengthens the town’s natural and economic attributes.”⁵⁹⁴

The guidelines describe and illustrate several design elements that support these goals. For example:

- Shared driveways, which help make neighborhoods safer and more pleasant for pedestrians.
- Vegetated buffers between development and natural areas and development directed away from critical environmental areas, which protect rural corridors and agricultural resources.
- Properly sized roads, which make walking safer and more appealing and foster attractive communities with a sense of place.

The town also developed Commercial Design Guidelines that inform discussions between town officials and developers. The guidelines describe and illustrate several design elements that the town would like to see in new commercial development, including:

- “Provide pedestrian connections between adjacent commercial developments through sidewalks, multi-use paths, etc.
- “All new construction or redevelopment of a property should, to the greatest practical extent, use materials and design that is either evocative or respectful of a rural setting. This should include wood and stone for primary façades.
- “Existing mature trees should be maintained, and species selected for planting should be appropriate for this region and microclimate of the setting.
- “Natural drainage ways, contours, and landforms should be respected and disturbance to these areas should be minimized.
- “Lighting should be appropriate to the rural setting. For example, do not “over light” (too many lights or lights that are too bright), always include full shielding to eliminate glare, and outside of hamlet areas and large parking lots, minimize lighting to preserve dark skies and limit light pollution.”⁵⁹⁵
- “Ground-floor commercial (office or retail) is encouraged along principal roads.”

Updating the Zoning Law

The design guidelines made the community more comfortable with the planning process and allowed the town to move on to updating its 1969 zoning law. At a public hearing for the new zoning law, the town’s planning director said that the updated zoning ordinance “creates more opportunities for people instead of restricting their decisions.”⁵⁹⁶ He also emphasized the need to adjust regularly zoning ordinances to respond to changing market conditions. For example, the new zoning law allows accessory dwelling units by special use permit. These units, which are typically smaller attachments to another unit, such as a single-family home, or small freestanding units next to a single family home, were illegal before Dryden updated its regulations. Accessory dwelling units are becoming popular in many communities. Some homeowners rent out the units for additional income, while others use them for older family members

⁵⁹⁴ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Residential Development Design Guidelines*. 2008. P. 3.

⁵⁹⁵ Town of Dryden. *Town of Dryden Commercial Development Design Guidelines*. 2008. Page 5, 7, 10, 11, and 17.

⁵⁹⁶ Durrett, David. *Second Public Hearing Planned for Zoning Law*. *The Ithaca Journal*. Nov. 22, 2011.

such as parents who cannot live independently, or for adult children. These units can also be affordable housing options for lower-income people.

The new zoning law also allows townhomes for the first time, making infill development easier and creating more housing options. Developers have more flexibility under the new zoning law. It allows planned unit developments and creates a Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District. Planned unit developments typically allow developers more flexibility than conventional zoning to create mixed-use neighborhoods while the Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay District promotes traditional design features in areas adjacent to existing villages and hamlets, allowing more development if the developer adheres to traditional neighborhood design principles such as walkability and a mix of housing types and uses.⁵⁹⁷ For example, the zoning specifies block lengths of 480 feet, alleys, public space integrated into the neighborhood, connected streets, and sidewalks on all streets. Up to 40 percent of dwelling units can be two-family or multifamily. These specifications allow compact development that fits with existing development, building on village character and maintaining a sense of place.

The zoning law also focuses on the performance of new development rather than specifying design details. For example, the law requires sites used for multifamily development to set aside 70 percent of their land as green space and gives the developer latitude to provide this space rather than being prescriptive about the site layout. According to the town’s planning department, this “works to create an intended result, without overly restricting the creativity of the developer to meet the performance standard.”⁵⁹⁸

Overcoming Opposition

While the town’s zoning update had wide support, many residents of the small hamlet of Varna, on the western edge of Dryden, opposed it. The town took measures to remedy these concerns and created zoning that worked better for residents. The town developed a hamlet zoning designation for the area, which was essentially a placeholder for regulations and design guidelines that the hamlet’s residents would develop during a later planning process. Varna’s residents supported this approach.⁵⁹⁹

After the town adopted the new zoning ordinance in 2012, the planners turned their attention to Varna and started working on a small area plan for the hamlet. The plan was important because Varna is well situated for growth. It is on the western edge of Dryden, close to Ithaca College and Cornell University,

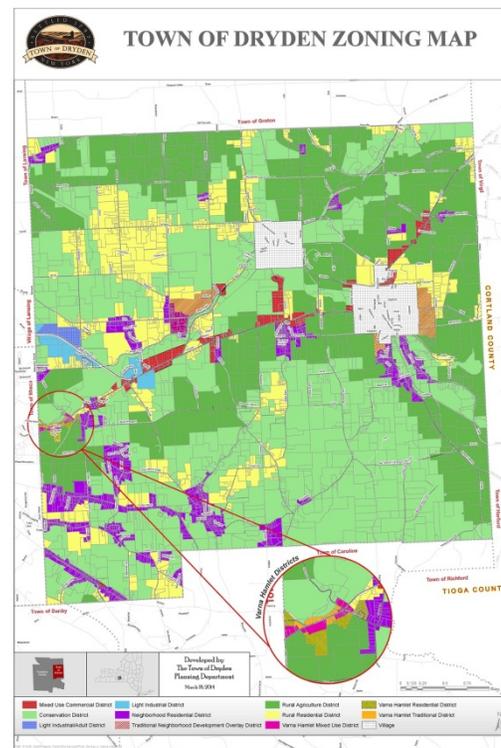


Figure 8: Dryden approved a new zoning map in 2012 that places much of the land in conservation or agricultural districts (light and dark green areas).

Figure credit: Town of Dryden

⁵⁹⁷ Town of Dryden. *Zoning Law*. 2012.

⁵⁹⁸ Town of Dryden. *Hamlet of Varna Community Development Plan*. 2012. p.45.

⁵⁹⁹ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

and it has water and sewer connections, which make it prime for further development that leverages existing infrastructure to save the town money in new infrastructure development.

The Varna Community Development Plan is the result of extensive public involvement and outreach.⁶⁰⁰ Among the avenues for public involvement were a Varna Advisory Committee, public workshop, surveys, and meetings with business owners in the area. The Varna Community Development Plan amended the town's existing comprehensive plan and established new design and landscaping guidelines for the area.

Dryden learned from Varna's planning process. After working with the town, Dryden amended its new zoning law based on the recommendations of the Varna Community Development Plan. The zoning amendment divided the Hamlet District covering Varna into three new districts with distinct regulations: the Varna Hamlet Mixed Use District, the Varna Hamlet Residential District, and the Varna Hamlet Traditional District. Within these districts:

- New development and redevelopment must include sidewalks and paths.
- Buildings cannot be more than 40 feet high.
- Regulations should preserve existing views and sight lines as much as practical.
- Plans should design new roads to preserve the existing topography.⁶⁰¹

The zoning amendment also established the density allowed in each district. The mixed-use and residential districts allow higher density than the traditional district, up to 12 dwelling units per acre. Regulations allow higher density in each district if the development or redevelopment achieves at least basic Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development standards.^{602,603}

Also, consistent with the town's emphasis on performance-based zoning, new development is required to provide green space on at least 40 percent of the lot in the mixed-use district, 60 percent in the residential district, and 70 percent in the traditional district. Varna's residents supported these new zoning regulations.



Photo credit: Town of Dryden

Figure 9: The main highway in the Hamlet of Varna.

Early Success

It is too soon to see extensive changes in Dryden's built environment. However, the town has begun to see the effects of its new design guidelines, zoning, and small area planning. Shortly after the town adopted its design standards, a developer proposed redeveloping a gas station that sits in a prominent location. The developer met with the town's planning staff and discussed how to apply the design

⁶⁰⁰ Town of Dryden. *Hamlet of Varna Community Development Plan*. 2012.

⁶⁰¹ Town of Dryden. *Resolution Proposing Certain Amendments to the Town of Dryden Zoning Ordinance Pending Adoption of Hamlet of Varna Community Development Plan*. 2012.

⁶⁰² Town of Dryden. *Resolution Proposing Certain Amendments to the Town of Dryden Zoning Ordinance Pending Adoption of Hamlet of Varna Community Development Plan*. 2012. Page 12.

⁶⁰³ The LEED for Neighborhood Development program encourages energy-efficient development patterns. It rates neighborhoods in the categories of smart location and linkage, neighborhood pattern and design, green infrastructure and buildings, and innovation and design process. <http://www.usgbc.org/resources/leed-neighborhood-development-v2009-current-version>.

guidelines to the redevelopment project. Fall Creek runs near the gas station, making stormwater protection a critical component for the site. The gas station is adjacent to other commercial properties, but it lacked pedestrian connections to those areas. To comply with the new design guidelines, the developer installed extensive landscaping, energy-efficient lighting, a swale behind the station to capture and filter stormwater runoff, and new, pedestrian-scale signs. The town also mandated pedestrian access to the adjacent properties, which connects the new development to existing buildings.⁶⁰⁴

Lessons Learned

Dryden has high planning capacity, with a six-person planning office. Many communities with fewer than 15,000 residents lack robust staff resources. However, some steps that Dryden has taken can be replicated in other communities, regardless of their size. Dryden's planning staff had the following observations and recommendations for other rural communities facing similar issues:

- **Prioritize design guidelines.** Dryden preferred to start with design guidelines and then develop zoning and development codes to be consistent with the desired vision. Nearly all residents have an interest in the look and character of development in their community. Focusing on design first can build goodwill and relationships between residents and the planning department. It also can bring about results even in a slow-growth area, where deciding where growth should occur is less of an issue than influencing the form of redevelopment.
- **Incorporate view sheds into the design plans, especially in rural communities.** Views of natural features are highly valued in many rural communities. Dryden requires extensive green space in development and redevelopment to protect these views and open space.
- **Write policies, zoning ordinances, and codes in plain language.** Plain language is useful in communities of all types and sizes, but it is particularly important in smaller communities that lack professional planning staff and the population needed to support a planning board.
- **Simplify the strategies.** Overly complex regulations require many staff and volunteer resources to implement. For example, Dryden's planning staff prefers to conserve land by purchasing development rights rather setting up a transfer of development rights program. Transferring development rights is more complex than buying them, which makes it more difficult for smaller municipalities.
- **Consider existing water and sewer infrastructure when identifying areas for smart growth development.** The presence of water and sewer infrastructure makes compact development patterns possible. Codes alone cannot attract the type of development that Dryden was pursuing.
- **Leverage technical assistance and funding from higher levels of government to achieve smart growth outcomes.** Local governments typically have authority over their own land use decisions, which makes higher levels of government, such as counties, advisors rather than regulators. A county can be particularly effective as an advisor if it and the local government have similar goals for land use and development. County planning departments can provide technical assistance and fund plans that help implement shared goals and policies.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰⁴ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

⁶⁰⁵ Personal communication with Dan Kwasnowski, Director of Planning, and Jane Nicholson, Senior Planner, Town of Dryden, on Nov. 28, 2012.

