

Regional Smart Growth Resources Section I

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Creating Livable Communities

*Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
2013*

<http://www.nirpc.org/land-use/programs/creating-livable-communities.aspx>

<https://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/economy-and-place/creating-livable-communities-clc>

About the Plan

This plan lays out the key strategies necessary to accomplish the vision of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's (NIRPC) 2040 Regional Comprehensive Plan (CRP), focusing new growth and development in "Livable Centers." Livable Centers are defined in the CRP as compact, mixed-use, walkable and transit-accessible areas with a wide choice of affordable housing options that are developed at a density and scale appropriate to their community, whether urban, suburban or rural.

Population within the region is forecasted to grow by 170,000 people by 2040, and without a regional growth strategy this growth will likely occur on farmland at the outer edges of the region while the existing urban cores continue to lose population. The Livable Centers concept explained in Creating Livable Communities is to concentrate future growth within a defined perimeter around central locations defined within each community. These existing activity centers already are served by utility infrastructure and the roadway network, so encouraging growth in these areas helps to ensure that growth occurs in a sustainable and responsible manner. The plan classifies communities within NIRPC's jurisdiction into four categories—metropolitan, large, medium and small—and outlines strategies that communities can take to foster Livable Centers.

Goals

- Livable urban, suburban, and rural centers by
 - Encouraging the compact mixing of uses
 - Encouraging a diverse mix of housing types and affordability levels near job centers and transit routes
 - Facilitating the remediation and redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized land
 - Promoting community green infrastructure and access to public open space
 - Promoting the preservation of historic and cultural resources
 - Promoting the integration of Context Sensitive Solutions into transportation planning
- Revitalized urban core by
 - Fostering the development of livable, mixed-use downtowns
 - Promoting adaptive reuse, infill development and the remediation and reuse of underutilized properties, particularly brownfields
 - Facilitating the rehabilitation of neighborhoods and maintenance of high-quality and affordable housing
 - Expanding visual and physical access to Lake Michigan and other open space
 - Partnering to protect threatened natural remnants

- Enhancing community design and aesthetic

Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
2009

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-01/documents/2009_essential_fixes_0.pdf

About the Resource

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), this document was put together by EPA's Smart Growth Program to help communities that may not wish to revise or replace their entire system of codes and ordinances, but nevertheless are looking for "essential fixes" that will help them get the smarter, more environmentally responsible, and sustainable communities they want.

The document identifies the most common code and ordinance barriers that communities face and suggests actions communities could take to improve their land development regulations. The suggested code provisions are separated into three categories—modest adjustments, major modifications and wholesale changes—determined by the level of effort and political will that is required to make changes at the local level.

Goals

The document provides solutions to 11 of the most common barriers local governments face when they want to implement smart growth approaches. Each section describes a different barrier, how to respond, expected benefits, and policy-change implementation steps. The topics covered are:

1. Allow or require mixed-use zones
2. Use urban dimensions in urban places
3. Rein in and reform the use of Planned Unit Developments
4. Fix Parking Requirements
5. Increase density and intensity in centers
6. Modernize street standards
7. Enact standards to foster walkable places
8. Designate and support preferred growth areas and development sites
9. Use green infrastructure to manage stormwater
10. Adopt smart annexation policies
11. Encourage appropriate development densities on the edge

Smart Growth and Protection of Natural Resources in Indiana

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant

2009

<https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/FNR/FNR-409-W.pdf>

About the Resource

This document, part of the Planning with POWER series, discusses the 10 basic principles of Smart Growth and provides examples of Smart Growth communities in Indiana. The local examples discussed are the Porter County Plan Commission's traditional neighborhood design guidance manual, Portage Northside Plan, Tryon Farm, and Coffee Creek.

Goals

The 10 Principles of Smart Growth are:

1. Allow mixed land use
2. Use compact building design
3. Increase housing choice
4. Create walkable communities
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Protect farms, unique natural features, critical environmental areas, and open spaces
7. Direct new development toward existing communities and infrastructure
8. Offer a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development processes predictable, fair, efficient, and cost effective
10. Involve community stakeholders

Smart Growth for Coastal and Waterfront Communities

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, International City/County Management Association, and Rhode Island Sea Grant
2009*

<http://coastalsmartgrowth.noaa.gov/report.html>

About the Resource

This document provides guidance for coastal communities to develop or redevelop in ways that are compatible with their natural assets. It takes the 10 Smart Growth Principles developed by the EPA and offers recommendations about how they can be applied to coastal communities. The guide begins with an overview of challenges that are unique to coastal and waterfront communities—natural hazards, ecosystem vulnerability to the combined effects of development, public trust doctrine, and competing uses. The following sections of the guide detail what smart growth concepts may look like and then offer examples, tools, and resources that may be helpful for the implementation phase.

Goals

The 10 Smart Growth elements that are covered by this guidance document are:

1. Mix land uses, including water-dependent uses
2. Take advantage of compact community design that enhances, preserves, and provides access to waterfront resources
3. Provide a range of housing opportunities and choices to meet the needs of both seasonal and permanent residents
4. Create walkable communities with physical and visual access to and along the waterfront for public use
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place that capitalizes on the waterfront's heritage
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and the critical environmental areas that characterize and support coastal waterfront communities
7. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities and encourage waterfront revitalization
8. Provide a variety of a land- and water-based transportation options
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective through consistent policies and coordinated permitting processes
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions, ensuring that public interests in and rights of access to the waterfront and coastal waters are upheld

Smart Growth Guidelines for Sustainable Design and Development

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program, and the Connecticut Capital Region Council of Governments
2009*

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/sg_guidelines.pdf

About the Resource

This document contains recommendations about how to make infill, grayfield, and brownfield redevelopment more sustainable. The guidelines are intended to be used primarily by local government officials, but they are also useful for use by state officials responsible for the allocation of state and federal resources, developers, designers, advocates, and residents who want to more effectively participate in community development processes. Strategies are described for three scales of development—regional, neighborhood and individual building.

Goals

The document outlines strategies to meeting the following objectives:

Regional scale

- Natural resources preservation
- Environmentally sensitive areas protection
- Existing development and infrastructure connections
- Transportation and transit systems access
- Community-oriented services proximity

Neighborhood scale

- Encourage neighborhood fabric and composition
- Community streets
- Nature and open space
- Equity, diversity and affordability

Site scale

- High-performance buildings
- Green building materials
- Sustainable and indigenous landscaping
- Green infrastructure
- Green construction best practices
- Green energy production and supply
- Green operations and maintenance