



ALLIANCE *for*  
REGIONAL  
STEWARDSHIP

# Toward a Vision of the Livable Community

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## Introduction

### What is Livability?

**W**HAT do people seek in the cities, communities and neighborhoods they inhabit? Convenience? Privacy? Safety? Excitement? Diversity? What makes one city more livable than another? How do different people define livability?

An expanding base of literature addresses these questions, many of which have arisen in the context of the need to accommodate an ever-expanding population in ways that preserve open space, use less energy and other resources, and encourage more healthy and stimulating lifestyles in ways that build community.

The Alliance for Regional Stewardship advocates an approach to understanding communities and regions in terms of four inter-related concepts that are frequently discussed, albeit not in an integrated fashion. These concepts – or “Principles of Regional Stewardship” – include Innovative Economy, Social Inclusion, Collaborative Governance, and Livable Community. Viewed in their overlapping and mutually supportive association, they constitute a framework for approaching place-based stewardship. This monograph on livability has been deliberately structured to emphasize the relationship among these four factors, or conversations. The sixth monograph in this series, “Inclusive Stewardship” (published in 2003), addresses the topic of Social Inclusion, while Collaborative Governance and Innovative Economy will be taken up in turn by future monographs. (For a discussion of the Principles of Regional Stewardship, see Appendix B.)

**Livability.** This monograph suggests that livability has many dimensions, and exists along a continuum that is appreciated in highly individual ways by different people. Nonetheless, it posits that all livable communities share a few baseline characteristics, such as a welcoming and hospitable atmosphere, convenience, safety, and affordability. Beyond these necessary components, livability becomes far more subjective.<sup>1</sup> Some people thrive on the availability of artistic and cultural amenities, while others appreciate easy access to dense downtowns, on the one hand, and close proximity to parks and nature trails at the other extreme. Still others want meaningful employment

opportunities, quality schools, houses of worship, convenient transit and shopping, and a choice of health care providers and facilities. People may crave privacy and quiet or teeming urban diversity. Through careful design and stewardship, communities of place can be fashioned and redeveloped to offer a range of these choices simultaneously, to people of varying age and socio-economic status. Surely, we all desire to live in healthy and sustainable environments that meet our needs on affordable terms. In the pages that follow, we explore a variety of themes relating to livability and consider the experiences of numerous communities in promoting them in equitable and inclusive ways.

### **Why “Livability”?**

The cause of livability is closely aligned with a number of other movements and interests promoting reform in the way we plan our communities and allocate resources, such as the following:

**Smart Growth** is concerned principally with issues of land use and sprawl.

**New Urbanism** emphasizes aesthetic issues of community design and lifestyle.

**Sustainability** is preoccupied with energy and resource consumption.

**Environmentalists** remind us to think of the impact of our actions on air and water quality and the natural systems on which life depends.

**Wildlife advocates** seek to preserve habitat for threatened and endangered plant and animal species.

**Farming advocates** point out that urban-influenced agriculture and animal husbandry – which supply both food and important buffering of metropolitan areas from undeveloped countryside – are threatened by sprawl.

The Alliance for Regional Stewardship embraces livability because the concept is broadly inclusive of a variety of worthy objectives and emphasizes in a holistic fashion the consequences of policy choices on social, economic, environmental, and governance issues. Additionally, this approach is human-centered, taking into account the need for people of all backgrounds to have access to clean, healthy, safe, convenient, and affordable communities that coexist with and complement the natural world.

## Chapter 1—Community Amenities

HAVING acknowledged the subjective nature of livability, it's important to underscore the characteristics that attractive and inviting places have in common. Most Americans, regardless of socio-economic status, prefer to travel short distances and expend the least time and energy possible in obtaining the routine goods and services they need and commuting to work. Livable, walkable communities are organized to make this relatively easy, while sprawling communities, in general, make these tasks more difficult and time consuming. Of course, many people – particularly those with lower incomes – are constrained in their choice of community due to the high cost of housing, a fact that underscores the importance of incorporating principles of livability into land-use plans.

Community amenities include those facilities and businesses that furnish the baseline necessities, such as food and essential services, as well as the “extras,” such as entertainment and cultural enrichment. An “amenity continuum” of neighborhood attributes that correlate with livability might include the following, ranging from “basic” to “advanced” (the range of amenities available at each level should be cumulative, to accommodate a variety of needs and tastes):

**Basic.** At minimum, livable neighborhoods incorporate schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, eating places, and access to mass transit. They should also include pocket parks, walkable streetscapes with appropriate traffic-taming features and pedestrian lighting, street-level businesses, and front porches for greeting and gathering.

**Intermediate.** Higher-amenity neighborhoods offer health clinics, full-service restaurants (some of them late night or around-the-clock), dry cleaners and laundromats, specialty shops (clothing, shoes, antiques, etc.), theaters (both cinema and live performance), and both indoor and outdoor gathering places, such as plazas, parks and libraries.

**Advanced.** The highest-amenity neighborhoods feature major arts and cultural facilities (playhouses, cinemas, orchestras, galleries, meeting facilities, sports venues, full-service hospitals, and a range of pro-

fessional services (accounting, legal, medical, dental, etc.), as well as higher-education facilities.

The basic-level amenities are typically available in any traditional urban neighborhood and most downtowns, while those included in the intermediate level are associated with small towns and neo-traditional village centers. The advanced amenities ordinarily require the critical mass of a major urban center or metropolitan region, underscoring the importance of mobility and access to quality of life.

To some extent, the appreciation of community amenities depends on one's stage of life. For college students, a high level of amenity might include a range of affordable housing choices within easy access to campus and entertainment venues. For young families, quality schools, safe neighborhoods and convenient commuting times to and from work might take priority. The elderly might emphasize mass transit, neighborhood shopping opportunities and access to health care providers. Empty nesters in mid-life might want appropriately sized housing close to work and opportunities for social and cultural enrichment. Athletic singles might look for parks, bicycle lanes, skateboard pavilions, night-clubs, and restaurants. An eclectic mix of performance spaces, galleries and cafes might appeal to those with a more avant-garde taste. Busy, career-oriented individuals might be happy to live near a dry-cleaning shop, while the lives of less fortunate people might be eased by the proximity of social service agencies and churches.

Newer communities often are not organized to satisfy this range of needs and preferences, reflecting instead a pattern of segregation by use, age and income, with the greatest determinant of where people live being their primary means of transportation: Relatively young and well-to-do people live in sprawling, automobile-dependent suburbs, while the elderly, poor and infirm inhabit more centrally located urban neighborhoods where services and transit are more readily available and less stigmatized. Truly livable communities incorporate the housing forms, services, businesses, attractions, and transit connections that enable people of all ages and incomes to shelter themselves and nourish both their bodies and their minds. As the following section points out, providing opportunities for aesthetic stimulation is good for both individuals and the public treasury.

**Livability and the arts.** Recent studies indicate that investments in arts and culture increase the appeal and viability of communities even more than the traditional mainstays of sports stadiums and arenas. Arts patrons spend more time at or near their destinations, often combining the arts-appreciation experience with a meal out or other entertainment. For example, a recent study commissioned by the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts on the overall benefit of the Denver metro area's seven-county Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD)<sup>2</sup> found that the \$35 million in taxes collected by the SCFD in 2003 alone helped fuel over \$1.3 billion in arts-related economic activity, of which the direct impact of the revenues was \$500 million—a 14-to-1 economic multiplier effect. Additionally, thanks in part to the SCFD, the Denver metro area boasts an arts-related workforce of 9,000 representing a payroll of \$86 million. Finally, in 2001 Denver's arts and cultural facilities attracted 9 million person-visits, nearly twice the traffic of the metro area's four professional sports teams combined.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, interest in the arts and cultivation of an ethic of supporting the arts necessarily begins on a small scale, often with school- and neighborhood-based arts programs that also can play a role in fostering social unity and neighborhood revitalization.

### **Hopkins Center for the Arts** Hopkins, Minnesota

Hopkins, Minnesota is an older suburb in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. While experiencing some downtown economic distress, Hopkins benefited from the presence of Stages Theater Company, a small-scale organization offering theatrical education and performances. For years, Stages had occupied dilapidated space rented from the local school district while maintaining its administrative offices off-site. In 1995, in a collaborative effort coordinated by the Hopkins Area Arts Council, Stages joined with the City of Hopkins and the school district to fund and construct a downtown arts center in connection with a major downtown-redevelopment campaign. The new arts center incorporates a theater, gallery, rehearsal space, community meeting space, an instructional classroom, a dance studio, and catering facilities for events. Today, attendance at Stages productions has doubled, with about half of all patrons traveling to Hopkins from the central metropolitan cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Annually, 160,000 people visit the center to attend performances, community education programs and other events.<sup>4</sup>

## Chapter 2—Mobility

**L**IVABLE communities are walkable places with access to mass transit and other alternative means of mobility, such as safe bicycle lanes and sidewalks along tree-lined streets with crosswalks, neck-downs and other traffic-taming tools. While they neither restrict nor discourage automobile use, livable – and walkable – communities are organized to be less dependent upon car trips to accomplish such basic, everyday tasks as commuting to work, getting to school or routine shopping and errands. This includes the co-mingling of residential and commercial uses so that some destinations are walkable or bikable.

Most people acknowledge the need for mobility options. Polls conducted in 2003 found that 71 percent of Americans believe their communities need both good roads and viable alternatives, and that 81 percent of Americans agree that expanded public transit would “improve the economy, create jobs and reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.”<sup>5</sup> The simplest and most common form of mass transit comes in the form of the familiar municipal bus. Requiring little more than a wide shoulder in the right of way to receive and discharge passengers, it is probably the cheapest and most flexible form of mass transit, because routes can be altered as ridership patterns evolve. Because buses share the roadway with other vehicles, however, they are subject to the same delays that motorists in passenger cars suffer. Rapid transit – including commuter rail, elevated trains, subways, monorail, and light rail (the modern equivalent of “street cars”) – are faster and more efficient because, in general, they travel along fixed, dedicated routes (in dense urban areas, light rail often runs at grade and must stop to accommodate surface traffic). Additionally, bus rapid transit (BRT) is attracting increased attention in U.S. metropolitan areas. In general, BRT combines the familiar technology of the transit bus with dedicated lanes of pavement and, in some cases, special platforms and limited, station-based access to expedite the entry and exit of passengers.

Fixed-route solutions to mass transit are vastly more expensive to introduce than conventional buses and thus require major regional commitments of political will and resources, as well as state and federal aid. The U.S. metro areas with substantial rapid transit systems, such Bos-

ton, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Chicago, and San Francisco, are fortunate to have invested early in these modes. Other regions, including Atlanta, Miami, Denver, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, and Portland, are in the relatively early stages of building rapid transit systems that are largely at grade and less comprehensive, while costing vastly more per mile. What all these systems have in common is convenience, speed, passenger appeal, and positive impact on fuel consumption, traffic congestion and air quality.

In this climate, the challenge for new and evolving communities is to find ways for major residential and activity nodes to coincide spatially with existing transportation and mass transit infrastructure, both to reduce traffic congestion and encourage diversion to transit. Supplementary mobility solutions exist for people who are not automobile dependent for their commute to work, but for whom mass transit is either inconvenient or impractical, such as when purchasing bulky appliances or large quantities of groceries, transporting heavy items, or making emergency trips and errands. Privately operated services like Flexcar and ZipCar, and San Francisco's City CarShare, California's Zev-Net and Seattle's Commuter Challenge offer occasional-use automobiles on a membership and hourly basis.<sup>6</sup>

#### **SmartCommute Initiative** Washington, D.C.

Transportation is the second-largest household cost following expenditures for mortgage or rent. Reasoning that people who do not rely on personal automobiles to commute to work have more money available for housing, Washington, D.C. initiated its SmartCommute Mortgage program in 2003 to encourage homebuyers to locate near transit stations. Under the program, people willing to live more centrally are automatically qualified for larger mortgages, thus enabling them to reduce their living costs while increasing their debt capacity. An additional incentive to SmartCommute homebuyers is reduced membership and hourly fees for Washington's Flexcar service, which provides occasional, task-oriented access to shared automobiles for people who do not own a car or commute to work by automobile.<sup>6</sup>

## Chapter 3—Schools

SCHOOLS often are the most visible and cherished symbols of collective public culture in our communities. In addition to educating our children, they are most likely to serve as our polling places on Election Day and often furnish recreational open space after school and on weekends, as well as meeting space for community functions. Through parent-teacher associations and other sponsored programs, they also serve as important focal points for civic involvement and interaction with strangers. When kept to a relatively small size and centrally located in the neighborhoods they serve, schools can tailor their programs and curricula to the needs of their communities and promote walking among young people.

While the charter and experimental schools movements have stimulated a great deal of innovation and a shift toward smaller, individualized and neighborhood-based facilities with on-site management, the trend for more than two decades has emphasized the development of isolated, impersonal large-campus schools at the outskirts of communities, often accessible only by bus or automobile. Emphasizing administrative efficiency over community responsiveness, such facilities promote more automobile trips—particularly to accommodate participation in after-school and extracurricular activities—and discourage physical exercise. Their dominance may even contribute to the growing youth and childhood obesity epidemic.

There is a natural coincidence of interests among advocates of neighborhood-based schools and compact, more livable communities. Smart growth advocates favor compact communities and development contiguous to existing urban areas to promote efficiency, save resources and preserve open space. Meanwhile, educators increasingly embrace small schools as a means of improving student achievement, stimulating parental involvement, facilitating participation in after-school and extra-curricular activities, enhancing teacher satisfaction, and improving school security.<sup>7</sup>

Barriers to neighborhood schools that encourage school sprawl abound, including the demands of integration, trends toward establishing specialty programs within existing schools (so-called “schools-within-schools”), administrative biases in favor of the supposed econo-

mies of scale to be realized through larger facilities, the expense of renovating and retro-fitting older schools, and parental pressure to build schools that are “newer, bigger and better.”<sup>8</sup>

Of obvious concern to advocates of compact, livable communities is the possibility that the introduction of new, large and modern schools on the outskirts of existing cities will attract additional sprawl development, traffic and infrastructure expense, thus perpetuating the cycle of public frustration and developer opportunism that engenders sprawl in the first place.<sup>9</sup>

### **Minimum School Site Sizes and the “60-Percent Rule”**

Many state governments have enacted uniform rules governing the parcel size for new schools, as recommended by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI). These minimums range from 15 acres for a 500-student elementary school to 50 acres for a 2,000-student high school. In some states, local school districts exceed even these parameters, by as much as 47 percent. At the other extreme, older neighborhood schools tend to be sited on lots of as little as two acres. Meanwhile, many states mandate that school districts follow the so-called “60-Percent Rule” when considering whether to renovate or replace existing facilities—when renovation exceeds 60 percent of replacement costs, the district must build a new school if it is to receive state aid for the project.

Some states are abandoning these wasteful policies and practices. For example, Maine has set CEFPI’s minimum standards as maximums, and Maryland mandates no minimums at all. Additionally, prompted by historic preservationists, Pennsylvania has eliminated the 60-Percent Rule, and Maryland encourages small-lot siting of new schools as well as renovation of existing facilities:<sup>10</sup> “In Maryland, smart-growth planning rules now require that school projects meet specific criteria—they should not encourage ‘sprawl’ development or be located in agricultural preservation areas unless other options are not viable; they should encourage revitalization of existing facilities, neighborhoods and communities; and they should be located in developed areas or in a locally designated growth area and served by existing or planned water, sewer and other public infrastructure.”<sup>11</sup>

## Chapter 4—Diversity, Housing and Jobs

**W**HILE American communities of all kinds are unquestionably becoming more diverse, the prevalent sprawling pattern of metropolitan growth nonetheless tends to promote neighborhood homogeneity, in terms of race, ethnicity and socio-economic circumstances. Traditional communities, having developed organically without zoning (or with permissive zoning), feature mixed housing forms that accommodate a range of incomes and lifestyles, while inviting multiple land uses that encourage convenient shopping and services. Thus, neighbors with dissimilar backgrounds experience greater exposure to each other – whether on the street or when patronizing local businesses – facilitating familiarity, understanding and empathy. At the other end of the spectrum, sprawling development with use segregation undermines interpersonal contact and communication, intensifying social isolation and mutual misunderstanding. Communities in which diverse people have frequent contact and opportunities for interaction are better able to organize and solve problems, whether in the form of civic campaigns or neighborhood watch efforts to address crime. Mixed-income development – particularly with co-mingling of rental and owner-occupied units – is a practical means of achieving this important social objective.

As the size of American families shrinks – and with an increasing percentage of households consisting of one unmarried adult – the single-family detached home on a large lot seems less and less practical for many people. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of households with children at home is projected to decline to 29.5 percent by 2010. Indeed, builders across the metropolitan continuum of development are offering a wider range of choices, including semi-attached townhomes and flat condominium and rental apartments, particularly in the growing number of “neo-traditional” or “new urbanist” communities, which also incorporate retail and commercial space. Recent projects from Florida to Colorado to Washington have proven that when offered a variety of housing choices – in terms of size, price and configuration – many consumers will opt for mixed-income and mixed-use communities.

Nonetheless, too many local governments continue, through development regulations mandating minimum lot size and square footage, to exclude affordable, multi-family and rental housing. Such practices constitute major cost barriers that frustrate efforts to house the homeless and disperse the working poor and people dependent upon public relief. Important also is the lack of appropriate housing for elderly people who frequently have accessibility and mobility requirements that cannot be satisfied in conventional developments, forcing relocation from age-integrated communities to institutional and semi-institutional facilities. Again, problems of affordability and availability perversely discourage seniors from downsizing to more appropriate housing.

In metropolitan areas the economics of housing interact with patterns of economic development to intensify poverty and social isolation. Retail is one of the most dynamic and fast-growing sectors of the economy, as well as a major source of employment for relatively low-skilled workers. The decade-long trend toward “big-box” retailing – requiring large parcels of land, almost always at the urbanized edge – locates jobs in auto-only-access areas that are far out of reach of jobseekers in the inner city. (The fact that large-footprint retailers are largely non-unionized may also contribute to the depression of wages paid to employees working for unionized competitors.) Similarly, hospitals – which employ people at all skill levels – increasingly are abandoning central locations for large-scale suburban campuses, thus contributing to the inner-city job drain. Ultimately, decreased economic activity and prosperity in urban neighborhoods inevitably results in property abandonment and reduced tax base, which exacerbates inner-city conditions as the salaries for public sector employees, like teachers, police officers and firefighters, lag behind those offered by more affluent suburbs.<sup>12</sup>

Powerful demographic trends present important incentives to communities and regions to consider the advantages of mixed-income housing. These include the growth in smaller households, increasing socioeconomic diversity, relatively slow growth in household income, the general aging of the U.S. population, and robust growth in the generally low-wage service sector of the economy. Compact, mixed-income, mixed-use development, both infill and on brownfields, offers the promise of urban tax-base enhancement, the accommodation of an evolving

population, central city revitalization, and social integration, while reducing the general upward pressure on housing costs that has paradoxically resulted in a rise in homelessness during a period of general economic prosperity.<sup>13</sup> In planning new communities and redeveloping older ones, builders, citizens and local officials must take into account the need to satisfy a more inclusive vision of housing demand, in essence placing community design in service to the interests of social justice, equity, diversity, inter-generational harmony, and meaningful employment.

## **SNAPSHOTS**

### **Addressing the Jobs-Housing Mismatch: Greater Minnesota Housing Fund** Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

The Twin Cities' Metropolitan Council established the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund in 2000 to work with regional employers to assist local communities in expanding their down-payment assistance and housing-development financing programs. The program helps people live closer to work by helping with closing costs and expanding the supply of affordable housing in areas of acute need by directing investment funds toward redeveloping communities.<sup>14</sup>

### **Streamlining the Review Process for Affordable Housing Production** Montgomery County, Maryland

The production of affordable housing often is impeded by “red tape”—expensive and time-consuming scrutiny of funding mechanisms, plan review and land acquisition. In 2003 the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) launched the “Green Tape” program, an expedited development-approval process for affordable housing in Montgomery County, Maryland that favors residential and mixed-use project proposals that designate at least 20 percent of total units “affordable.” The program simplifies application forms, enhances inter-agency cooperation, speeds review and approval, and expedites construction and utility-tap permits for qualified developments.<sup>15</sup>

### **Incentives to Locate Housing Near Transit** San Mateo County, California

To address a severe shortage of affordable housing and reduce traffic congestion, the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) sponsors a transit-oriented development (TOD) program that allocates up to 10 percent of the county's state transit-improvement funds to subsidize development of housing near transit stations. Under the program, local development agencies receive up to \$2,000 for each bedroom built within 1/3 of a mile of a rail transit station provided the project satisfies a minimum density requirement of 40 dwelling units per acre. Between October of 1999 and September of 2000, C/CAG allocated \$2.3 million to stimulate the construction of 1,282 bedrooms in five projects. This and similar programs ease affordable housing shortages while maximizing transit ridership.<sup>16</sup>

## **Chapter 5—Open Space and Parks**

### **Resources for Recreation, Exercise and Relaxation**

**P**EOPLE of all ages, and particularly youth, need open spaces to unwind, exercise themselves and their pets and simply relax amid fresh air and sunshine. In urban settings, parks, school playgrounds and the courtyards of larger residential buildings often help satisfy this important need. When our metropolitan areas were younger, abundant undeveloped land at the edges of suburbs frequently provided this amenity, although larger lot sizes and lower density may have offset its importance.

Earlier, we have praised the advantages of density, centrality of location and proximity to amenities. Consequently, this chapter may seem to contradict the theme of compact development. In fact, it merely invokes the old adage, “You can have too much of a good thing.” People are busier than ever before, and housing patterns reflect this fact. New homes, including large detached houses in suburban subdivisions, are larger than ever, and in many cases occupy less land than in the past. Builders acknowledge that many families are not interested in expending the time and effort necessary to maintain large yards.

As interest in urban living has increased, stimulating a wave of urban redevelopment throughout the 1990s and into the current decade, the once-deserted “doughnuts” surrounding American downtowns have been repopulated by young adults and empty nesters seeking diversity, convenience, culture, and excitement. In many cases, this trend has meant the rehabilitation of existing housing; just as often, it has involved the construction of new housing on brownfields at higher rates of density than existed previously. Lot coverage of just 50 percent – and most projects are built at much higher densities – leaves little room for open space, once automobile parking accommodations are taken into account. Add the very desirable incorporation of street-level retail uses and its contribution to building footprint, and density is elevated even more.

The result is a pattern of extremely dense development that fills the urban landscape with uninterrupted construction, blocks sun and discourages outdoor activity beyond the minimum required to access trans-

portation and local businesses. In essence, developers are offering housing to the middle class at a level of density that researchers have determined to be both unhealthy and socially detrimental for people living in public housing. Case in point: the replacement of high-density, high-rise public housing in central cities across the country with lower-density, mixed-income condo- and townhouse-style housing.

Hobbled throughout the 1960s, '70s and '80s by urban disinvestment, central cities are understandably eager to encourage – through incentives and new zoning provisions – denser development that maximizes the value of new construction and potential property tax revenues, both residential and commercial. The result is substantial new population and economic activity, but relatively little publicly shared open space for free and low-cost enjoyment, recreation and exercise, both in urban and suburban settings.

An important fact overlooked by policymakers, planners and developers is the significant value added to communities by the incorporation of parks and open space in new development and redevelopment, beyond the ecological, aesthetic, lifestyle, and health considerations. Proximity of housing to parks both elevates and stabilizes property values, particularly as such vitality-adding resources become more scarce. Just as smart growth advocates recognize the need to incorporate and network open spaces within dense, walkable neighborhoods and communities, 19<sup>th</sup> century planners appreciated the appeal and logic of such arrangements decades before the introduction of the automobile. Development of New York City's Central Park stimulated construction of housing along its perimeter, and this surrounding real estate remains the most attractive and valuable in that city to this day, dotted with culturally enriching museums and arts institutions.

Preservation of select open parcels within neighborhoods in the form of community gardens offers a range of benefits. In addition to facilitating the maintenance of more biomass amid dense development, they create opportunities for contact and cooperation among neighbors, thus diminishing the isolation many people paradoxically experience when forced to live in close quarters. They also introduce a measure of natural beauty and an inexpensive means of obtaining fresh fruits and veg-

etables, while reinforcing human connection to seasonal cycles and processes. Often community gardens are located on idle parcels that have reverted to public ownership through condemnation for tax delinquency or other reasons. Local governments should recognize the value of these amenities and resist budgetary pressures to re-convert them to development, particularly where they enjoy high levels of neighborhood support and participation.

In addition to seeking ways to incorporate parks and other passive uses in new development plans, local governments should recognize the importance of existing parks, and allocate adequate resources to their upkeep and improvement, as well as recreational programs that promote their use by residents, particularly youth. Such activities include concerts, crafts fairs and athletic programs that foster both social exchange and physical wellness.

There are other long-term considerations that should enter into land-use decision making as it relates to open space. Directing new development toward existing areas of density and the re-use of brownfields helps preserve critical and fragile lands that absorb and purify the rain and snowfall that eventually percolates into streams and drains into rivers, lakes, bays and, ultimately, oceans. The cycle is closed as storms forming over oceans and large inland lakes redeposit nourishing moisture on plains and forests. Our drinking water supplies are captured from both underground and impounded surface sources. Sprawl development hinders the natural processes of water purification and riparian flow by reducing the supply of permeable land and removing native vegetation that helps filter water and recycle oxygen. It also undermines water quality through contaminated runoff from paved surfaces. By promoting automobile dependency, sprawl also increases the amount of nitrogen that precipitates into water supplies from air pollution—a particular danger to aquatic life. In short, water supply and quality is a livability issue with implications for land use.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, although substantially altered from its natural state, farmland on the outskirts of urbanized areas constitutes an important source of open space, aesthetic enjoyment and local supply of fresh produce and landscaping trees, shrubs and turf. Where productive and economi-

cally viable, it also serves as a “brake” on metropolitan expansion, as well as a buffer between urban and rural settings. Urban expansion annually claims over two million acres of rural land each year, 60 percent of which is agricultural.<sup>18</sup> Strategies for preserving agricultural lands near urban areas include land trusts, transfers of development rights, reduced farm-property taxes, conservation easements, and policies to streamline the redevelopment of brownfields (it is estimated that redevelopment of one acre of brownfield diverts development from 4.5 acres of greenfield).<sup>19</sup>

### **Stable Techniques for Open Space Preservation** States of New Jersey and Maryland

State government can be an important source of coherent land-conservation policy, as well as a stable partner in piecing together funding for land acquisition. Since the 1970s, New Jersey’s “Green Acres” water-protection program has assisted local governments and non-profit groups in protecting sensitive lands through grants and loans. Originally conceived as a means of protecting water quality and retaining storm water, the program more recently has shifted its attention to financing recreational open space and parks in cities and populous, older suburbs. The policy change also included an emphasis on wildlife habitat preservation. In Maryland, to avoid patchwork preservation of open space, the state has combined its land-acquisition programs with its assessment and inventories of sensitive lands to ensure that the most valuable open spaces are preserved in a contiguous and consolidated fashion. The program ranks available open space according to both its ecological importance and risk of development, placing priority for acquisition on plant and animal breeding and migration habitat.<sup>20</sup>

## Chapter 6—Efficiency and Sustainability

**I**N addition to being affordable, livable communities are efficient, not only in design, layout and co-mingling of uses, but also in the principles applied to the construction of homes and other buildings. Automobile-dependent development, with its segregation of uses and inconvenient access to mass transit options, perpetuates wasteful patterns of fuel consumption and costs billions of dollars each year in lost productivity through time spent stuck in traffic jams and making extra automobile trips that elsewhere might be replaced by quick pedestrian or bicycle errands.

**Efficiency.** Since the days that horse thieves were routinely hung, Americans have valued mobility, which today often comes in the form of the private automobile—a convenience in some places, but increasingly an expensive necessity in our ever-more spatially expansive communities. Automobile dependence has resulted in a tripling of the average number of hours spent each year in rush-hour traffic delays, which has increased from 16 to 46 hours since 1982. Beyond the harm of afflicting commuters with frustration, inconvenience and delays, highway traffic congestion depresses U.S. productivity to the tune of \$63 billion annually, up from \$14 billion in 1982. From the point of view of resource consumption, automobile commuting wastes fuel—5.6 billion gallons a year burned by vehicles idling during traffic jams alone.<sup>21</sup> At a time when the cost of a barrel of crude oil has topped \$50, this statistic should prompt both concern and reform of habits.<sup>22</sup>

The prevailing price of fossil fuels urges attention to other areas of routine waste, including homes and workplaces. The energy crisis of the early 1970s stimulated the nation’s first wave of interest in reducing the fuel – and money – required to heat and cool our indoor habitats. More recently, a “green building” movement has emerged to advocate and guide a new ethic for reducing the waste of energy, water and material resources in both renovation and new construction of homes and other buildings. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council to assist regulators and builders alike in gauging the environmental “load” of construction, in terms of energy use, storm water discharge

and use of “green” materials (i.e., materials obtained from renewable sources and processed with minimal environmental impact). The LEED scorecard, recently revised to take into account the environmental and energy-consumption impact of structures built in remote locations, awards points for construction on sustainable sites, reduced footprint, proximity to transit and bicycle trails, and siting on brownfields. Some jurisdictions have used this scoring system to award compact and centrally located project proposals with expedited plan review.<sup>23</sup>

**Sustainability.** Livable communities are places that minimize their impact on the environment by drawing fewer natural resources and emitting less pollution and waste. Such “new” technologies as solar water heating, photovoltaic generation of electricity, passive solar space heating, compact fluorescent lighting, and high-efficiency home appliances that use less electricity and water can reduce household energy use by as much as 50 percent. “Old” technologies have much to offer as well: Recycling, re-use and composting, along with the use of fewer pre-packaged foods, can reduce the volume of household garbage and trash by over 60 percent. For those with the time and inclination, community and backyard vegetable gardens, particularly those relying on natural, organic fertilizers (manure, clippings, compost) can be a source of healthy, inexpensive fresh produce and a good use of “idle” land, as well as opportunities for worthwhile outdoor physical activity.

An early example of a sustainable community built from the ground up is Village Homes in Davis, California, a 70-acre, mixed-use subdivision undertaken in 1975 and designed specifically to reduce the energy consumed by an average family in carrying out its ordinary, daily activities. In part through street shading, orientation of homes on lots, lot configuration, setback specifications, natural cross-ventilation, and innovative construction techniques, Village Homes – by taking strategic advantage of the Davis area’s modified Mediterranean climate – consumes half as much energy per household as other subdivisions in the City of Davis. To reduce automobile dependence, Village Homes has on-site employment opportunities and encourages home offices for working professionals. Moreover, the subdivision takes advantage of natural drainage patterns through a network of ditches that landscaped as creeks and incorporated into the development’s greenbelts. Both as a

green buffer and source of community income, Village Homes has a 300-tree almond orchard and small-scale agriculture, including produce and poultry farming.<sup>24</sup>

As much life-style enclave as sustainability demonstration project, Village Homes dramatizes the extent to which the carrying capacity of urban land can be maximized – and the environmental impact of residential communities minimized – through thoughtful planning, design and construction. The sustainability of older communities can be similarly enhanced through renovation, rehabilitation, retrofitting with higher-efficiency heating and cooling systems, and innovative use of existing open space.

### **Time is Money: Multi-Tasking for Transit Stations** Maplewood, New Jersey

Commuters who appreciate the economies of mass transit also grasp the value of their time and seek to maximize leisure and convenience. The largely idle and passive parking lots located at transit stops offer opportunities for realizing greater energy efficiency and time savings by including interactive kiosks and even some services, such as driver's license renewals or library book and video returns. Maplewood, New Jersey's transit station has a paid concierge specializing in connecting commuters to local services, retailers and public offices to enable people to complete errands before and after work without having to make extra automobile trips. The service also benefits businesses in the immediate vicinity of Maplewood's New Jersey Transit (commuter rail) station. Good ideas for saving time, limiting waste and enhancing energy efficiency abound. In New York City, the Metropolitan Transit Authority, through cooperative agreements with vendors at its larger stations, limits the kinds of items available to better control trash and food-waste problems in transit vehicles and stations. In Washington State, some Sound Transit stations incorporate child day care facilities intended for parents who don't drive.<sup>25</sup>

## Chapter 7—Health, Safety, and Family

UNTIL relatively recently, a major overlooked cost of automobile dependence is its contribution to air pollution and a swelling epidemic of asthma and other respiratory ailments. While advances in technology have unquestionably decreased automobile emissions while boosting fuel efficiency, increases in overall automobile use are undermining these gains. Between 1980 and 1995, the number of children suffering from asthma rose from 2.3 to 5.5 million.<sup>26</sup> Time spent in long commutes – in addition to diverting attention from family life, child-rearing, civic affairs, passive leisure time, and personal fitness – may even be influencing our diets, as busy families, ever more pinched for time, opt for the convenience of packaged and fast foods at mealtime, rather than more time-consuming but nourishing and healthful freshly prepared foods. Obviously, the trans-metropolitan, auto-bound way of life subverts the traditional family ritual of a peacefully shared evening meal.

Earlier we referenced the alarming trend toward increased juvenile obesity. Since 1980, the rate of overweight children (aged 6 to 17) has more than doubled, surpassing 10 percent. It would be unfair to attribute this to sprawl alone. Portion size, fat and sugar content, and other factors – such as the omission of physical education from many public school curricula and contemporary preferences for technology-based and other forms of physically passive play – contribute to juvenile weight gain. The problem, however, is more severe than the merely embarrassing “baby fat” of yesteryear: According to David Goldberg of Smart Growth America, “About 60 percent of overweight 5- to 10-year-olds already have at least one risk factor for heart disease, including elevated blood pressure or insulin levels. Today about 30 percent of newly diagnosed diabetic children have “adult-onset” diabetes, a disorder triggered by poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle. Before 1990 it was rarely seen in people younger than 40.”<sup>27</sup>

Obesity and overweight, whether induced by diet or inactivity, is a national epidemic costing about \$117 billion a year.<sup>28</sup> As much as \$76.6 billion could be saved annually if all sedentary adults were to engage in moderate physical exercise for 30 minutes five or more days a week.<sup>29</sup> Well planned, livable communities can help elevate physical activity

and thus improve the quality of life and personal health of people of all ages. Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Active Living by Design program currently supports local projects in 25 communities across the nation to promote more active, healthy lifestyles through local planning and other public interventions. The premise of the program is that prevailing land-use practices encourage automobile dependence and physical inactivity. Active Living by Design advocates reforms in three principal areas:<sup>30</sup>

- **Land use.** Increase density and mix land uses (residential, commercial, etc.) to reduce the distance to common destinations and encourage walking and biking—mixed-use neighborhoods generate up to four times as many walking trips as single-use neighborhoods.
- **Transportation.** Enhance pedestrian and non-automobile access and connectivity through sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes, and use of traditional gridiron platting—walking trips increase with the number of intersections and blocks, particularly where traffic speeds are low and the streets are visually interesting.
- **Parks, trails and greenways.** Include parks in neighborhood plans and link them with protected public and private paths and trails—people with access to neighborhood parks are twice as likely to be physically active as those without access to parks.

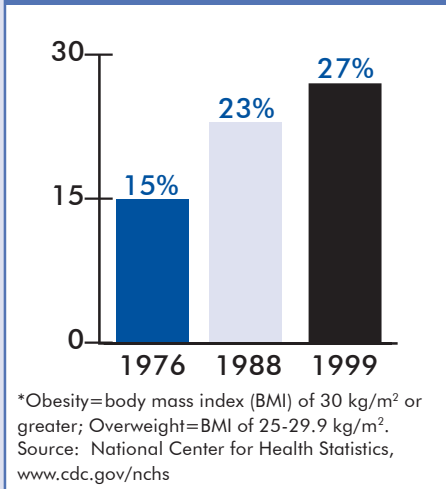
**Safety.** Since the early 1960s, middle-class families have fled central-city neighborhoods to seek relief from the exaggerated risk of urban violence, taking refuge in the purported tranquility and security of the suburbs. As recently as the 1980s the stereotypical reputation of inner cities as centers of social pathology was supported by crime statistics. Throughout the 1990s and continuing to the present, however, cities have recovered their appeal, thanks to an extended period of economic prosperity and new, community-based approaches to ensuring public safety. With the maturation of suburbs, even random violence has fled the urban core, making the chances of being murdered by a stranger “equally remote” in the inner city as in suburbs.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, a recent study has concluded that “the outer suburbs, often seen as the safest places to raise children, are in fact more dangerous than the inner city ... because the likelihood of becoming a traffic fatality is far higher in areas where people drive farther and faster. ... Families are drawn to cul-de-sacs primarily because [they] are thought to be safe havens from

traffic. But because subdivision streets are engineered to be safe for speeding drivers, with wide lanes and swooping corners that may be rounded without slowing significantly, most actually encourage speeding.”<sup>32</sup> According to the Surface Transportation Policy Project, pedestrian victims account for 13 percent of traffic-accident fatalities, even though only six percent of trips are made on foot; 16 percent of those who die are children.<sup>33</sup> Community leaders and concerned citizens must strive for livability, not mere *survivability*.

### Health Consequences of Physical Inactivity<sup>34</sup>

- Physical inactivity is responsible for at least 200,000 deaths annually from coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes.
- 34 percent of coronary heart disease deaths can be traced to physical inactivity, and physically inactive adults are twice as likely active adults to have coronary heart disease.
- Physical inactivity can increase the risk of stroke and high blood pressure.
- In 2001, about one in ten adults reported having diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is influenced by physical inactivity.
- Pediatricians and health scientists are increasingly concerned about Type 2 diabetes in children, due largely to physical inactivity.
- Physical inactivity strongly influences obesity and overweight, which contribute to or increase chronic diseases and death. A 2001 survey found that 58 percent of adults report being either overweight or obese.
- The proportion of youth who are overweight and adults who are obese has more than doubled in the last 20 years. This increase has induced scientists to declare an “obesity epidemic.”

**Obesity\* Rates among U.S. Adults  
1976-1999**



## Chapter 8—Social Capital The Currency of Common Purpose

RESEARCH and intuitive experience increasingly support the notion that dense relationships among community residents enable people to organize more quickly and effectively to solve problems, confront threats and participate in democratic institutions. These relationships, consisting of networks and norms of trust, reciprocity and civic engagement are often referred to as “social capital.” Trust and the expectation of reciprocity – the return of a favor for one rendered – make collective action possible, and neighborhood life more satisfying and predictable.<sup>35</sup> Livable communities make social capital more “bankable” by offering more opportunities to exchange it. Through compact design and frequent personal encounters on the street and in other public spaces, strangers become neighbors and stakeholders in a shared enterprise called community. Aesthetics are protected through mutual respect and group action rather than the enforcement of covenants. Personal security becomes a matter of public safety, guarded by collective attention to community well-being. Spatial separation and automobile dependency – and the social isolation they engender – undermine this critical accumulation of social capital by discouraging the interaction necessary to build and nurture relationships.

The segregation by class and physical separation of sprawling residential subdivisions also hobbles democracy by preventing people from engaging in the fundamental activity of democracy – exiting environments of comfort and homogeneity and entering public forums of diversity and dissimilarity, where authentic discussion and debate can occur. In effect, livable communities enable people to engage in the real work of citizens, which includes public dialogue and direct engagement in solving shared problems.<sup>36</sup> By saving and exchanging social capital, people add to the rewards of their private and family lives by getting directly involved in the issues and processes that affect them and their neighbors. With this empowerment comes an enhanced sense of self-esteem and well-being that studies have shown can have a tangible impact on personal mental and physical health, due in part to the reduced stress people experience when they successfully advocate for solutions to the problems that afflict them. And the benefit of these “soft” politi-

cal considerations should not be undervalued: relationships built through civic involvement often expand leisure-time social networks, resulting in more tightly knit communities.<sup>37</sup>

Community design alone cannot ensure these beneficial effects on social capital, but it can help overcome common barriers to the formal and informal relationships that build strong communities. The Village Homes subdivision discussed in Chapter 6, while expressly undertaken to display the potential of energy-saving strategies, was also planned to demonstrate how community design could foster social cohesion and neighborhood identity. In many cases, Village Homes investors participated materially in the construction of their residences and those of neighbors. Additionally, community residents have assisted in the construction of common spaces and amenities, such as greenbelt features, drainage ditches and commercial spaces. They also cooperate in maintaining shared and community gardens. The result has been a stable, mixed-income and cross-age community with strong identification and resident loyalty.

In settings where neighbors have organized for community promotion, economic development, beautification, or crime prevention, similar advantages – in terms of stronger problem-solving and social networks – have been observed.

#### **Social Capital in Action: Denver's Wyman Park-Playground**

Beginning in 1994, a resident-driven coalition of Denver neighborhood organizations targeted the inner city Wyman Elementary School for special attention. Located in a mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhood, the school's two-acre playground lacked equipment and landscaping. The entire surface of the property consisted of lifeless pea gravel, with the exception of a single, neglected cottonwood tree. In response, three volunteer-led neighborhood organizations—the Center for the People of Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods and Uptown on the Hill—mobilized to transform the conspicuous eyesore into a community asset.

*(Continued on next page)*

With a combination of sweat equity from residents, parents and students, funding from community foundations, and in-kind labor and materials from local contractors, the Wyman neighbors constructed state-of-the-art play equipment and installed a lawn with automatic irrigation, a softball diamond, a “discovery garden,” and a miniature arboretum on the property, replete with jogging paths, picnic space and a basketball court. Off-duty firefighters assisted neighbors in laying sod and planting trees. Today, the Wyman Park/Playground serves as a focal point for neighborhood activity, hosting an annual National Night Out gathering, pickup basketball games, organized softball and soccer matches, kite flying, jogging, and dog walking, as well as an annual school-sponsored Field Day competition.

## **Conclusion**

### **Tasking Leaders and Citizens**

**F**OR most people, livability is a function of personal lifestyle choices as dictated by public policies and prevailing practices. Inevitably, some – perhaps many – people will remain unmoved by smart-growth arguments promising greater convenience, lower costs and superior quality of life. Moreover, governing institutions are unlikely to mandate lifestyles and development options that may conflict with the needs and preferences of some citizens. While self-consciously market-oriented in tone, this discussion has attempted to take into account the persistence of serious material need in a general atmosphere of abundance.

Wherever possible, and certainly in areas where environmental and other considerations warrant, leaders must consider – and concerned citizens should demand – adoption or reform of land-use and transportation policies that will permit compact development, convenient mobility, cleaner air and water, preservation of open space, lively and inviting mixed-use neighborhoods, and more active and healthy lifestyles.

Specific suggestions for localities and regions include the following:

- Adjust zoning ordinances to permit reduced lot sizes, increased density, admixture of single- and multi-family housing, and mingling of residential, retail and commercial uses.
- Require incorporation of recreational and passive open space in master plans for new subdivisions and inner-city redevelopment projects.
- Properly maintain and improve existing park facilities and associated programs; look for ways to link or network open space and park facilities; find creative ways to preserve access to lakefront and riparian areas near downtowns.
- Incorporate bicycle lanes and pedestrian friendly traffic-taming strategies into long-term road-improvement plans.

- Expand transit opportunities, from neighborhood circulators, to commuter bus lines, to bus rapid transit and rail, where possible; ensure the transit accessibility of major employment nodes.
- Promote arts-oriented development in neighborhoods through tax credits, incubator programs and other initiatives.
- Support rehabilitation of existing, small-scale and neighborhood-serving schools, rather than construction of isolated mega-campuses.
- Address housing affordability issues that result in concentrations of homeless people in downtown districts that repel new residents, businesses and redevelopment interest.
- Urge energy-efficiency and rehabilitation programs that extend the useful life and viability of older housing stock.
- Explore market-oriented approaches to encouraging affordable housing production and transportation efficiency.

### **Principles of Smart Growth**

- **Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.** Providing quality housing for people of all income levels is an integral component in any smart growth strategy.
- **Create walkable neighborhoods.** Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship, and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.
- **Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.** Growth can create great places to live, work and play if it responds to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow.
- **Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.** Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction, which re-

spond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

- **Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.** For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, the concept must be embraced by the private sector.
- **Mix land uses.** Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.
- **Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.** Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving the quality of life of our communities, and guiding new growth into existing communities.
- **Provide a variety of transportation choices.** Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities, and transportation is a key aim of smart growth.
- **Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.** Smart growth directs development toward existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe.
- **Take advantage of compact building design.** Smart growth provides a means for communities to incorporate more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land-consumptive development.

Source: Smart Growth Network, [www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)

## **Appendix A Resources**

**American Farmland Trust**  
[www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)

**American Planning Association**  
[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

**Brookings Institute**  
[www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)

**Center for Neighborhood Technology**  
[www.cnt.org](http://www.cnt.org)

**Congress for New Urbanism**  
[www.cnu.org](http://www.cnu.org)

**U.S. Department of Energy Program on Sustainable Communities**  
[www.sustainable.doe.gov](http://www.sustainable.doe.gov)

**Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities**  
[www.fundersnetwork.org](http://www.fundersnetwork.org)

**U.S. Geological Survey**  
[www.usgs.gov](http://www.usgs.gov)

**Growth Management Leadership Alliance**  
[www.gmla.org](http://www.gmla.org)

**Land Trust Alliance**  
[www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org)

**Livable Communities Support Center**  
[www.livablecenter.org](http://www.livablecenter.org)

**Local Government Commission**  
[www.lgc.org](http://www.lgc.org)

**Lincoln Institute for Land Policy**  
[www.lincolninst.edu](http://www.lincolninst.edu)

**National Neighborhood Coalition**  
[www.neighborhoodcoalition.org](http://www.neighborhoodcoalition.org)

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**  
[www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)

**Place Matters**  
[www.placematters.com](http://www.placematters.com)

**Smart Growth America**  
[www.smartgrowthamerica.org](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org)

**Smart Growth Network**  
<http://smartgrowth.org>

**Sprawl Busters**  
[www.sprawl-busters.com](http://www.sprawl-busters.com)

**Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse**  
[www.sprawlwatch.org](http://www.sprawlwatch.org)

**Surface Transportation Policy Project**  
[www.transact.org](http://www.transact.org)

**Texas Transportation Institute**  
<http://tti.tamu.edu>

**Urban Land Institute**  
[www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org)

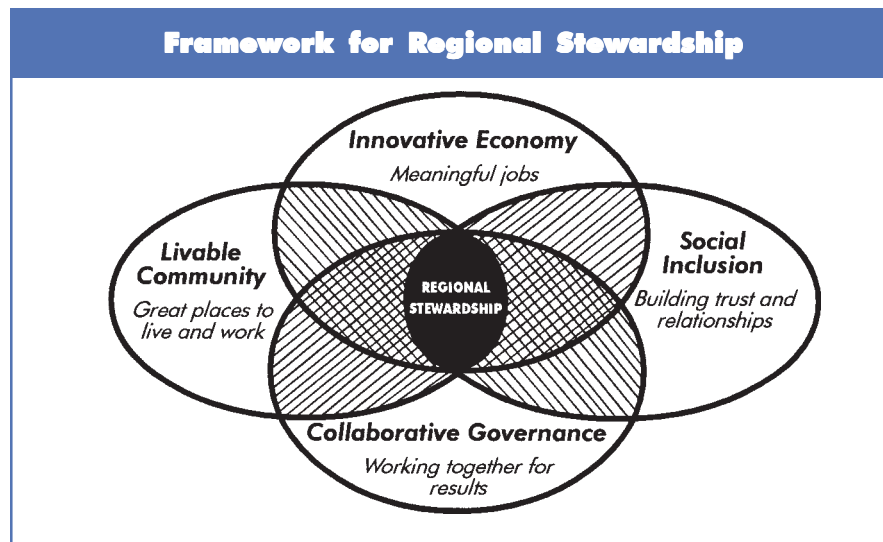
## Appendix B Principles of Regional Stewardship

**R**EGIONAL stewards—leaders committed to the long-term well-being of place—are integrators who cross boundaries of jurisdiction, sector and discipline to address such complex regional issues as sprawl, equity, education and economic development. They see the connection between economic, environmental and social concerns and understand that the intersection of crosscutting issues offers significant opportunity for partnership, collaboration and problem solving—*stewardship*.

Regional stewards share basic values of creating broad prosperity: a healthy, attractive environment, and inclusive communities for ourselves and subsequent generations. They take responsibility to ensure that we pass on a better place to our children.

Regional stewards apply the same entrepreneurial spirit and persistence to solving regional challenges that business entrepreneurs apply in building a business; they are *civic entrepreneurs*. They see the need for more connected regional approaches to addressing economic, environmental and social issues; they are *integrators*. They build support from leaders, citizens, interest groups, and policy professionals toward a shared regional vision; they are *coalition builders*. Regional stewards hold themselves and each other accountable to achieve tangible results and sustained outcomes.

Regional stewards include local elected or appointed officials, university or college leaders, business and foundation executives, nonprofit leaders, and community activists. What they all have in common is the realization that to accomplish their goals they need to work collaboratively with people in other jurisdictions and sectors by embracing the principles diagrammed and introduced below.



**Innovative Economy:** *Preparing people and places to succeed.*

- People work more with their brains instead of their hands. It is an economy in which rapid change is constant; an economy at least as different from what came before as the industrial age was from the agricultural age.
- Competitiveness is based on speed, quality, flexibility, knowledge, and networks.
- Emphasizes skills and knowledge as the keys to economic progress. Skilled and knowledgeable people tend to locate in communities that provide a good quality of life and excellent social, cultural, and natural assets.
- Provide jobs that enable all citizens to enjoy a good quality of life; to produce meaningful jobs that sustain families all along the economic spectrum and provide opportunities for advancement.

**Livable Community:** *Preserving and creating great places to live and work.*

- Ensures the public safety and the well-being of their citizens.
- Ensures housing and public education opportunities for all members of the community.
- Uses new visions of design—including compact development, transit-oriented housing, walkable neighborhoods, safe and secure communities, and protected open space.
- Changes traditional land use practices that result in sprawl and traffic congestion.
- Promotes arts and cultural opportunities that build on the attributes of regions.

**Social Inclusion:** *Ensuring that everyone participates and shares responsibility.*

- Social Inclusion recognizes that the interests of neighborhoods are connected to the future health of the region and vice versa.
- Long-term regional prosperity is linked to reducing poverty and inequality in metropolitan areas. Thus, equity must become a part of regional strategy, not just an afterthought.
- Everyone is included in the development of regional strategies through decision-making structures and systems support broad inclusion.
- Increasingly diverse populations and perspectives must be engaged and participate as contributing members of a “regional society.”
- Complexity and interdependence of issues means that problem-solving can only be effectively accomplished through regional strategies and community engagement.

- Building trust and relationships requires safe civic spaces for public dialogue and conversations and the appropriate tools to support collaborative public decision-making and civic engagement.

**Collaborative Governance:** *Finding creative ways to govern.*

- Government alone cannot deal effectively with many community problems. Governance—how people come together to address common problems—is more than government. At the regional level citizens, business, labor, nonprofits, educators, and government must work together to set directions, solve problems and take action.
- Today’s regions are a complex system of overlapping, interrelating jurisdictions—much like a network. Collaborative Governance requires coordination of resources, and sharing of information, ideas, and power.
- Social capital has to be created in regions. Social capital is the networks and norms of trust and reciprocity required to advance civic cooperation.
- Information has to be shared among all the participants
- Success requires process and structural changes that emphasize coalitions and actions across jurisdictions *and* across sectors.

**References**

<sup>1</sup> Douglas R. Porter, *Making Smart Growth Work* (Boston, Mass.: Urban Land Institute, 2002), p. 67.


<sup>2</sup> Established in 1988, the Denver metropolitan area’s Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) collects a one-tenth of one percent sales tax and distributes the proceeds (more than \$400 million to date) to educational, arts and cultural institutions in a seven-county region. Receiving organizations fall into three categories, or “tiers.” Tier I, which receives the highest level of support, includes the region’s flagship amenities—the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, the Denver Art Museum, the Denver Botanic Gardens, and the Denver Zoo. Twenty-three organizations receive Tier II funding, including the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Opera Colorado and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Nearly 300 smaller, community-based groups receive Tier III support. In 2003, SCFD sup-

port ranged from a high of 33 percent of the operating budget for the Denver Art Museum (Tier I) to six percent of the operating budget for the Denver Center for the Performing Arts (Tier II). The SCFD not only subsidizes arts and cultural organizations, enabling them to maintain more skilled professional staffs, but also increases public access to arts organizations through lower admission fees and regularly scheduled free admission days.

<sup>3</sup> Colorado Business Committee for the Arts, “2004 Study of Metro Denver Culture,” [www.cbca.org/econbiannual.asp](http://www.cbca.org/econbiannual.asp).

<sup>4</sup> William Fulton and Morris Newman, “The Arts and Smart Growth: The Role of the Arts in Placemaking” (Translation Paper Number 12), Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, April 2003, p. 9. See also, Carolyn Bye, *A New Angle: Arts Development in the Suburbs*

- (Minneapolis, Minn.: The McKnight Foundation, 2002), [www.mcknight.org/arts/angle.asp](http://www.mcknight.org/arts/angle.asp)
- <sup>5</sup> Press release from the American Public Transit Association dated 4 April 2003, [www.apta.com/media/releases/congestion.cfm](http://www.apta.com/media/releases/congestion.cfm); press release from the Surface Transportation Policy Project date 1 April 2003, [www.transact.org/report.asp](http://www.transact.org/report.asp).
- <sup>6</sup> Smart Growth Network, *Getting to Smart Growth II: 100 More Policies for Implementation* (International City/County Management Association, 2004), p. 72.
- <sup>7</sup> Sam Passmore, "Education and Smart Growth: Reversing School Sprawl for Better Schools and Communities" (Translation Paper No. 8), Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, March 2002, pp. 6-7.
- <sup>8</sup> Passmore, 2002, pp. 8-9.
- <sup>9</sup> Passmore, 2002, p. 2.
- <sup>10</sup> Passmore, 2002, pp. 3-4.
- <sup>11</sup> David Goldberg, "Children, Youth and Families and Smart Growth: Building Family-Friendly Communities" (Translation Paper No. 9), Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, August 2002, p. 9.
- <sup>12</sup> Greg LeRoy and Sara Hinkley, "Opportunities for Linking Movements: Workforce Development and Smart Growth" (Translation Paper No. 2), Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, June 2000, p. 7.
- <sup>13</sup> For more information on the economic and social benefits of affordable housing, visit the Civic Results website at [www.crna.net](http://www.crna.net).
- <sup>14</sup> For more information, visit [www.gmhf.com](http://www.gmhf.com).
- <sup>15</sup> For more information, visit [www.mc-mncppc.org/development/forms/green\\_tape.shtm](http://www.mc-mncppc.org/development/forms/green_tape.shtm).
- <sup>16</sup> Smart Growth Network, 2004, pp. 24-25.
- <sup>17</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see Dana Beach, "Water and Smart Growth: The Impacts of Sprawl on Aquatic Ecosystems" (Translation Paper No. 14), Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, 2004.
- <sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 1997 *National Resources Inventory*, 2000, [www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/NRIrIse.html](http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/NRIrIse.html). For a more detailed discussion, see Edward Thompson, Jr., "Agricultural Sustainability and Smart Growth: Saving Urban-Influenced Land" (Translation Paper No. 5), Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, April 2001.
- <sup>19</sup> Smart Growth Network, 2004, pp. 52-53.
- <sup>20</sup> Smart Growth Network, 2004, pp. 54-55.
- <sup>21</sup> For more information, visit the website <http://tti.tamu.edu>.
- <sup>22</sup> The cost of a barrel of light crude oil on 13 October, 2004 was US\$52.51 (Associated Press).
- <sup>23</sup> Smart Growth Network, 2004, pp. 75-76. The State of Maryland's "Smart Code" program, designed to promote environmentally low-impact development, has been revised to incorporate the newest round of LEED standards: "By renovating an existing building ... a builder can claim ... credit for site selection (1 point), urban redevelopment (1 point), building reuse (3 points), and resource reuse (2 points), as well as meeting the prerequisite for reducing the amount of waste going to landfills."
- <sup>24</sup> For more detail, consult [www.lgc.org/freepub/land\\_use/articles/energy\\_betterdesign/print.html](http://www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/articles/energy_betterdesign/print.html).
- <sup>25</sup> Smart Growth Network, 2004, p. 76.
- <sup>26</sup> David Goldberg, August 2002, p. 4.
- <sup>27</sup> David Goldberg, August 2002, p. 4.
- <sup>28</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, 2001, p. 12.
- <sup>29</sup> M. Pratt, et al., "Higher Direct Medical Costs Associated with Physical Inactivity," *The Physician and Sports Medicine*, 2000, 28:10.
- <sup>30</sup> For more information, visit the website, [www.activelivingbydesign.org](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org).
- <sup>31</sup> Visit the website, [www.virginia.edu/topnews/releases2002/lucy-april-30-2002.html](http://www.virginia.edu/topnews/releases2002/lucy-april-30-2002.html).
- <sup>32</sup> David Goldberg,, August 2002, pp. 3-4.
- <sup>33</sup> David Goldberg, August 2002, p. 4. See also, [www.virginia.edu/topnews/releases2002/lucy-april-30-2002.html](http://www.virginia.edu/topnews/releases2002/lucy-april-30-2002.html).
- <sup>34</sup> "Active Living by Design: Increasing physical activity through community design" (program brochure), [www.activelivingbydesign.org](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org).
- <sup>35</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 165-169.
- <sup>36</sup> Frances Moore Lappé and Paul Martin DuBouis, *The Quickening of America: Rebuilding Our Nation, Remaking Our Lives* (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), Chapter 2.
- <sup>37</sup> Pan American Health Organization, 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Subcommittee of the Executive Committee on Women, Health and Development, March 2001, [www.paho.org/english/gov/ce/msd/msd19\\_8-e.pdf](http://www.paho.org/english/gov/ce/msd/msd19_8-e.pdf).



**The Alliance for Regional Stewardship (ARS)** is a national, peer-to-peer network of regional stewards who benefit by sharing experiences and working collaboratively on innovative approaches to shared regional challenges.

ARS is for proven leaders who recognize the interdependencies of their regions' economy, environment, and society—and are seeking practical ways to effect change as regional stewards.

These stewards can come from the business, government, education, nonprofit or community sectors, but share a common commitment to collaborative action and regional stewardship.

**ARS activities include:**

- Semi-annual National Forums on Regional Stewardship
- John W. Gardner Academy for Regional Stewardship
- Ongoing affinity groups on topics of specific interest
- Comprehensive website and monthly e-newsletter
- Monograph series on key regional topics
- Innovation scans of regional best practices
- Regional Stewardship Award program

For more information on the Alliance for Regional Stewardship, please visit our website at [www.regionalstewardship.org](http://www.regionalstewardship.org)



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