

SMART GROWTH AUDIT*

CITY/TOWN: _____

(Note: If you think a question does not apply to your community, simply add a “not applicable” – NA option.)

I. VISION 2020 SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES FOR DIRECTING GROWTH

A. ENCOURAGE GROWTH IN AREAS WITH EXISTING AND UNDERUTILIZED INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Does your Master Plan include specific language that describes a desired pattern of development?

Yes. The Master Plan describes a pattern of development that includes one or more compact centers with primarily low-density development in surrounding areas..... 2

The Master Plan is not specific on desired pattern of development..... 1

The Master Plan calls for growth throughout the community; or there is no Master Plan..... 0

2. How visible is the edge of your town center (or centers, if your municipality has more than one)?

It is clearly visible..... 2

The edge of the town center is still recognizable, but it has begun to blend with outlying development..... 1

There is no distinction between the town center and outlying development..... 0

3. Where is most commercial growth occurring?

Within the town center (s)..... 2

Mostly outside the town center (s)..... 1

Outside the town center (s) in strip patterns and/or large lots..... 0

Not Applicable (There is little commercial development occurring in our community)..... NA

4. Where are your community’s public buildings (town hall, library, senior center, schools) located?

Public buildings are in a town center..... 2

Most public buildings are in a town center, but some planned buildings are outside..... 1

Most existing and planned public buildings are outside a town center..... 0

5. Does the local zoning define one or more compact town centers?

Yes the zoning establishes compact town center(s)..... 2

There is a defined town center(s) but it is not compact and/or it extends in a linear fashion along major roads..... 1

No town center area is defined..... 0

**Format and a portion of the questions developed by the Vermont Forum on Sprawl “Smart Growth Scorecard” ©2000.*

6. How do sizes of newer lots in your town center – those created within the past 20 years-- compare to the typical sizes of older lots in the same area?

- Most newer lots in the town center are similar in size to older lots in similar locations..... 2
- Lot sizes are a distinct mix; some newer lots are similar to older lots, while some are larger..... 1
- Most newer lots are larger than older lots similar in locations..... 0

7. Is there a distinct pattern to densities in local zoning, from higher densities in compact centers to lower densities in outlying areas or areas with sensitive natural resources (e.g. aquifer, Biomap areas)?

- Yes..... 2
- Yes, but zoning densities in the town center(s) are significantly lower than existing development in the same area..... 1
- No. Lot sizes are either the same or mixed in sizes throughout all districts in the community..... 0

8. If your community has sanitary sewer and/or water, how are line extensions managed?

- The service area is defined and line extensions are prohibited outside of this area..... 2
- The service area is defined but some line extensions are permitted outside of this area..... 1
- The service area is extended to serve any development that requests it..... 0
- Not applicable – there is no sanitary sewer or public water service..... NA

9. Does your community use the capacity of its infrastructure (water, wastewater, high speed cable, power, light rail, bus lines, highway access, etc) in planning for development?

- This information is documented and used comprehensively in planning..... 2
- Some information is available, but it is not shared or used comprehensively in planning..... 1
- Little information is available..... 0

10. Is local assistance available for the redevelopment of brownfields in your community?

- Yes. There is assistance (financial, pre-permitting, permitting) for brownfields re-development..... 2
- Some assistance is available but more could be done..... 1
- No assistance is available..... 0
- Not Applicable..... NA

11. Does your zoning have provisions to transfer density into areas with infrastructure capacity or density bonuses for developing in areas with infrastructure?

- Yes. The zoning includes provisions for higher density development through transfer of development rights (TDR) or bonuses for development in defined growth areas served by existing infrastructure 2
- There is some flexibility for increased density in areas served by infrastructure, but the standards are not well developed..... 1
- No such provisions are available..... 0
- Not Applicable..... **NA**

12. Does your community have a current (less than 5 years old) economic development plan or strategy within the Master Plan, that outlines how commercial and industrial growth will be encouraged in areas with infrastructure capacity—a program that promotes growth in Priority Development Areas?

- Yes. An economic development strategy is being followed and directs growth to areas with infrastructure capacity..... 2
- There is an economic development policy but it is not followed or does not prioritize areas for development 1
- No. Presently there is no strategy for economic development..... 0

B. MIX COMPATIBLE LAND USES

13. Where are commercial/business and residential uses located in relation to each other?

- The town center(s) and other growth areas allow commercial and residential uses in a compatible form..... 2
- We have districts that permit mixed uses but they do not have the standards needed to achieve compatible mixed uses..... 1
- No mixed uses are permitted, uses are segregated (except for grandfathered non-conforming uses)..... 0

14. Does your zoning have mixed-use village zones or transit-oriented development (if applicable)?

- Yes. The zoning includes mixed-use village districts..... 2
- There are standards but they need refinement..... 1
- No. Presently there are no such provisions in the zoning..... 0
- Not applicable..... **NA**

C. BUILD COMPACTLY

15. Does your community have cluster or open space subdivision zoning?

- Yes. This provision exists as a by-right use and is used by developers..... 2
- There is a provision but it needs improvement or is by special permit only..... 1
- No. Presently there are no provisions in the zoning bylaw..... 0

16. Does your community have a provision for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) with defined sending and receiving zones?

- Yes there is an active program that has been used successfully..... 2
- Yes, but it needs refinement or is not used..... 1
- No – there is no provision for TDR..... 0
- Not applicable..... NA

17. If you community is not entirely served by sanitary sewers, do the Board of Health regulations allow new subdivision to use group systems?

- Yes group systems are allowed and used..... 2
- Yes, but it is difficult to get a group system permitted..... 1
- The Board of Health regulations do not permit group systems..... 0
- Not applicable..... NA

18. How does your community regulate the width of street pavement?

- Regulations allow different street pavement widths depending on the character of the area, the projected volume of traffic and/or the desired speed of traffic..... 2
- Regulations allow some variation in street pavement width but only under limited circumstances..... 1
- No variations in street pavement width are permitted..... 0

19. What provisions has your community made for pedestrians and cyclists?

- We have a good network of pedestrian pathways and bikepaths connecting much of the community..... 2
- We have some pathways and a plan for additional pathways and bikepaths in the community..... 1
- We have only limited pedestrian pathways and no plan for pedestrian or cyclist facilities..... 0

D. PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

20. Which option best describes the mix of housing types in your community?

- There is a mix of housing types and housing prices (including housing priced in the affordable range) within that mix including single family, multi-family, apartments, affordable housing, and senior housing..... 2
- There is a limited mix of housing types, including some affordable housing..... 1
- There is very little diversity in housing and very little affordable housing in the community..... 0

21. How has your community planned for the future housing needs?

- The Master Plan or Housing Plan projects the amounts and types of local housing that will be needed over the next 20 years. We have outlined specific means for meeting those needs..... 2
- The Master Plan or Housing Plan includes a preliminary evaluation of future housing needs, but does not specify how to meet them..... 1
- The community does not have a master plan or housing plan to address future housing needs..... 0

22. Does the community work with an affordable housing group or groups active in your community or region?

- Yes, we work actively with one or more local or regional affordable housing groups- the community has applied for or supported applications for state funding to provide affordable housing..... 2
- We have worked to a limited degree with an affordable housing group..... 1
- We have never worked with an affordable-housing group; and/or there is no active group promoting affordable housing in the community..... 0

23. Does your community permit accessory apartments?

- Yes and some are created each year..... 2
- Yes but few are created each year because the standards are very hard to meet..... 1
- No, accessory apartments are not permitted in the community..... 0

24. Is your community proactive in working on 40B housing proposals?

- Yes. The community has sponsored Local Initiative Projects and/or worked cooperatively to produce units in appropriate locations..... 2
- The Zoning Board of Appeals has adopted regulations for permitting 40Bs, but little other activity has gone on..... 1
- We have not been proactive on 40B projects..... 0

25. Has your community adopted the Community Preservation Act (or comparable mechanism)?

- Yes and the Community has successfully used CPA funds to produce affordable housing units..... 2
- Yes, but to date CPA funds has only been used for housing planning..... 1
- No, not at this time..... 0

II. VISION 2020 SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES FOR PRESERVATION

A. CREATE A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE

26. Does your community have, and follow, an up-to-date (less than 5 years old) Master Plan?

- Yes, and the community's regulations are consistent with the vision in the Master Plan..... 2
- There is a Master Plan with a vision but not all the regulations are consistent with the vision..... 1
- No the Master Plan is out of date..... 0

27. Would your community's zoning bylaw/ordinance allow replication of those parts of your community that are considered the best assets in the community? (e.g. village center area)

- Yes and this is encouraged..... 2
- Yes, but not without variances and special permits..... 1
- No, the current regulations would not permit this..... 0

28. Does your community have a site plan review bylaw/ordinance?

- Yes and it functions well, producing results that enhance the community..... 2
- Yes but it is in need of improvement..... 1
- Not presently..... 0

29. Which of these options best describes the conditions of historic buildings in your community?

- Most are in use and well maintained..... 2
- Most are in poor condition, but they are in use..... 1
- Most historic buildings are vacant or have been demolished..... 0

30. What is your community doing to protect historic buildings and other features?

- We have defined a historic district, along with guidelines for development..... 2
- We have acknowledged the importance of historic buildings and other features, but we have no specific measures to maintain or enhance them..... 1
- We have done little to address the need to protect historic buildings and features?..... 0

31. Does your community have a demolition delay bylaw/ordinance?

- Yes and it is effective in preserving historic features of the community..... 2
- Yes, but it needs refinement..... 1
- No not at this time..... 0

B. PRESERVE OPEN SPACE, CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS, FARMLAND, AND PLACES OF NATURAL BEAUTY.

32. What action is your community taking to protect natural areas?

- We have a Natural Resources Inventory and strong provisions to protect natural areas – including wetlands, wildlife habitat, and sites for rare plants-- in site-plan review and/or subdivision regulations..... 2
- We have made provisions to protect some, but not all natural areas in site-plan review and/or subdivision regulations..... 1
- We have no Natural Resources Inventory and no provisions to protect natural areas in site-plan review or subdivision regulations..... 0

33. Does your community have an up-to-date (less than 5 years old) Open Space Plan?

- Yes and it is consulted regularly by all Boards to guide decisions..... 2
- There is a current plan but it is not well integrated into development decisions..... 1
- No there is not an up-to-date Open Space Plan..... 0

34. Has your community adopted the Community Preservation Act (or comparable mechanism)?

- Yes and the community has successfully used CPA funds to preserve priority parcels..... 2
- Yes, but to date CPA funds have not been used to purchase property..... 1
- No, not at this time..... 0

35. Does the community have a local wetlands bylaw that provides for undisturbed buffers around important wetlands, protection of vernal pools, and protection of other key resources?

- Yes there is a local bylaw that provides these protection features..... 2
- There is a local wetlands bylaw, but it needs to be improved to provide adequate protection..... 1
- There is no local bylaw on buffers for wetlands and other natural resource areas..... 0

36. Do residents have easy walking access to public parks and playgrounds?

- Yes. Parks and playgrounds are available in all larger neighborhoods, and can easily be reached by walking from other parts of the community..... 2
- We have some parks and playgrounds, but they cannot be easily reached by walking from all parts of the community..... 1
- No. We have very few parks and playgrounds..... 0
- Not applicable..... NA

37. Do residents have local access to passive and active open space?

- Yes. Most large parcels of open space are either publicly owned, or privately owned (by a land trust or comparable group) and open to public use..... 2
- Most large open parcels are privately owned, with limited public use..... 1
- No. Most or all large open parcels are privately owned and closed to public use..... 0

38. What strategies for protecting farmland is in your Master Plan?

- A comprehensive, specific set of strategies and policies..... 2
- Some specific strategies..... 1
- Vague or no strategies..... 0
- Not Applicable..... NA

39. How much conservation restrictions and/or land trust activity is occurring in your community?

- Greater than 20% of the community's land area is permanently protected..... 2
- Less than 20% but greater than or equal to 10% of the community's land area is permanently protected 1
- Less than 10% of the community's land area is permanently protected 0

40. Is there local support for farming and/or forestry through tax abatements, and/or a dedicated community fund (such as CPA money) to help purchase or protect such land? (e.g. when 61a releases come up?)

- Yes-we offer tax abatements and/or a dedicated fund/CPA..... 2
- We have, or are working on, a plan to offer tax abatement and/or a dedicated fund/CPA..... 1
- No, we offer neither..... 0
- Not applicable..... NA

41. Does the community have a right-to-farm bylaw or local agricultural commission?

- Yes and the group is active..... 2
- We are developing initiatives similar to these..... 1
- No neither currently exists..... 0
- Not applicable..... NA

42. Does your community have an aquifer/water supply protection bylaw that protects drinking water sources?

- Yes there is an aquifer/water supply protection district with standards that protect drinking water supplies... 2
- There is an aquifer/water supply protection district but the standards need to be improved..... 1
- No, presently there is not an aquifer/water supply protection district..... 0
- Not Applicable..... NA

C. COORDINATE PUBLIC INVESTMENT, AND FIND A FAIR AND BROAD-BASED WAY TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES.

43. Is there an annual effort to do Capital Improvement Programming?

- Yes the community has a comprehensive and accurate annual CIP that is presented as part of the budget.... 2
- There is a CIP process but it is not translated into a comprehensive document..... 1
- No, the community does not undertake a CIP..... 0

44. Does your community participate in any regional revenue sharing arrangements?

- Yes we are part of regional mechanism for revenue sharing that promotes smart development..... 2
- Our Master Plan identifies a need for such an arrangement and/or we are looking into such an arrangement.. 1
- No, our master plan does not identify a need for such an arrangement and/or we have not formally sought such a smart growth revenue sharing arrangement. 0

45. If your community has designated Economic Opportunity Areas (EOAs), are these located in areas with existing or underutilized infrastructure?

- Yes the community's EOAs are located in areas with existing or underutilized infrastructure..... 2
- There are EOAs but they are not located in areas with existing or underutilized infrastructure..... 1
- The EOAs are located in "greenfield" areas and require new infrastructure investments. 0
- Not Applicable..... NA

D. MAKE DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS PREDICTABLE, FAIR, AND COST EFFECTIVE.

46. Is there a guidebook for developers and applicants that explains the local bylaws, regulations and procedures?

- Yes there is an up-to-date printed guide and operating procedures that require various boards and departments to share information on a project early that helps to streamline the process..... 2
- General printed guidance is available..... 1
- Only verbal guidance is routinely available..... 0

47. Does your community budget funds for training and conferences for Board members?

- Yes, training is funded and members have attended some training in the past 2 years..... 2
- There is a small budget or few members take advantage of the provision..... 1
- No there is no funding available for training..... 0

48. Does your community communicate about growth with utility providers (gas, electric, sewer, water, etc)?

- Yes there is a mechanism for communication and coordination..... 2
- Communication could be better..... 1
- There is no formal communication with utility providers..... 0

<i>Smart Growth Audit</i>		<i>Points</i>			
<i>Section</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>NA</i>
I. A.	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				
	7				
	8				
	9				
	10				
	11				
	12				
I. B.	13				
	14				
I. C.	15				
	16				
	17				
	18				
	19				
I.D.	20				
	21				
	22				
	23				
	24				
	25				
II. A.	26				
	27				
	28				
	29				
	30				
	31				
II. B.	32				
	33				
	34				
	35				
	36				
	37				
	38				
	39				

	40				
	41				
	42				
II. C.	43				
	44				
	45				
II. D.	46				
	47				
	48				
	TOTAL # OF ANSWERS:				# NAs:
		X 0 =	X 1 =	X 2 =	
	TOTAL POINTS:				
				OVERALL POINT TOTAL:	
<p style="text-align: center;">Overall Point Total</p> <p>Score: = $2 \times (\text{Total Questions Answered -do not include NAs}^*) \times 100$ (* 48 total questions - # of NAs)</p>					

Score: *Based on this Audit your community has:*

75 - 100 *....a smart growth approach to development.*

50 - 74 *...some aspects of a smart growth approach to development.*

Less than 50 *...not focused on a smart growth approach to development.*

Please return this audit by December 31, 2003 to:
SRPEDD, 88 Broadway, Taunton, MA 02780
FAX (508) 823-1803