

Smart Growth for Coastal & Waterfront Communities

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What is smart growth?

Smart growth is development that revitalizes neighborhoods, protects farmland and open space, keeps housing affordable, and provides more transportation choices.

It is development that is good for the economy, community, and the environment.

Waterfront planning challenges

- Sensitive coastal resources
- Protecting waterfront and coastal access
- Dynamic systems:
Addressing impacts of hazards and climate change



Question of Balance



How can coastal communities enjoy the benefits and opportunities of growth while protecting the very amenities that attract development?



Context for Coastal Elements

➤ Smart Growth Principles

- Developed in 1996 by Smart Growth Network



➤ Principles, however, do not directly address the challenges and opportunities faced by waterfront and coastal communities.

- How is a smart growth community on the coast different from a landlocked smart growth community?

Smart Growth for Coastal & Waterfront Communities



Coastal & Waterfront Smart Growth Elements

1. Mix land uses, including water-dependent uses
2. Take advantage of compact community design that enhances, preserves, and provides access to waterfront resources
3. Provide a range of housing opportunities and choices to meet the needs of both seasonal and permanent residents

4. Create walkable communities with visual and physical access to and along the waterfront for public use
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place that capitalizes on the waterfront's heritage
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and the critical environmental areas that characterize coastal and waterfront communities

7. Strengthen and direct development to existing communities and encourage waterfront revitalization
8. Provide a variety of land- and water-based transportation options
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective through consistent policies and coordinated permitting processes
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions, ensuring that public interests in, and rights of access to, the waterfront and coastal waters are upheld

Element 1: Mix land uses including water-dependent uses



Element 1:

- Adopt zoning policies and building codes supporting mixed use development
- Plan for water-dependent recreational, commercial, and industrial uses
- Implement fiscal policies and incentives supporting mixed uses

Element 4: Create walkable communities with physical and visual access to the waterfront



Element 4:

- Mix land uses and design buildings to foster pedestrian activity and visual access to the water
- Expand and manage physical access to the water

Element 6: Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas



Element 6:

- Protect, maintain, and restore ecological systems
- Preserve open space and natural lands for scenic resources and recreational opportunities
- Plan with nature, anticipating dynamic waterfront and coastal processes

Element 7: Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities and encourage waterfront revitalization



Element 7:

- Promote community-based waterfront revitalization
- Promote infill development by preserving, upgrading, and reusing existing properties
- Retrofit historic waterfronts for new uses
- Clean up and reuse brownfields

Element 8: Provide a variety of land- and water-based transportation options



Element 8:

- Enhance water-based public transportation and link to pedestrian and land-based transit systems
- Ensure that transportation options consider the movement of goods, as well as people

Element 10: Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions, ensuring that the public right of access to coastal waters is upheld



Element 10:

- Develop an inclusionary process to maximize participation & results
- Develop a common understanding among stakeholders
- Use transparent meeting & communication techniques
- Collaborate with federal, state & local agencies with jurisdiction over coastal resources

Smart Growth for Coastal and Waterfront Communities

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coastal & waterfront

SMARTGROWTH

ELEMENTS

Mix land uses

1

Take advantage of compact design

2

Provide a range of housing choices

3

Create walkable communities

4

Foster distinctive, attractive communities

5

Preserve open space & critical environmental areas

6

Direct development toward existing communities

7

Provide a variety of transportation options

8

Make development decisions predictable & fair

9

Encourage community & stakeholder collaboration

10



- Project partners release report...
- Smart Growth principles compared
- RESOURCES
- TOOLS
- CASE STUDIES

PROJECT PARTNERS RELEASE REPORT

In August, NOAA, EPA, ICMA and RI Sea Grant are releasing a [report](#) [overviewing Coastal and Waterfront Smart Growth](#) approaches and implementation techniques described on this website.

DEVELOPMENT at the WATER'S EDGE

Coastal and waterfront communities have a distinctive sense of place created by their history, as well as by their characteristic sights, sounds, and smells. On the coast, the bellow of tugboats and the salty taste of ocean air; along lakes and rivers, the sound of the water and the feel of brisk waterborne winds—all come together to shape our sense of these special places... [more >>](#)

COASTAL and WATERFRONT CHALLENGES and OPPORTUNITIES

Bounded by water, coastal and waterfront communities are challenged to make the best use of limited land while protecting critical natural resources from the potentially damaging effects of growth. These communities must consider a common set of overarching issues when managing growth and development. [more >>](#)

SMART GROWTH APPROACHES

How can smart growth strategies help coastal and waterfront communities manage growth and development while balancing environmental, economic, and quality of life issues? How can communities on the water adapt smart growth strategies to fit their unique character? This website will help communities answer these questions. It is specifically targeted to anyone who plans, designs, builds, approves, or has an interest in development at the water's edge. [more >>](#)

Thank You

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