Smart Growth Fixes for Climate Adaptation and Resilience

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Why Smart Growth Strategies for Adaptation and Resilience?

• Development on the ground now will shape community’s economy, health, quality of life, and resilience for decades to come.
• Can often both reduce GHG and prepare for climate change.
• Can be worked incrementally into municipality’s regular processes and adjusted periodically.
• Bring multiple short- and long-term benefits regardless of extent of climate impacts – improve everyday life.
  – Save people money on housing and transportation.
  – Fiscally responsible for governments.
About the Publication

• Audience: local government officials, staff, boards
• Chapters: Overcoming Barriers, Overall Strategies, Flooding/Extreme Precipitation, Sea Level Rise, Extreme Heat, Drought, Wildfire
• Menu of modest adjustments, major modifications, and wholesale changes – more than 70 policies, total
• Examples of communities implementing these policies
• Relevant credit summary language from LEED-ND, STAR Community Rating System, and Living Community Challenge
Sample Strategy: Overall

Create list of desired development elements (e.g., green infrastructure features) in more-vulnerable areas and require/encourage developers to implement a certain number of them.

Seattle Green Factor Program requires developers to apply a certain level of landscaping. They can choose from several options to meet the requirement.
Sample Strategy: Flooding

If elevation is necessary, establish elevation requirements that include design guidelines to promote accessibility and street life.

NYC Urban Design Principles were incorporated into the flood resilience amendment to the city’s building code.
Sample Strategy: Sea Level Rise

Designate and protect working waterfronts to preserve sense of place and economic engine.

Portland, Maine, adopted zoning to allow compatible non-marine uses on the working waterfront to help generate revenue for improvements to prepare for sea level rise.
Sample Strategy: Drought

Integrate water resources management with land use planning to ensure enough water for growth and to direct growth to places that make best use of community’s water infrastructure investments.

Policy L. Link Land Use Planning with Water Management

The Authority shall coordinate and cooperate with the City, County and all other entities with planning authority to integrate water management policies with land use decisions. The Authority recognizes that managing the use of groundwater while conserving and using existing water resources including maximizing the use of excess resources when available should significantly reduce acquisition of new supplies to serve future customers.

Key Sub-Policy:
1. The Authority should work with the City and County to update the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and/or other plans to ensure that system expansion is concurrent with infrastructure service levels and that the extension of facilities and services be phased in an efficient and orderly manner.

Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority’s Water 2120 plan directs it to link land use planning with water management. Overall water use in the area is about the same as in 1983, despite 70% growth in population.
Smart Growth Fixes for Climate Adaptation and Resilience is available at https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-fixes-climate-adaptation-and-resilience

Or go to www.epa.gov/smartgrowth, click on the Publications link, and go to the Climate Change and Energy section.

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