SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE AGENDA

- **Placemaking and Zoning:** Creating vibrant public spaces and healthy communities
- **Housing:** Increasing housing choices and affordability
- **Transportation:** Improving our transportation systems
- **Economic Development:** Promoting equitable community development and job creation
- **Environment and Preservation:** Protecting our natural resources, parks, and working landscapes.
- **Holistic and integrated**
- **Community based**
MASS HOUSEHOLDS SPEND ABOUT 50% OF INCOME IN COMBINED HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS
BARRIERS TO HOUSING CONSTRUCTION IN MASSACHUSETTS

- High costs: land and construction
- Limited infrastructure in many communities
- Restrictive local codes, permitting and fiscal zoning
- Limited planning capacity
- Community concerns: fiscal impact, property values, community character
- Limited opportunities for large-scale new development in context of established settlement patterns

Source: MassAudubon, Losing Ground
SMART GROWTH DEVELOPMENT: HOUSING WITHOUT SPRAWL

• Uses land efficiently: compact and higher-density
  • Walkable, mixture of housing types, mixed-use
  • Connected street network rather than cul-de-sacs
  • Appropriate open space amenities
• City infill, town centers, walkable to transit
SMART GROWTH DEVELOPMENT: HOUSING WITHOUT SPRAWL

• Adaptive reuse and grayfield redevelopment:
  • Empty mills and institutional buildings
  • Dead malls, shopping centers

• Transitioning uses
  • Dying or transitioning office parks, light industrial parks
  • Transit-ready locations…

• Rural clusters
SMART GROWTH HOUSING STARTS WITH PLANNING

• Regional or community comprehensive or master plan:
  • Preferred and priority development areas for compact development and redevelopment:
    • Town/village center sites
    • Transit oriented sites
    • Empty institutional sites
    • Declining or empty office or industrial sites

• Conceptual area and site planning guides regulations and future development
FAIRMOUNT LINE COLLABORATIVE

• Vision plan for a coalition of four Boston community development corporations working together
• Helped leverage many $ millions for:
  • Transportation improvements
  • Housing
  • Economic development
  • Green space development
FAIRMOUNT LINE – LENOVO BUILDING

- 0.1 miles from new commuter rail station
- 24 affordable rental units + one commercial space
- Formerly vacant site
- Meets LEED standards
- Developer: CSNDC
SOUTH COAST RAIL LAND USE PLAN

- Regional community-based map: priority development and priority preservation areas
- Concept plans for station areas appropriate to the community
SHOPPING CENTER TO MIXED USE TOD

King's Highway Station Concept Plan
MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Redevelopment of the existing shopping center would provide an opportunity to create a mixed-use neighborhood center that combines retail, office, entertainment, and other uses close to new multifamily homes. New streets with sidewalks and a public square would establish a walkable and attractive place. A mix of new homes and commercial development east of the tracks would help create a transition to the existing residential neighborhood east of Church Street. Pedestrian paths to the station and commercial amenities would serve surrounding neighborhoods, both new and existing.

Potential Future Character

NEW MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

A mix of retail, office and residential uses could create the focus for a new neighborhood center.

A MIX OF NEW HOUSING
- Multifamily
- Townhouses

New Bedford
NEW DENSITY SUPPORTS THE COST OF REVITALIZING OLD SHOPPING AREAS
REDEVELOPMENT OF A FORMER SHIPYARD - HINGHAM

• 235 apartments (23 affordable)
• 252 townhouses
• Part of large mixed use project at old shipyard
• Water shuttle to Boston
A NEW CENTER FOR A SUBURBAN TOWN

- Dublin, OH, outside Columbus
- 324 apartments recently approved
RESEARCH TRIANGLE NC MASTER PLAN FOR SMART REDEVELOPMENT

- Clustered, connected, development:
  - Unlock potential
  - Promote sustainability
  - Leverage and support future transit initiatives.
  - Enhance connectivity
  - Support regional natural systems.

Source: Cooper Robertson
SUBURBAN OFFICE BUILDINGS INTO HOUSING?

- Former Bell Labs building, Holmdel, NJ
- Designed by Saarinen
- Developer plan for loft style apartments rejected by town in favor of mixed use with medical offices, retail, no housing
RURAL SMART GROWTH HOUSING

• What are the objectives?
  • Workforce and affordable housing
  • Preservation of open space and working lands

• How can economic development policies support rural communities to stay rural rather than become ex-urban?
  • Town and village center housing
  • Open space subdivisions
  • Natural Resources Protection Zoning
RURAL GREENFIELD ZONING FOCUSED ON PRESERVATION

100 acre wooded site with field, stream, and trail before development

Natural Resource Protection Zoning (14 lots, >75% preservation)

Two-acre zoning/conventional subdivision (34 lots, no preservation)

Source: Lacy, Ritchie, Russell, “Green Side of Smart Growth”
BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE, BARN…

- Multiple townhouse units look like a traditional New England farmhouse. (Lexington, MA)
COTTAGE DEVELOPMENTS FOR SUBURBAN AND RURAL AREAS
TAD: TRANSIT-ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT - TOD’S EVIL TWIN

• Near transit but with auto-oriented planning and lacking the density, access, pedestrian-friendly street network, mix of housing types/densities/costs, or public space

• Not integrated into the landscape with easy accessibility to transit, including well-lit streets, comfortable sidewalks and streetside amenities

• TAD sometimes can be rehabilitated to become TOD
Smarter Growth Housing Densities

• City, suburb, exurb, rural
• Depends on the context and type of development
  • Single family detached
    • 7-21 units per acre
  • Single Family with secondary unit
    • 17-24 units per acre
  • Multiple units with single family appearance
    • 8-22 units per acre
  • Rowhouses
    • 10-40 units per acre
  • Multifamily elevator buildings
    • 21-236 units per acre
DESIGN MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: 8 TO 12 UNITS/ACRE
DESIGN MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: 15 TO 25 UNITS/ACRE
DESIGN MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: 30 TO 50 UNITS/ACRE
DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THINKING

• *Design for people first,* then cars.
• *Promote connection* rather than isolation from adjacent areas.
• *Balance higher densities with open space* amenities.
• *Orient buildings* to the open space/public realm and to the connecting streets.
• *Include a variety of housing types.*
• *Mix uses where feasible.*
• *Provide visual interest and variety.*
VISUAL INTEREST IN BUILDINGS

• Relate the size and bulk to buildings in the immediate neighborhood

• Variety of building forms and roof shapes – clusters of units, small variations in height, setback, roof shape

• Visual interest: color, materials, texture, landscape, trim

• Long horizontal facades broken up by vertical elements
INFILL COMPATIBLE WITH NEIGHBORS

• Mansion style apartments
• Multiple units in buildings that look like neighboring single family homes in height, bulk, setbacks, porches, style…. 
ONE BUILDING LOOKS LIKE MANY INDIVIDUAL HOUSES
UNOBTRUSIVE PARKING

• Parking lots at rear or side
• Multiple small parking lots rather than one big lot
• Trees and landscaped islands in parking lots
• Any blank walls of garages faced at street level with retail or, at a minimum, artwork, display cases, or trees or vines
COMMON AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

• Defined boundaries between public and private open space
• Open space located so it can be viewed from individual units, especially children’s play areas
  • Outdoor “rooms” rather than one undifferentiated space
  • Space for both passive and active recreation
  • Connections to regional open space, if possible

• Some private open space: balcony, patio, porch, deck, yard…
  • Screening or fences for privacy
USE DESIGN TO GIVE VARIETY TO LARGE BUILDINGS

• A large building broken up by two materials, prominent entries, roofline variety—but united by the size, placement and rhythm of windows
“The details are not the details. They make the design.”

-- CHARLES EAMES
SMART GROWTH HOUSING: WHERE AND HOW?

Massachusetts Smart Growth Conference
Panel A - Housing Trends and Innovations: Where Will Everyone Go?
November 20, 2013
Larissa Brown, AICP | Director of Community Planning | Goody Clancy