



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



Rural Communities and Small Towns Across America Know: Smarter Investments Save Money

From Alabama to West Virginia, Maine to Minnesota, rural communities and small towns across America are interested in making smarter investments for their economic recovery. Communities across the country have unequivocally shown that smart practices in housing, infrastructure and transportation will save local, state and federal government significant sums. Small businesses and family farms benefit from strategic local investments too, because smarter short-term decisions mean a stronger regional economy for the future.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have partnered to create the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an innovative collaboration that gets more out of each taxpayer dollar. When rural communities and small towns make strategic decisions about their future transportation, housing, water infrastructure and public services needs, they save money - and so does the federal government. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities' programs take proven successes from rural communities across the country and develop models a whole nation can use.

Rural Communities and Small Towns That Are Saving Money and Stretching Their Dollars

Staples, Minnesota

The Region Five Development Commission in central Minnesota includes five rural counties and a series of small towns looking to save money and create jobs. The region is struggling with population shifts, disappearing family farms, pressure on natural resources and economic distress. Working across local agencies and jurisdictions, the communities are developing a strategic plan for housing and employment, transportation options for senior citizens, business retention and attraction and conservation of natural resources through eco-tourism. The effort will save money across all the jurisdictions and leverage each step for future economic growth.

Caribou, Maine

The Northern Maine Development Commission is developing a regional strategy to address housing, transportation, water infrastructure and environmental needs to promote greater economic opportunity and workforce development. The strategic plan is seeking input from local leaders across government, civic and business sectors of Washington and Aroostook Counties on how to bring successful business models to the area and maximize the use of existing budget resources.

Ranson, West Virginia

The Randolph County Housing Authority is preparing to revitalize the main street in Ranson, West Virginia to bring economic opportunities to local residents and small business owners. Their plan to transform the main street will also bring low-cost transportation options to the community, which will encourage more development and strengthen commercial businesses.

Oskaloosa, Iowa

Iowa towns like Oskaloosa (pop. 11,000) credit the Main Street Iowa Program for creating more than 150 small businesses which support over 350 jobs in downtown Oskaloosa. That translates to \$15 million in private investment in Oskaloosa and nearly \$1 billion in private investment statewide. The Main Street Iowa Program has a proven track record of leveraging modest state and federal resources to encourage significant private investment, and has been instrumental in turning around dozens of small towns in Iowa that were suffering from population loss and lack of economic opportunities.

About Smart Growth America

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks so people can walk to their town center to ensuring that more homes are built near public transit or productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure that people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods.

Find out more at SmartGrowthAmerica.org, or contact Jessica Holmberg at 202-207-3355 x121 or jholmberg@smartgrowthamerica.org.

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