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Oklahoma City examines transportation performance measures with aid from Smart Growth America technical assistance workshop

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The Oklahoma City Planning Department welcomes representatives from Smart Growth America on Thursday and Friday as part of a grant-funded technical assistance program aimed at measuring transportation system performance in Oklahoma City. The program will assist in identifying ways to create a complete and connected transportation system in Oklahoma City that accommodates pedestrians, bicycles and transit. The information will be used to inform planning efforts throughout the region.

“The transportation element of our new comprehensive plan, PlanOKC, focuses on moving people, not just vehicles,” Mayor Mick Cornett said. “Our goal is to have a street system that works together with transit, trails, sidewalks, and the bike network, and ensure that all methods of travel are considered as the city moves forward. Smart Growth America’s expertise in the area enables us to benchmark our plans and progress.”

In September 2011, Oklahoma City was one of 15 communities nationwide selected from a pool of 90 applications by Smart Growth America to participate in the technical assistance program. Stretching from Maine to Washington State, these 15 communities represent major cities, suburban centers, and rural towns alike.

“Smart Growth America is committed to providing the tools and training to help community leaders keep their cities and towns livable, sustainable and vital places,” said Roger Millar, Director of Smart Growth America’s Leadership Institute. “PlanOKC is based on improving the quality of life throughout Oklahoma City by creating places that attract employers and residents. While the City has the capacity to develop plans and implement recommendations, we at SGA are happy to help with the technical details that tie a good plan’s recommendations to its local setting.”

The program, made possible through a five-year Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Sustainable Communities, seeks to develop local planning solutions that help communities grow in ways that benefit families and businesses, while protecting the environment and preserving a sense of place. Three other nonprofit organizations—Forterra, Global Green USA and Project for Public Spaces—also received competitively awarded grants this year to help communities get the kinds of development they want.

As a national leader in the field, Smart Growth America has accumulated extensive experience working with communities to help them use land strategically, make the most of existing resources and invest strategically to catalyze private development.
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 to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

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