

SMART GROWTH HOUSING ENDORSEMENT CRITERIA

Vt. Smart Growth Collaborative
Revised November 16, 2005

SCORING:

The criteria are arranged according to seven major criteria and one bonus criterion. Each criterion considers a number of elements. Points for each element are given in the right hand column. Projects should be scored as follows:

Except as specified below, if a certain element applies to a project, the number of points in the right hand column should be awarded to the project. If it does not apply, no points are given. There are three exceptions to this methodology:

- (1) In instances where there is a choice, only the number of points for the appropriate choice should be added (i.e., Sections 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4). If the project does not meet any of the choices, no points are given.
- (2) Bonus elements are neutral, that is, a project can receive bonus points if it contains the element but would not be penalized if it doesn't.
- (3) There are two cases where, if an element applies to a project, points are subtracted instead of added.

ENDORSEMENTS

A review committee will evaluate projects to determine if they will be "endorsed" by the Vermont Smart Growth Collaborative. To be considered "eligible" for endorsement, a project must get a minimum of 1 point under 1.1. and score at least 15 points, not including bonus points. The committee will also consider whether the project exemplifies Smart Growth Principles and scores bonus points.

1. CONCENTRATED DEVELOPMENT

1.1.	Does the location have easy access to jobs, services, transportation, and grocery stores?	
1.1.1.	The project is infill or brownfield development within an existing town center or existing growth center, or.	5
1.1.2.	The project is within an existing town center or existing growth center, or	4

1.1.3.	The project is within a proposed new growth center, as defined by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs, that could meet the housing needs of the town and region, or	3
1.1.4.	The project is within walking distance of or adjacent to an existing town center or existing growth center, or	2
1.1.5.	The project is in a logical growth area that could become a growth center and that could meet the housing needs of the town and region?	1
1.2.	Is the density at least: ¹	
	4 units per acre	1
	10 units per acre	2
	20 units per acre	3
1.3.	Does the project strengthen the neighborhood or community (i.e. by creating a more walkable environment, adding density without detracting from the quality of the area, adding necessary green space, improving transportation options, improving availability of services, utilizing historic resources and settlement patterns, or improving the attractiveness of the area)?	2
1.4.	Is the site served by public utilities and facilities?	
	The site is served by either public water or sewage disposal facilities, or	1
	The site is served by both public water and sewage disposal facilities, or	2
	The site is in a planned water and/or sewer service area.	1
1.5.	Does the project represent a reasonable rate of population growth given the current size and population of the community?	1
1.6.	Is the overall building size kept to a minimum while still meeting occupants' needs? (Suggested maximum unit size: 1,600 SF plus 200 SF per bedroom.)	1

¹ If the project has permanently protected open space that is used for farming, forestry or outdoor recreation, do not count the acreage dedicated to that open space when figuring the density.

2. MIXTURE OF USES

2.1.	Does the project provide for diversity in type and price of housing within the area where it is located?	1
2.2.	Does the project provide for a diversity of housing choices on the site?	1
2.3.	BONUS: Does the project provide other uses on the site (i.e., recreational facilities, community facilities, commercial uses, or social service delivery)?	1

3. TRANSPORTATION

3.1.	Is the project located on a street that is part of a public street network?	1
3.2.	Does the project provide for access to shops, services, jobs, etc. by more than one mode of transportation (for example, part of a sidewalk system, on a transit route or within ¼ mile of transit stop, or near [1/4 mile] a bikepath or pedestrian way)?	1
3.3.	Does the project provide covered, short-term bicycle parking and/or secure indoor long-term bicycle parking for residents, located in a garage or room on a first-floor level of the building.	1
3.4.	Does the project allow for logical traffic circulation for vehicles and pedestrians within the site?	1
3.5.	BONUS: Are traffic calming devices used to slow traffic?	1
3.6.	Is the project oriented to pedestrians, for example, by providing sidewalks and reducing walking distances by minimizing lot frontage and spacing between buildings?	1
3.7.	Does the project have safe pedestrian access to any nearby open space and/or recreation areas, including trails?	1
3.8.	Does the project minimize excessive paving and highly visible parking lots, for example, by narrow streets, short driveways, less surface parking, and parking behind buildings?	1

3.9. BONUS: Does the project allow children living in the housing to be able to walk or bike to school	1
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4. WORKING LANDSCAPE/RURAL HOUSING

4.1. Is the project within an area where soils are categorized as prime agricultural by the USDA Soil Conservation Service or within a block of conserved farms (unless in a growth center, a planned extension of a growth center or within a proposed growth center)? <i>An exception may be made for farm labor housing.</i>	-3
4.2. BONUS: Is the project compact and/or clustered in a way that preserves valuable natural resources, including productive farm and forest land?	1

5. HUMAN SCALE

5.1. Does the project fit with the character of the surrounding neighborhood (example, if adjoining buildings orient the entrances to the street, does the project as well? Are setbacks and height of building complementary?)?	1
5.2. Does the project promote a sense of community within the development, for example, by facilitating interaction among residents through diverse gathering places or by incorporating common spaces and/or buildings?	1
5.3. Does the project connect to surrounding neighborhoods through public spaces and/or design features?	1

6. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

6.1. BONUS: Does the project use a brownfield site outside an existing town center or existing growth center?	2
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6.2.	Is the project located within a floodplain (except where allowed under zoning), rare or endangered species habitat, wetland, natural areas, and critical wildlife habitat? 6.2.1 If yes, have steps been taken to minimize or mitigate the impact?	-3 if yes +1 if no +1 if yes
6.3.	BONUS: Where applicable, is the project consistent with a municipal open space plan? Does it provide access and/or links to parks, greenways, and trails? Does it provide a park or trail?	1
6.4.	BONUS: Does the project offer green space in a densely settled area or is it within walking distance of a park (1/4 mile)?	1

7. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

7.1.	Has the project developer and/or designer made efforts to involve the neighbors and other community members in project design and development?	1
7.2.	BONUS: Has the project developer made efforts to involve people who would live in the building?	1

8. ENERGY/WATER CONSERVATION

8.1.	BONUS: Is the building eligible for ENERGY STAR Home (5-star or 86 points on the Home Energy Rating System scale for new construction or 4-star or 80 points for existing buildings)?	1
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9. SOCIAL EQUITY/FAIR SHARE

9.1.	BONUS: Does the project create affordable housing in a neighborhood or community whose residents are predominantly middle to upper income and/or meet a regional need?	1
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