

A Community Self-Assessment Tool

# THE VERMONT SMART GROWTH SCORECARD

A "WAY TO GROW!"™ publication from the Vermont Forum on Sprawl

# THE VERMONT SMART GROWTH SCORECARD

*prepared by*

The Vermont Forum on Sprawl

*with support from*

The Orton Family Foundation

and the John Merck Fund

“Way to Grow” is a series of publications by the Vermont Forum on Sprawl designed to help communities plan for growth. *The Vermont Smart Growth Scorecard* is the first in the series. Other publications will include *Growing Smarter: Best Site Planning for Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development* and *Better Bylaws, Better Communities*. For details, see Resources on page 15. Additional copies of this publication are available from the Vermont Forum on Sprawl at \$10.00 each.

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# INTRODUCING THE SMART GROWTH SCORECARD

Welcome! This unique tool has been prepared for communities' use by the Vermont Forum on Sprawl, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization devoted to preserving Vermont's unique landscape and quality of life while encouraging economic vitality in community centers. This project has been made possible by the Orton Institute, the educational arm of the Orton Family Foundation, as part of its Citizen Planner Program designed to assist communities in shaping their futures.

## 1. Why a Scorecard?

Our aim is to provide your community — whether it is small or large, rural or urban — with a simple, clear, usable means of assessing how well you are prepared for the pressures of growth.

Growth itself is neither positive nor negative; it is simply a process of change. Because Vermont is a state of uncommon beauty and strong, close communities — and because we are surrounded by millions of people, many of whom desire a better quality of life — it is inevitable that our communities will face pressures to change and grow. A key question for the future of our communities is whether the impacts of local change will be largely positive — what many now call **smart growth** — or mostly problematic. The troubling impacts of growth and development, so familiar to so many Americans, are often called **sprawl**.

## 2. What Is Sprawl? What's Smart Growth?

Sprawl is low-density development outside compact urban and village centers, along highways and in rural countryside.

In a recent poll of over 2,300 Vermonters conducted for the Vermont Forum on Sprawl (VFOS), 72% of those responding said growth and sprawl are not the same. Sixty-one percent saw a need for action to stop sprawl development.

Asked how they recognize sprawl, 88% of the Vermonters pointed to commercial development strung out in “strip” patterns along roads. Seventy-two percent cited single-family homes built on former farm fields.

Sprawl is this and more. The VFOS publication *What Is Sprawl in Vermont?, Exploring Sprawl #2*, identified these **telltale features of sprawl**:

**Large-lot developments. Low average densities**, especially outside town centers. **The need for a car** to meet basic needs. **Fragmented open space**, with wide gaps between development and **large paved areas**. **Separation of uses** into distinct areas.

Sprawl wastes land. It costs more than compact development; it limits choices in housing and transportation; and it can eat away at a community's vitality.

In short, sprawl tends to corrode or destroy those qualities we treasure most in Vermont: the beauty and productivity of our landscape, and the close-knit strength of our communities.

Subdivision of agricultural land into large residential lots.



In contrast, smart growth shapes change and development in ways that can strengthen our communities, while preserving open space and our working landscape.

Smart growth tends to:

- **preserve traditional settlement patterns**, with a higher-density community center (or centers) surrounded by mostly open space.
- **encourage mixed uses** and a diversity of businesses in compact centers.
- **offer a range of choices** for housing and transportation.
- **preserve working land** and important natural, and historic, resources.
- **involve citizens** and interest groups in deciding the community's future.

### 3. How Does Sprawl Happen? How Can We Encourage Smart Growth Instead?

Sprawl tends to sneak up on communities that are unprepared to shape growth in positive patterns. And it's a hard truth that developed areas tend to stay developed. That's why it is never too soon to take action — to gauge and begin changing your vulnerability to sprawl.

In any community that is pressed to grow, **a number of factors in combination** tend either to shape smart growth or to allow (even encourage) sprawl. Our focus here is on key decisions made by communities that will influence how they grow. For example, a town plan and a local zoning ordinance can either foster smart growth or encourage sprawl — often in ways that community leaders do not fully realize.

The vital first step is to **assess where you are now**. How do the key factors combine in your community? Which way do they point? If you want to work for smart growth, where should you start?

This is where the Smart Growth Scorecard can help. Our aim is not to be negative or critical, nor to place communities in competition for the “best score.” Instead, we hope this tool will help your community assess its readiness for growth in a realistic, specific, revealing way. We also hope that using this tool will help you engage the public in discussing and shaping your community's future.

### 4. How Does the Scorecard Work? Who Can Use It?

The Smart Growth Scorecard is a simple tool that can be used by different groups:

- by the Planning Commission, or other local officials, for their own guidance.
- by community leaders to prepare for public meetings or planning sessions.
- as a tool for public involvement in planning and decision-making.
- by members of the community, interest groups, and/or the media.

Here is a step-by-step guide:

- To keep the Scorecard pages clean for future use, we suggest that you make as many copies as you'll need of the scoresheet on page 13. Use this sheet, and/or invite others to use it, to note and tabulate answers.
- Work through Sections 1-8. To answer each question most accurately and usefully, check the TIPS for sources of information. Enter your choices on the scoring sheet.
- Add up your score for each individual section. You'll notice that the answers tending toward smart growth receive the most weight — so the higher your score, the better. Compare each section total to the scoring ranges shown at the bottom of that section, or on the scoresheet:
  - Smart Growth
  - In Transition
  - Needs Your Attention!
- Add up your total score. Compare this to the three overall scoring ranges shown on the scoresheet. Also enter your scoring range — SG, IT, or NYA! — for each section.

## 5. What Your Scores Can Tell You

In assessing your overall and section scores, we suggest you consider these basic messages:

**Smart Growth:** Scores in this category show that your community is heading in a positive direction. Even so, examine each section score to see where you may need to do more work.

**In Transition:** Your community could be going either way. To move in the smart-growth direction, look at your weaker section scores. Study individual results. What can you do to generate more 3s?

**Needs Your Attention!** This can be a wakeup call for your community. It is important, first, to analyze your results carefully. Second, focus on some key steps you can take as a community in the short term, while you're working on long-term planning and positive changes.

Again, this is a tool for community self-assessment. Because each Vermont community is unique in many ways, the Scorecard is not designed or intended as a basis for ranking or comparing communities.

## 6. What Next? Where to Go for Help?

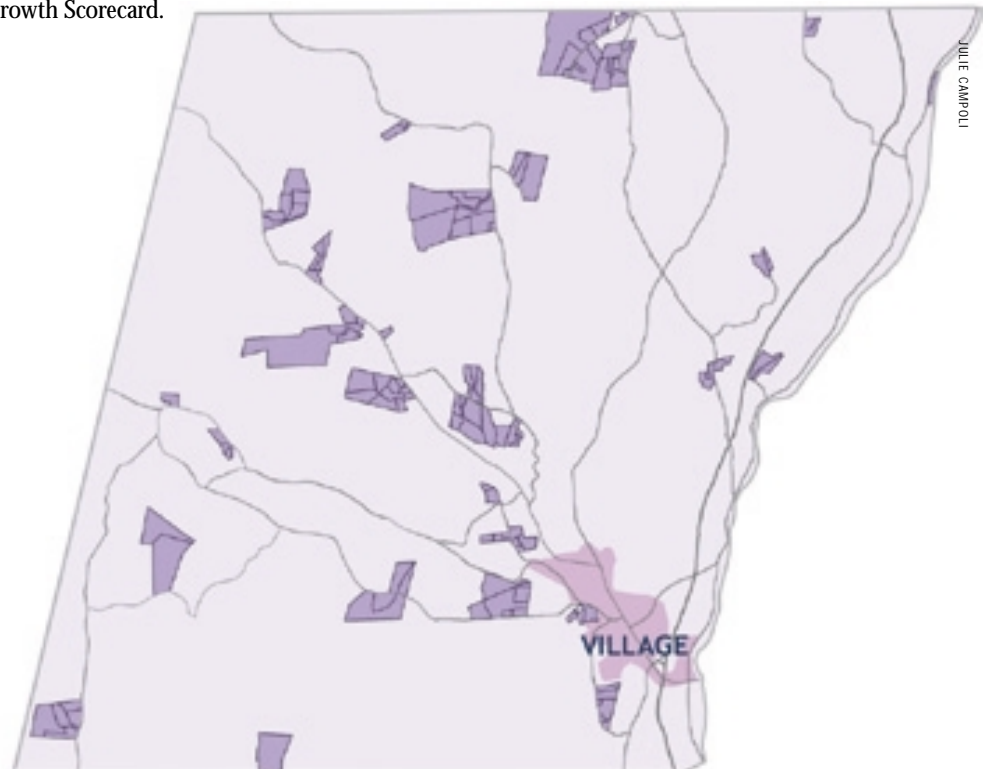
At the end of the Scorecard, please check out the section called More Resources. The tools, publications, and trainings described here can help your community continue moving toward smart growth.

Depending on your particular Scorecard results, you may also want to consult or meet with:

- Your local planning office or regional planning commission.
- Your local, regional, or statewide land trust.
- Local, regional, or statewide groups that focus on:
  - affordable housing
  - public transportation
  - historic preservation
  - supporting local business
  - recreational paths and other resources

New subdivisions spread outside a village in a rural community “in transition.”

Good luck! And now, the Smart Growth Scorecard.



**I Promote healthy communities by directing business and housing development toward compact, mixed-use centers, at a scale of growth that fits the community and the region.**

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**

Review town plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations

Check permit records, review parcel maps

Review sewer system policies

Look at aerial photos

- A. How visible is the edge of your town center (or centers, if your municipality has more than one)?**
- It is clearly visible.....  3
- The edge of the town center is still recognizable, but it has begun to blend with outlying development.....  2
- There is no distinction between the town center and outlying development.....  1
- B. Where is most commercial and industrial growth occurring?**
- Within the town center.....  3
- Both in and outside the town center.....  2
- Outside the town center, in strip patterns and/or large lots.....  1
- C. Where is most new residential growth occurring?**
- Mostly within the town center.....  3
- Partly within the town center and partly in outlying areas, often in clustered developments.....  2
- Mostly in areas outside the town center, on large lots.....  1
- D. Where are your town's public buildings, and where are they planned?**
- Most existing and planned public buildings are in the town center.....  3
- Most existing public buildings are in the town center, but some planned buildings are outside.....  2
- Most existing and planned public buildings are outside the town center.....  1
- E. How do sizes of newer lots in your town center — those created within the past 20 years — compare to the typical sizes of older lots in the same area?**
- Most newer lots in the town center are similar in size to, or smaller than, older lots in similar locations.....  3
- Lot sizes are a distinct mix. Some newer lots are similar to older lots, while some are larger.....  2
- Most newer lots are larger than older lots in similar locations.....  1
- F. Does your town plan include specific language that describes a desired pattern of development? If so, what does this language say?**
- Yes. The town plan describes a desired pattern of development that includes one or more compact centers, with primarily low-density cluster development in surrounding areas.....  3
- The town plan is not specific on the desired pattern of development.....  2
- The plan calls for growth throughout town; or there is no town plan.....  1
- G. Does local zoning define one or more compact town centers?**
- Yes.....  3
- We have defined a town center (or centers) — but it is not compact, and/or it extends in linear fashion along major roads.....  2
- No town center is defined.....  1
- H. Is there a distinct pattern to densities in local zoning — from higher densities in compact centers to lower densities in outlying areas?**
- Yes.....  3
- Yes, but zoning densities in town center districts are significantly lower than among older lots in the same locations. Outlying areas also have low densities.....  2
- No. Lot sizes are the same throughout all districts in the town; or they are mixed in size throughout all areas of town.....  1

- I. Where are commercial/industrial and residential uses located in relation to each other?
- The town center allows commercial, industrial, and residential uses. ....  3
  - We have mixed-use districts, but they are scattered around town. ....  2
  - No mixed uses are permitted. Commercial/industrial and residential uses are segregated. ....  1
- J. If your community provides public sewer and/or water, how are line extensions managed?
- The sewer and water service area is defined and consistent with the town center.  
Line extensions outside this area are prohibited. ....  3
  - The sewer and water service area is defined and consistent with the town center —  
but some line extensions are approved outside this area. ....  2
  - The sewer and water service area is not defined. ....  1
- K. What scale of commercial and industrial growth is permitted?
- We limit the size of new commercial and industrial buildings, to fit with the  
community's character and the local market. ....  3
  - We limit the size of new commercial/industrial buildings in the town center, but not outside. ....  2
  - We do not limit the size of buildings anywhere. ....  1



An old town center and a low density growth area in Morrystown, Vermont

Smart Growth .....	33-27
In Transition .....	26-33
Needs Your Attention! ....	17-11

Smart Growth Section I Score \_\_\_\_\_

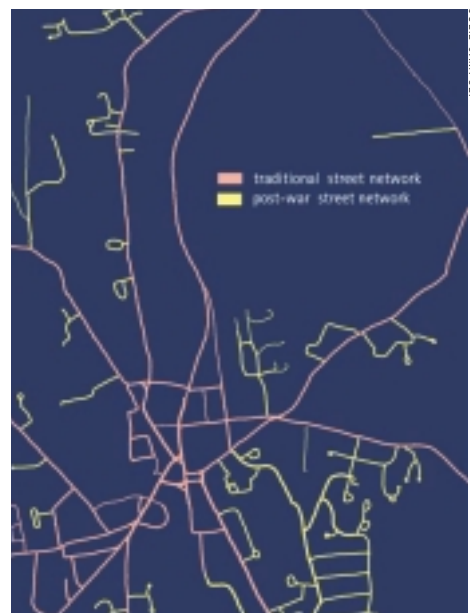
II

Provide for and encourage transportation options that harmonize with community goals for land use.

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**  
 Look at town road map  
 Review street design specifications  
 Contact regional transportation association; review maps of pedestrian/bikepaths

- A. Which of these options best describes the layout of local streets?
  - Streets are interconnected, in a clear pattern for getting around town. ....○ 3
  - The town center has a network of streets — but in outlying areas, streets are disconnected, with no clear pattern for getting around.....○ 2
  - Streets are disconnected, with no clear pattern for getting around.....○ 1
- B. How has your town planned for future streets?
  - We have a street network plan.....○ 3
  - We have begun working on a plan for future streets.....○ 2
  - We have no plan for future streets.....○ 1
- C. How does your town regulate the width of new streets?
  - Regulations allow different street widths, depending on the character of the area, the projected volume of traffic, and/or the desired speed of traffic. ....○ 3
  - Regulations allow some variation in street widths, but only under limited circumstances.....○ 2
  - No variation in the width of streets is permitted.....○ 1
- D. If public transportation is available to your town, is your town a member of the regional transportation association?
  - Yes.....○ 3
  - We are exploring this option.....○ 2
  - We could be a member, but we aren't.....○ 1
- E. What provisions has your town made for pedestrians and cyclists?
  - We have a good network of sidewalks and pedestrian/bike paths, interconnecting much of the town..○ 3
  - We have some sidewalks, and a plan for pedestrian/bike paths to connect specific areas of town. ....○ 2
  - We have only some limited sidewalks, and no plan for pedestrian/bike paths.....○ 1

Middlebury street network image showing old and new streets.



JULIE CAMPOLI

Smart Growth ..... 15-13  
 In Transition ..... 12-9  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 8-5

\_\_\_\_\_ Smart Growth Section II Score



# III

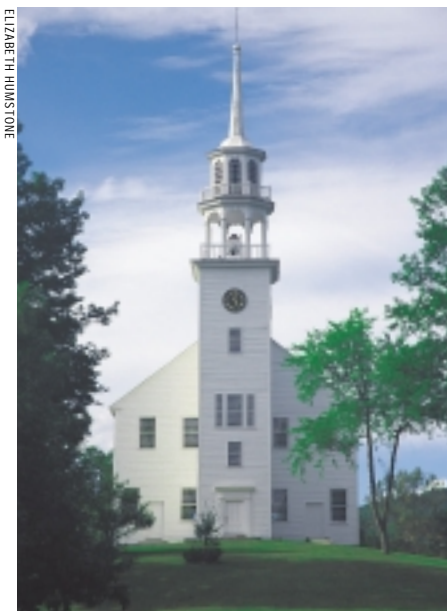
## Protect the environment and natural resources, and preserve important historic features.

- A. Which of these options best describes the condition of natural areas in town?**
- Good to excellent. Little or no degradation. ....  3
  - Fair. Limited degradation, extensive in some places. ....  2
  - Poor. Extensive degradation. ....  1
- B. What actions is your town taking to protect natural areas?**
- We have strong provisions to protect natural areas — including wetlands, wildlife habitat, and sites for rare plants — in site-plan review and/or subdivision regulations. ....  3
  - We have made provisions to protect some, but not all, natural areas in site-plan review and/or subdivision regulations. ....  2
  - We have made no provisions to protect natural areas in site-plan review or subdivision regulations. ....  1
- C. What local commissions and/or organizations are active in environmental protection or historic preservation?**
- There is an active conservation commission, a local land trust, **and** a historic preservation group. ....  3
  - There is a conservation commission, a local land trust, **or** a historic preservation group. ....  2
  - No local organizations are focused on environmental or historic protection. ....  1
- D. Which of these options best describes the conditions of historic buildings in your community?**
- Most are in use and well-maintained. ....  3
  - Most are in poor condition, but they are in use. ....  2
  - Most historic buildings are vacant or have been demolished. ....  1
- E. What actions is your town taking to protect historic buildings and other features?**
- We have defined a historic district, along with guidelines for development in it. ....  3
  - We have highlighted the importance of historic buildings and other features, but we have no specific measures to maintain or enhance them. ....  2
  - We have made little or no mention of historic buildings and features. ....  1

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**

Review town plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations

Consult local conservation commission, or local/regional environmental groups



ELIZABETH HUNSTONE

A historic church in South Strafford, Vermont

Smart Growth ..... 15-13  
 In Transition ..... 12-9  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 8-5

Smart Growth Section III Score \_\_\_\_\_

# IV Preserve public access to open spaces both formal and informal — parks, playgrounds, town greens, bodies of water, forests and mountains.

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**  
 Review town plan, zoning, subdivision regulations  
 Review parcel maps

- A. Do townspeople have easy walking access to public parks and playgrounds?**  
 Yes. Parks and playgrounds are available in all larger neighborhoods, and can easily be reached by walking from other parts of town. ....  3  
 We have some parks and playgrounds, but they cannot be easily reached by walking from all parts of town.....  2  
 No. We have very few parks and playgrounds. ....  1
- B. Do townspeople have local access to open space for hiking, hunting, fishing, etc.?**  
 Yes. Most large parcels of open space are either publicly owned, or privately owned but open to public use.....  3  
 Most large open parcels are privately owned, and some are open to public use.....  2  
 No. Most or all large open parcels are privately owned and closed to public use.....  1
- C. Has the town planned for future access to parks and open space?**  
 Yes. The town plan defines existing parks and open space, and has provisions for expanding them, acquiring more, and/or developing connections between them.....  3  
 Yes. The plan outlines the importance of parks and open spaces, but is not specific about how to acquire, improve, or retain them.....  2  
 No. ....  1
- D. How do local regulations provide for open space in new developments?**  
 New developments must conform to the town’s open-space plan, creating additional open space and connections to adjacent open spaces (either existing or planned, such as a planned park or recreation trail).....  3  
 Larger developments must provide open spaces, with access to them. But regulations do not give guidelines for types and locations of these open spaces. ....  2  
 There are no provisions for open space with new developments. ....  1

Hikers on a trail in Waterbury.



ELIZABETH HUNSTONE

Smart Growth ..... 12-11  
 In Transition ..... 10-7  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 6-4

\_\_\_\_\_ Smart Growth Section IV Score

**V Strengthen and protect farm and forest industries, minimizing conflicts between them and development.**

- A. Where is most development in town located?**  
 Within or close to the town center. ....  3  
 In outlying areas, but not on farmland. ....  2  
 In outlying areas, including farmland.....  1
- B. Do townspeople have local access to agricultural support businesses — veterinarians, seed and grain companies, etc.?**  
 Yes, there is a good local supply of support services. ....  3  
 There is a limited supply. ....  2  
 No. There are no local support services, or almost none. ....  1
- C. What strategies does your town plan have for protecting farmland?**  
 A comprehensive, specific set of strategies and policies.....  3  
 Some specific strategies.....  2  
 Vague or no strategies.....  1
- D. Does your town plan map the location of farms and prime agricultural soils?**  
 Yes.....  3  
 Yes, but in a vague or incomplete way. ....  2  
 No.....  1
- E. What densities of development does your zoning permit on farmland?**  
 Low densities, with provisions for small lots (as in clustering or fixed-base zoning), to protect farmland or forestland. ....  3  
 Low densities, but without provisions for small lots; or high densities.....  2  
 High densities, with no provisions to protect farmland or forestland.....  1
- F. How much conservation-easement and/or land-trust activity is occurring in your town?**  
 Over 20 percent of viable farmland or forestland is in conservation easements, and a land trust is active in town. ....  3  
 Conservation easement and/or land trust activity has begun. ....  2  
 There is no easement or land trust activity. ....  1
- G. Is there local support for farming and/or forestry through tax abatements, and/or a dedicated town fund to help purchase or protect prime working land?**  
 Yes — we offer tax abatements and/or a dedicated fund.....  3  
 We have, or are working on, a plan to offer tax abatements and/or a dedicated fund.....  2  
 No, we offer neither.....  1

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**  
 Review town plan, zoning, subdivision regulations  
 Review parcel maps  
 Contact local, regional, or statewide land trust  
 Consult town clerk on tax questions



A farm protected by conservation easements in Wheelock.

Smart Growth ..... 21-18  
 In Transition ..... 17-12  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 11-7

Smart Growth Section V Score \_\_\_\_\_

# VI Encourage the creation and renovation of housing to meet the full diversity of local and regional needs, especially in communities that are growing rapidly.

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**

- Review town plan, zoning, subdivision regulations
- Review parcel maps
- Contact local or regional affordable-housing group
- Contact town manager or community development director

- A. Which option best describes the mix of housing types in town?**
- We have a mix of housing types, including affordable housing, multi-family housing, apartments, and senior housing.....  3
  - We have a limited mix, including some affordable housing.....  2
  - We have very little diversity in housing, and very little affordable housing.....  1
- B. How has your town planned for future housing needs?**
- The town plan projects the amounts and types of local housing that will be needed over the next 20 years. We have outlined specific means for meeting those needs.....  3
  - The town plan includes a preliminary evaluation of future housing needs, but does not specify how to meet them.....  2
  - We have not discussed future housing needs. ....  1
- C. How do local regulations provide for meeting diverse housing needs?**
- New developments are required to include housing targeted at more than one segment of the market — for example, apartments along with single-family homes, or affordable homes along with market-rate housing.....  3
  - New developments have the option of including a mix of housing, but are not required to. ....  2
  - New developments are not required to include a mix of housing — and in most cases, they are prohibited from doing so by regulations.....  1
- D. Does the town work with an affordable housing group or groups active in your town or region?**
- Yes, we work actively with one or more local or regional affordable housing groups. ....  3
  - We have applied for or supported applications for state funding to provide affordable housing.....  2
  - We have worked to a limited degree with an affordable housing group. ....  1
  - We have never worked with an affordable-housing group; and/or there is no active group promoting affordable housing in town. ....  1

Affordable housing over stores in downtown Burlington developed by non-profit housing groups



Smart Growth ..... 12-11  
 In Transition ..... 10-7  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 6-4

\_\_\_\_\_ Smart Growth Section VI Score

## VII Support a diversity of businesses in community centers.

- A. Can townspeople meet most daily shopping needs — groceries, hardware, etc. — in town?**  
 Yes. We can meet everyday needs at a diversity of local businesses. ....  3  
 We can buy some goods in town, but must travel outside town for others. ....  2  
 No. We have to travel outside town to meet most everyday needs. ....  1
- B. How does your town support existing downtown business and attract new ones?**  
 We focus on attracting new businesses to the town center by providing public-financed improvements to the downtown business district — street and sidewalk repairs, parking areas, benches, street trees, etc. ....  3  
 We are working on a plan to attract a variety of businesses, and to improve the downtown business district, but we have not taken action. ....  2  
 We have had little or no discussion about attracting or supporting downtown businesses. ....  1
- C. How does local zoning encourage business development in the town center?**  
 It provides for a variety of businesses in the town center, including those that meet people's daily needs; and it offers regulatory incentives, such as reduced parking and setbacks. ....  3  
 Zoning encourages a mix of downtown business types — but regulations, such as lot size, setbacks and parking, make such a mix of development unlikely. ....  2  
 It does not encourage a mix of downtown business types — and regulations require lot sizes, setbacks, and parking provisions that can't be met in the town center. ....  1
- D. Are local groups active in promoting local business (or, if applicable, local farming and forestry)?**  
 A local business (and/or farming/forestry) group promotes local shopping and business, and recruits new enterprises. ....  3  
 There is a local business (and/or farming/forestry) group, but its activity is limited. ....  2  
 There is no local business (and/or farming/forestry) group. ....  1

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**

Review town plan and zoning



ELIZABETH HUNSTONE

Many small businesses on Bristol's main street.

Smart Growth ..... 12-11  
 In Transition ..... 10-7  
 Needs Your Attention! ..... 6-4

Smart Growth Section VII Score \_\_\_\_\_

**VIII** Develop goals and achieve strategies by building coalitions with community stakeholders, and by engaging the public in the search for smart-growth solutions.

**TIPS FOR ACCURATE SCORING:**  
 Answer from your own experience.

- A. How active is your community in planning?**  
 There are never vacancies on boards, and multiple applications create competition for slots. ....○ 3  
 There is good attendance at public meetings, and support for town initiatives. ....○ 2  
 There are no vacancies on boards right now, but it often takes effort to fill openings. Attendance is good at high-visibility meetings, but not so good for ongoing or general planning sessions.....○ 2  
 Board positions go vacant for months. Meetings are sparsely attended. ....○ 1
- B. To what extent was the public involved in developing the town plan?**  
 There was a lot of public involvement — committees, workshops, survey work, well-attended public meetings. ....○ 3  
 Some public meetings were well-attended, but overall there was not a lot of public involvement in developing the plan. ....○ 2  
 Only the required number of public meetings were held.....○ 1
- C. Are citizens active in community planning, development, and resource protection through other organizations?**  
 Yes. At least two of these groups are active in town: a community development organization, a downtown organization, a historical society, a community (or conservation) land trust, a conservation commission.....○ 3  
 At least one of the above groups is active in town.....○ 2  
 No. There is no local community development organization, downtown organization, historical society, community land trust, or conservation commission.....○ 1

Citizens celebrate their hard work to acquire a new park.



ELIZABETH HUMPHREYS

Smart Growth .....	9-8
In Transition .....	7-5
Needs Your Attention! .....	4-3

\_\_\_\_\_ Smart Growth Section VIII Score

# THE SMART GROWTH SCORECARD SCORESHEET

**Enter your answers (3, 2 or 1):**

**I. Compact Centers**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_ F. \_\_\_\_\_ G. \_\_\_\_\_ H. \_\_\_\_\_ I. \_\_\_\_\_ J. \_\_\_\_\_ K. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Transportation**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Natural and Historic Resources**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Open Spaces**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Farms & Forests**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_ F. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Housing**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**VII. Business Diversity**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**VIII. Public Involvement**

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Section Score \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_

THE SCORING RANGES	
Smart Growth .....	SG
In Transition .....	IT
Needs Your Attention! .....	NYA!

Section Score	SG	IT	NYA!
I. Compact Centers	33-27	26-18	17-11
II. Transportation	15-13	12-9	8-5
III. Natural Resources	15-13	12-9	8-5
IV. Open Spaces	12-11	10-7	6-4
V. Farms & Forests	21-18	17-12	11-7
VI. Housing	12-11	10-7	6-4
VII. Business Diversity	12-11	10-7	6-4
VIII. Public Involvement	9-8	7-5	4-3
Overall Score	129-102	101-71	70-43

# MORE RESOURCES

## From the Vermont Forum on Sprawl

Exploring Sprawl, a six-part series on sprawl research in Vermont:

1. *Vermonters' Attitudes on Sprawl*
2. *What is Sprawl in Vermont?*
3. *The Causes and Effects of Sprawl in Vermont Communities*
4. *The Impacts on Sprawl of State Investment and Policies*
5. *The Costs of Development: Downtown vs. Open Spaces*
6. *Economic, Social, and Land Use Trends Related to Sprawl in Vermont*

More in the "Way to Grow!" series:

### No. 2: Growing Smarter — Best Site Planning for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Development

In written and graphic form, this handbook offers examples of good site development in urban, suburban, and rural settings. It also sets out a process designed to reward developers of projects that adhere to best-development practices with a faster, easier, more predictable permitting process.

**Project partners:** The Champlain Initiative, Preservation Trust of Vt., Vt. Planners Association, Vt. Natural Resources Council, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, and representatives from the fields of real estate, home building, landscape architecture, and architecture.

**Education partner:** The Orton Institute

**Available in:** end of 2000.

### No. 3: *Better Bylaws, Better Communities*, a guidebook on smart-growth regulations.

This guidebook, co-authored by the Vermont Forum on Sprawl and the Conservation Law Foundation, provides standards for regulations that reinforce smart-growth principles in town centers, suburban settings, and rural communities. It contains examples of good zoning, ideas on how to get certain provisions accepted, and the techniques for applying standards.

**Project partner:** The Conservation Law Foundation.

**Education partner:** The Orton Institute

**Available in:** early 2001.

### No. 4: *How to Determine Your Town's Infill Potential*.

This report describes how to find and identify the room for growth in your town center (or centers). Often, communities are unaware of the places where they could expand without sprawl — such as, for example, by filling in vacant land and parking lots, renovating empty buildings, or increasing the number of floors in buildings.

**Project partner:** The University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program.

**Available in:** end of 2000.

### No. 5: *New Models for Compact Commercial and Industrial Development*

Designed to counter today's trends toward strip commercial development and spread-out, isolated industrial lots, these new models reflect smart-growth principles and reinforce Vermont's state policy of compact settlements surrounded by rural countryside.

The models are developed for four settings:

- urban and village centers
- older, vacant and/or underused industrial areas near downtowns and village centers
- new growth centers
- older, vacant and underused industrial areas.

**Project partner:** The Vermont Business Roundtable.

**Available in:** 2001.



## From the Orton Family Foundation

### A. *CommunityViz*

This groundbreaking tool will enable communities to use direct, visual means of exploring future development. Using the CommunityViz software, citizens and community leaders will be able to build different development scenarios and then compare them from visual and economic perspectives. This tool will enhance long-term planning in a way that is accessible to all citizens. For more info, visit

**www.orton.org.**

**Available in:** 2001.

### B. *The Orton Institute Community Mapping Program*

This Orton Institute program, currently offered in 7th-9th grades in Vermont and Colorado, brings teachers, students, and community members together as they employ an interdisciplinary approach to studying a significant local resource. Along with satisfying school content standards, the semester-long program provides the community with an in-depth narrative and a high-quality geographic information systems (GIS) map, for future planning purposes.

To learn more, visit **www.ortoninstitute.org**.

**Available:** now

### C. *Community Video*

This tool brings a community together to explore its past, present, and future as seen through the eyes of its residents, and as portrayed in video form. Currently being developed into model form, the technique of using video to inform and inspire discussion helps to boost citizen involvement in shaping a communities future. Videos have been shot in four communities in Vermont, and one in Colorado. To learn more, visit **www.orton.org**.

**Model available in:** 2001.

### D. *Hands on the Land*

This rich, beautiful book reveals the history of Vermont's landscape from glacial times to today. It thoroughly explores the influences that have shaped our lives and landscapes — and it can help communities choose their future paths. The Orton Institute is currently developing curricula for schools based on the book, and will be offering a discussion series around Vermont in the winter and spring of 2001. To learn more, visit **www.orton.org**.

**Available:** Book is available now; curriculum and discussion series will be available in 2001.

### E. *Change and Challenge*

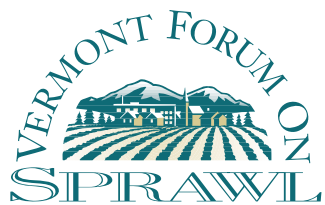
The Orton Family Foundation has produced a 50-minute video (also broken into 3 shorter, distinct sections) that looks at development in Vermont over the years. This video can be used in the classroom or by communities as a discussion piece. To learn more, visit **www.orton.org**.

**Available:** Now.

### F. *The Orton Institute Citizen Planner Program*

The Orton Institute through its Citizen Planner Program is offering educational workshops on subjects relevant to Vermont communities. Workshops have focused on enhancing public discourse and decisions at the local level, and on addressing the growth of home-based businesses that information technology is bringing to rural communities. Additional planned education programs, some developed in partnership with the Vermont Forum on Sprawl, will focus on settlement patterns. To learn more, visit **www.ortoninstitute.org**.

**Available:** now



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