COMMUNITY GOALS SCORECARD

ABOUT THIS SCORECARD

Why Should You Use the Scorecard?

This scorecard is as much a conceptual model as it is a practical tool. Scores do not matter - it should only be used as a way to gauge what your community is currently doing well, and identify the areas where improvements can be made. This process should be viewed as a way to help communities evaluate how existing policies and regulations facilitate developing in a way that supports their economic, environmental and community goals. As a result, some of the questions in this survey may require a look at local planning documents and/or the zoning ordinance; others can be answered by observation. It may also be necessary to speak directly with your local planning and zoning office.

When Should You Use the Scorecard?

This scorecard can be used at the beginning stages of a planning process to help assess how well existing regulations help to implement the community's goals. Once this baseline assessment is completed, you should be able to identify priority areas where changes can be made.

Who Should Use the Scorecard?

- Planners
- Elected/Appointed Officials
- Citizens
- Anyone involved or interested in development decisions in the community

GENERAL SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES:

1. **Mix Land Uses**
2. **Take Advantage of Compact Building Design**
3. **Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices**
4. **Create Walkable Communities**
5. **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place**
6. **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas**
7. **Strengthen and Direct Development Toward Existing Communities**
8. **Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices**
9. **Make Development Decisions, Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective**
10. **Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions**

DIRECTIONS:

The scorecard is broken up into ten sections, one for each of the 10 principles above plus a section to establish a general planning profile of the community. Read through the sections and circle the best answer for each measurement listed. The measurements are weighted differently so that the maximum score for each measurement reflects its importance to a community's goals. Keep in mind that you may choose to weigh the measurements differently depending on their importance to your community. To calculate the score, multiply the points for a given answer by the measurement's weight and enter it into the score column. Add up the scores for each measurement and write that number (subtotal) in the space provided. Compare each section's number to the scoring ranges shown at the bottom of the section: Looking Good, In Transition, or Needs Attention.

How do you Use the Scores?

The final number does not matter; the score should simply be used as a gauge to determine those areas where your community is doing well in terms of implementing alternative development patterns, and areas where improvements can be made. In terms of the range of scores, consider the following ideas:

"Looking Good": if your score falls within this range, it shows that your community has already taken steps towards changing policies/regulations that foster conventional development. Even though improvements can still be made within this category, it might be useful to concentrate on other areas.

"In Transition": if your score falls within this range, it seems like your community is moving in a positive direction, although improvements can still be made. Identify the "effortless opportunities" that can keep the momentum towards change – what changes can be made with the fewest resources that can keep your community moving in this direction?

"Needs Your Attention": if your score falls within this range for certain sections, this identifies key areas where your community can make positive changes. First, carefully examine the results of the score to determine the specific areas that need improvements. Second, go through a process to identify the next steps that can be successfully taken towards moving your community towards managing growth in sustainable ways.

I. COMMUNITY PLANNING PROFILE; ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION IN PLANNING PROCESS:

A snapshot of your community's land use plans and development processes. This helps to get a sense of municipal commitment to land use planning in general, as well as municipal sophistication about land-use issues.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Comprehensive Plan is current; it is thoroughly examined, revised, and amended at least every 6 years.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Community has a designated center (a defined area intended to accommodate growth).	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community actively engages the public in its planning activities.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	

Section I Score
Looking Good **5**
In Transition **3-4**
Needs Your Attention! **0-2**

Subtotal	

II. MIX OF USES:

Creates a vibrant community where places to work, shop, live and play are integrated. This includes provision for maintaining working waterfronts within coastal communities.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Most daily shopping and service needs can be met in a central location or business district, without the use of a car to get between shops and services.	All needs met Some needs met No needs met	2 1 0	X 2	
Zoning code allows and encourages mixed-use development (commercial and residential uses in the same building and/or district), especially in a Community center.	Required Encouraged Allowed Not mentioned	3 2 1 0	X 2	
Local parking regulations support smart growth by allowing shared parking, credit for parking provided off-site, reduced parking requirements for mixed-use development and credit for on-street parking.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community has a Special Improvement District or economic development plan to attract new businesses and housing options to a city center.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community has provisions to protect working waterfronts and traditional vocations, such as tax incentives for water dependent uses, "Right to Fish" ordinance to establish prior rights, etc.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	

Section II Score
Looking Good 10-13
In Transition 5-9
Needs Your Attention! 0-4

Subtotal [ ]

III. COMPACT BUILDING DESIGN:

Build with smaller footprint on the land in order to preserve critical natural areas.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Zoning regulations have minimum density requirements where applicable.	Yes No	1 0	X1	
Zoning regulations allow (and encourage) clustering development in order to preserve natural areas and open space.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Zoning regulations do not contain minimum parking standards, or they allow shared parking.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Regulations allow smaller street widths, depending on the character of the area, traffic volume, and speed of traffic.	Yes No	1 0	X2	

Section III Score
Looking Good 5-6
In Transition 3-4
Needs Your Attention! 0-2

Subtotal [ ]

IV. RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS:

This principle offers a range of housing types and sizes. It also strives to increase the choices available to households of all income levels, which is especially important in coastal communities in order to support the local workforce.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Zoning allows for a mix of housing types (not separated into single-use districts), including single-family homes, affordable housing, multi-family housing, apartments, and senior homes.	A good mix Limited mix No mix	2 1 0	X 1	**Score**
Community encourages affordable housing as a fixed percent (at least 10%) of new development.	Required Encouraged Not Mentioned	2 1 0	**Weight** X 1	
Community has an affordable housing strategy that includes inclusionary zoning, new construction and rehabilitation programs for low- and moderate-income households. *(Inclusionary Zoning refers to the allowance of lot sizes [usually greater than 8 dwelling units/acre] that make the provision of affordable units by private developers feasible.)*	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Affordable housing opportunities are distributed throughout the community, integrated into market-rate communities.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community has planned for future housing needs (amount and types of housing such as seasonal housing or "age in place") and has outlined specific methods for meeting those needs.	Yes No	1 0	X2	

Section IV Score
Looking Good 8-9
In Transition 4-7
Needs Your Attention! 0-3

Subtotal	

V. WALKABLE, SAFE, DESIGNED FOR PERSONAL INTERACTION, AND PROVIDES PUBLIC ACCESS TO WATER:

Designed for the human, rather than for the automobile. Helps to reduce traffic and create places with increased potential for social interaction, walking and sense of community. Also protects public access to water.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Community has a good network of sidewalks and safe pedestrian/bike paths, interconnecting the town.	Yes No	1 0	X 3	**Answer**
Zoning requires buildings to be close enough to each other to encourage walking and pedestrian activity (Average residential density greater than 8 dwelling units per acre; commercial floor area ratio (FAR) exceeding 1.0).	Yes No	1 0	X 3	
Community is designed with the pedestrian in mind; curb cuts favoring vehicular access are minimized, parking lots in the front of buildings are avoided and there are many crosswalks.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
The majority of parking for commercial, retail, and civic uses is required to be located to the rear of buildings.	Yes No	1 0	X1	
Community has taken steps to protect and preserve public access to water (through easements, access inventory, viewshed ordinance, etc.)	Yes No	1 0	X1	

Section V Score
Looking Good 9-10
In Transition 5-8
Needs Your Attention! 0-4

Subtotal	

VI. FOSTER DISTINCTIVE, ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES, WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE:

Growth is in keeping with the local architecture, especially if in historically significant area. This principle helps to enhance the overall quality and values of the community. It also protects and enhances the community's character and desirability as a place to live, work, shop and recreate.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Zoning has specific design guidelines, including graphic images, to ensure new development is in keeping with coastal community character, especially in historic districts.	Yes No	1 0	X 3	**Score**
Community has a historic district and/or historic preservation commission to protect important structures.	Both Commission None	2 1 0	X 2	
Community has pedestrian-friendly amenities such as benches, lighting, street trees and trash cans, as well as windows at street level.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community has clean, well-lit community spaces such as public plazas, squares, parks, etc.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	

Section VI Score
Looking Good **8-9**
In Transition **4-7**
Needs Your Attention! **0-3**

Subtotal

VII. PROTECTS OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, AND CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS:

Benefits the general public as it spares watersheds, protects water quality, scenic vistas, and agricultural areas needed for drinking water, farm, and tourism revenues and strong quality of life.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Community has plans to ensure future access to parks, open space, and coastal resources.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	**Answer**
Community has regulations that steer development away from unsuitable land, including (if applicable) steep slopes greater than 20%, floodplains, stream corridors, aquifers and aquifer recharge areas (protect water quality).	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Community has adopted an open space plan to strategically identify and preserve open lands, including public parks and recreation areas, farms, natural habitats and forests.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Community has an active Environmental Commission.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community has tools available to protect farmland, open space, and riparian buffers (Transfer of development rights, cluster zoning, tax abatements, dedicated funds to purchase).	Yes No	1 0	X3	

Section VII Score
Looking Good **8-10**
In Transition **4-7**
Needs Your Attention! **0-3**

Subtotal

VIII. NEAR EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

Makes the most of limited public resources and builds on public investments already made by encouraging new development where infrastructure and services already exist. Creates opportunity for infill or redevelopment of under-utilized, abandoned and brownfield sites.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Community has identified service areas for public water and sewer adjacent only to existing Community center(s). No new development is allowed outside service area.	Yes / No	1 / 0	X 2	**Score**
New development is occurring within 1/2 mile (walking distance) of existing development in a community center (Community centers are compact, walkable places intended to accommodate growth and include a variety of community services, employment, and shopping, housing and public spaces).	Yes / No	1 / 0	**Weight** X 4	
Public facilities (schools, libraries, etc.) are located centrally, within walking distance for most users.	Yes / No	1 / 0	X 4	
Community has looked into the capacity of its infrastructure and environment to accept new growth (carrying capacity analysis, build-out analysis).	Yes / No	1 / 0	X2	
Community has redeveloped, or has plans to redevelop vacant, under-utilized, and/or brownfield properties.	Yes / No	1 / 0	X 2	
Community has assistance available to redevelop brownfields (financial, pre-permitting, etc.).	Yes / No	1 / 0	X 2	
Community's comprehensive plan has specific language that describes a desired pattern of development.	Compact Center w/ lower density as you move outward / Plan is not specific on desired pattern of development, or no comp plan	1 / 0	X2	
Zoning encourages business development – especially those that meet businesses' and residents' daily needs – in the town center by offering regulatory incentives such as reduced parking, setbacks, and/or by offering public-financed improvements such as street and sidewalk repairs, street trees, etc.	Yes / No	1 / 0	X2	

Section VIII Score
Looking Good **15-20**
In Transition **7-14**
Needs Your Attention! **0-6**

Subtotal [ ]

IX. ENCOURAGE MULTIPLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES:

Maximizes use of existing transit service (if it exists) and encourages other transportation options in order to decrease dependency on the automobile, thereby reducing traffic and encouraging walkability.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
Community encourages multiple modes of transportation, as evidenced by on-street parking, bike lanes, sidewalks and frequent crosswalks in the community.	Yes No	1 0	X3	
Community has convenient access to public transit (bus, rail).	Yes No	1 0	X2	
Community has a recent circulation plan element as part of its Comprehensive Plan.	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Zoning encourages more compact, higher-density development within 1/2 mile of transit stops (bus, train, shuttle, etc.).	Yes No	1 0	X 2	
Streets within the community are interconnected, in a clear pattern for getting around, with few cul-de-sacs or dead end streets that encumber traffic flow.	Yes No	1 0	X 3	
Circulation plan with multiple transportation options must be considered in all new development proposals, and implemented when applicable.	Yes No	1 0	X2	
Community encourages and preserves waterborne transportation options (Provide access and/or tax incentives for shore to shore ferry, tour boat).	Yes No	1 0	X1	

Section IX Score
Looking Good **13-15**
In Transition **5-12**
Needs Your Attention! **0-4**

Subtotal	

X. MAKE DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS PREDICTABLE, FAIR, AND COST EFFECTIVE:

This principle allows developers to know the process and resources required ahead of time to propose a development project. It also allows other members of the community to know the process by which the development decisions are made by elected and appointed officials.

Measurement	Answer	Points	Weight	Score
An up-to-date, printed guide regarding the regulatory framework and procedures a citizen, developer, etc. is required to go through is available.	Yes No	1 0	X 3	
The Community budgets funds for professional development opportunities such as training and conferences for Board members and other personnel involved in the planning process.	Yes No	1 0	X 1	
Community contains a mechanism for communication and coordination with utility providers regarding growth and development issues.	Yes No	1 0	X2	

Section X Score
Looking Good **5-6**
In Transition **3-4**
Needs Your Attention! **0-2**

FINAL CALCULATIONS:

1. Starting with Table I below, enter the subtotals for each section into the column "Section Scores".
2. Using Table 2, examine each section score to see where it falls on the scale (LG, IT, or NYA). Write this in Column 2.
3. Add all of the section scores together to determine what the total score is.

Coastal Community Planning & Development Training
Once the calculations are complete, take a look at the areas in need of improvement. Does the community score well in terms of efficient use of infrastructure, but poorly in terms of providing access to public transit and other choices for getting around? Are the building design standards in keeping with the local architectural style, but inaccessible to pedestrian traffic? Making determinations of this nature, and asking the right questions will help guide planning and new development in the right direction.

Table 1

Criteria	Column 1 Section Scores	Column 2 LG, IT, NYA
I. Municipal planning profile/Encourage collaboration		
II. Mix of uses		
III. Encourage compact development		
IV. Range of housing options		
V. Walkable, designed for personal interaction		
VI. Respectful of community character, design and historic features		
VII. Protects open space, farmland and critical environmental areas		
VIII. Near existing development and infrastructure		
IX. Provides choices for getting around		
X. Make development decisions, predictable, fair, and cost effective		
TOTAL SCORE		

LG = Looking Good
IT = In Transition
NYA = Needs Your Attention

Table 2

Section Score	LG	IT	NYA
I. Municipal planning profile/Encourage collaboration	5	3-4	0-2
II. Mix of uses	10-13	5-9	0-4
III. Encourage compact development	5-6	3-4	0-2
IV. Range of housing options	8-9	4-7	0-3
V. Walkable, designed for personal interaction	9-10	5-8	0-4
VI. Respectful of community character, design and historic features	8-9	4-7	0-3
VII. Protects open space, farmland and critical environmental areas	8-10	4-7	0-3
VIII. Near existing development and infrastructure	15-20	7-14	0-6
IX. Provides choices for getting around	13-15	5-12	0-4
X. Make development decisions, predictable, fair, and cost effective	5-6	3-4	0-2
Overall Score	85-104	45-84	0-44

How do you Use the Scores?

The final number does not matter; the score should simply be used as a gauge to determine those areas where your community is doing well in terms of implementing alternative development patterns, and areas where improvements can be made. In terms of the range of scores, consider the following ideas:

 "Looking Good": if your score falls within this range, it shows that your community has already taken steps towards changing their methods of conventional development. Even though improvements can still be made within this category, it might be useful to concentrate on other areas to change.

"In Transition": if your score falls within this range, it seems like your community is moving in a positive direction, although improvements can still be made. Identify the "low hanging fruits" that can keep the momentum towards change – what changes can be made with a few amount of resources that can keep your community moving in this direction?

"Needs Your Attention": if your score falls within this range for certain sections, this identifies key areas where your community can make positive changes. First, carefully examine the results of the score to determine the specific areas that need improvements. Second, go through a process to identify the next steps that can be successfully taken towards moving your community towards managing growth in sustainable ways.

This scorecard was created using information from the following scorecards:
- New Jersey Future – Smart Growth Scorecard for Municipal Review
- Vermont Forum on Sprawl – The Vermont Smart Growth Scorecard: A Community Assessment Tool
- Eco-City Cleveland Smart Growth Tool
- SEMasschussetts.org: Vision 2020: A Partnership for Southeastern Massachusetts