

EPA To Recognize Well-Planned Communities

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Written by [Aaron Lande](#)

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced the opening of the nomination period for its [10th Annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement](#). This award allows EPA to recognize and support communities that use innovative policies and strategies to strengthen their economies, provide housing and transportation choices, develop in ways that bring benefits to a wide range of residents, and protect the environment. Is it just me, or could that description be applied to [LEED for Neighborhood Development](#) communities as well?

The award is open to public- and private-sector entities, though all applications must include a public-sector partner. Applications can be submitted in one of four categories:

Programs, Policies and Regulations: Recognizing regulatory and policy initiatives that support the principles of smart growth, especially actions that remove barriers to or provide incentives for smart growth.

Smart Growth and Green Building: Recognizing development, in either single or multiple buildings, that combines smart growth and green building approaches as building design and materials are integrated with land use and location efficiency.

Civic Places: Recognizing projects in the public realm that improve a community's sense of place while adding environmental and economic benefits. EPA is particularly interested in projects that create well-designed and vibrant public spaces.

Rural Smart Growth: Recognizing communities that preserve and encourage rural economies and character. EPA is interested in thriving rural areas that have used smart growth approaches to encourage economic development and job creation, improve transportation choices and housing options, and support the economic viability of working lands.

Applications are due Apr. 6, 2011.

To give a sense of what the EPA is looking for, here are last year's winners:

Overall Excellence in Smart Growth: Smart.Growth@NYC: [Policies and Programs for Improving Livability in New York City](#) — New York City Department of Transportation with the Departments of Health, Design and Construction, and City Planning

Smart Growth and Green Building: [Miller's Court](#) — Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development, Seawall Development Company, Hamel Builders, and Marks, Thomas Architects

Programs, Policies, and Regulations: Making the Greatest Place: Metro's Strategic Implementation of the [2040 Growth Concept](#) — Metro, Portland, Oregon

Rural Smart Growth: [Gateway 1 Corridor Action Plan](#) — Gateway 1 Communities and Maine Department of Transportation

Civic Places: [Mint Plaza](#) — City and County of San Francisco, Martin Building Company, CMG Landscape Architects, and Sherwood Design Engineers

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