



Smart Growth Gets a New Look

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The growth paradigm for the last fifty years in the US (and many other parts of the world), which accelerated in the 1990s has been away from cities and more in the suburban and exurban areas outside of major metropolitan areas. While large US cities have rebounded from their nadir in the 1970s and 1980s era of white flight, homelessness, drugs and crime, much of the infrastructure investment has been made toward developing auto-centric development instead of walkable mixed use zoned areas along mass transit corridors. I've long thought that good urban planning and mixed use zoning is a large part of the answer to dealing with our dependence on automobiles/oil as well as having many social, public safety and environmental benefits.

Now that \$4 gas is here and looks like it might be a short stop before \$5-\$10 gas, Smart Growth is getting more attention as the best method to maintain a high standard of living and promote economic growth.

So let's take a look at some videos from around the country on what's happening on the Smart Growth or Transit Oriented Development front to reduce out dependence on automobiles.

Starting in my backyard, here's Public Service Announcement from Vision Long Island, trying to stimulate debate on reorienting local priorities away from auto-based development and toward walkable mixed use towns around mass transit corridors like the LIRR and the emerging Long Island bus system.

Here's a short 2 minute spot explaining why the American Planning Association (APA) gave

Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes their 2007 Award to her for revitalizing Smart Growth in downtown Kansas City.

And finally, here's a look at Sacramento's strategy of using infill development to manage it's growth.

The Wall Street Journal [picked-up this story today.](#)

Gasoline was less than \$2 a gallon when Mike McKeever brought his gospel of bikes, light rail and tightly packed neighborhoods to this state synonymous with cars, freeways and suburban sprawl. "The development industry was very concerned," says Mr. McKeever, head of Sacramento's regional planning agency. "The environmental community was openly negative," concerned that it was "just more talk, talk." Seven years later, with gasoline hurtling past \$4 a gallon, Sacramento has become one of the nation's most-watched experiments in whether urban planning can help solve everything from high fuel prices to the housing bust to global warming. "They're really

the model," says Steve Winkelman, a transportation expert at the Center for Clean Air Policy.

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