WHAT DO WE MEAN BY
Smart Growth?

As the Upstate's population increases, it is up to local governments, stakeholders, and citizens to drive smart and balanced growth so that all residents have the opportunity to thrive. Here are 10 core principles of smart growth and how our communities can benefit from embracing them. Visit **upstateforever.org/smart-growth** to learn more.

Embrace mixed land use, the practice of placing a combination of residential, commercial, and recreational properties within close proximity. This is critical to the development of healthy, vibrant, and equitable communities.

Take advantage of compact building design. The Upstate's current sprawling growth pattern is not fiscally or environmentally sustainable. Building with a smaller footprint — growing up rather than out — preserves more greenspace, protects water resources, supports a wider variety of transportation choices, and leads to lower infrastructure costs.

Create a range of housing opportunities & types. Local communities are abundant with single-family homes and clusters of high-density apartments. Housing types that fall somewhere between these two are often called the "missing middle." Missing middle housing can satisfy demand for walkable urban living while simultaneously providing product types that are more affordable by design.

Create walkable neighborhoods within a reasonable distance (approximately 1/4 mile) of a variety of amenities within a network of streets designed to make walking practical, safe, and convenient.

Foster distinct communities with a strong sense of place. Smart growth encourages planners to craft a vision of a unique community, set standards for development that respect and reflect the values and cultures of the people who call them home, and foster physical environments that support a more cohesive community fabric.

Preserve open space. Protecting undeveloped land helps people, wildlife, and even economies thrive. It's important to prioritize greenspace protection not only in rural areas, but urban as well.

Direct development toward existing communities. Infill and redevelopment in existing communities is a smart way to mitigate sprawl, especially when implemented with an eye toward improving the quality of life for existing and new residents.

Provide a variety of transportation choices. Successful planning for the Upstate must couple a multi-modal approach — embracing diverse transportation options like walking, bicycling, public transit, and driving — with supportive development patterns to create a variety of transportation options for all residents.

Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective. Local governments can help make it easier for private investors and developers to create compact, mixed-use development and missing middle housing types.

Encourage community & stakeholder collaboration. The needs of every growing community — and the developments necessary to address those needs — are best defined by the people who live, work, and play there. Opportunities for citizens to provide feedback through public meetings and workshops help pave the way for equitable development.

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