

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION**

A national, nonprofit, membership organization  
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*Note for reporters: During the event, please check in at the conference registration desk in the Grande Ballroom foyer of the Sheraton San Diego Hotel (1380 Harbor Island Dr.) to obtain a media credential.*

## **The Story of Smart Growth in San Diego**

### ***Leading planning and development experts converge on San Diego this week***

What's so special about San Diego?

More than 1,350 local officials, community leaders and professionals in many disciplines from across the country will get a close look at what the San Diego region is doing to tackle the economic, environmental and social challenges of creating more livable communities when they converge on San Diego this week for the 11th annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference – the largest and most comprehensive smart growth/sustainable communities conference held in the U.S.

"San Diego is one of the most livable and sustainable major metropolitan areas in the nation. The region is an innovative pioneer in the smart growth movement, and provides inspiring models for creating transit-oriented, compact development; transforming downtowns and ethnically diverse, older neighborhoods; designing walkable, mixed-use urban villages; and fostering the emergence of leading high-tech, telecommunications and clean-tech businesses," said Judy Corbett, executive director of the Local Government Commission, which is organizing the conference that event runs February 2-4 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina.

One session should be of particular interest – **"The Evolution of Smart Growth – The San Diego Story"** (Saturday, 10:15-12:15). Like many areas, the San Diego region has an intertwined history of local, regional and non-profit planning with a growing emphasis on smart growth. Last year, the region became the first in California to update its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) under state mandates for climate protection and carbon emission reductions. The 2050 RTP and its Sustainable Communities Strategy was largely based upon San Diego's Regional Comprehensive Plan and local land use plans, which have increasingly focused on smart growth and sustainability.

As an example of its smart growth leadership, San Diego recently won the American Planning Association's prestigious Daniel Burnham Award for Comprehensive Planning in 2010 for its innovative General Plan update.

San Diego has a long history of implementing smart growth approaches to development, beginning with the re-introduction of light rail, the growth management movement of the 1980s, the multiple-species habitat planning of the 1990s, and a focus on redevelopment and quality infill in the late 1990s and 2000s. Each movement built upon prior efforts.

This evolution of smart growth planning is still unfolding. Come find out about San Diego's efforts to include more ethnic diversity and stakeholders in future land use planning, how non-profits have influenced the planning landscape, and about the major decisions, coalitions and politics of each phase.

The distinguished panelists, moderated by former San Diego City Architect Michael Stepner, and currently a professor at the NewSchool of Architecture and Design, include William Anderson, former San Diego Planning Director and Ken Sulzer, former executive director of SANDAG, San Diego's regional planning agency, among others.

The conference will also take a focused look at the economic implications of and best practices for development around San Diego transit stations during sessions on **"Emerging Practices and Policies in Transit-Oriented Development"** (Friday, 3:30) and **"Linking Jobs, Housing and Transit for Economic Development"** (Saturday, 10:15).

San Diego smart growth goes international during a Thursday afternoon session (3:45-5:15) on **"Smart Growth Catalysts and the Battle for Planning in the San Diego/Tijuana Region."** Panelists will explore how non-government organizations – "smart growth catalysts" – can influence sustainability planning that supports local programs and helps integrate both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border to address sustainability issues for the environment, economics, land use and social equity.

Dozens of local officials, community leaders, planners and advocates from the San Diego region will also be speaking in other sessions throughout the three-day program.

**San Diego smart-growth tours:** On Thursday (Feb. 2), the conference is offering nine tours of local model projects, featuring urban infill and community renaissance on Main Street and in Little Italy; suburban transit-oriented development retrofits; exemplary complete streets; smart growth and affordable housing; climate change implications for San Diego Bay communities and habitats; and innovative efforts focused on public art, parks and access to healthy food. On Sunday morning (Feb. 5), three more tours will walk through downtown streetscapes and public spaces, pedal around using public bike options, and dig into the benefits of community gardens in underserved communities.

For more details about the conference agenda, sponsors and special features: [NewPartners.org](http://NewPartners.org)

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