Facing the Critics: Tools and Trainings to Successfully Counter Smart Growth Opponents

Ilana Preuss
Vice President & Chief of Staff
Positive Messages that Connect

• Tell the Story – the Heart of a Community

• Use Tested Language to Reach Your Target Audience

• Focus people on the economy – make the case
Tell the story of what makes a place great
Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools.

These strategies support thriving local economies and protect the environment.
Q: Now we would like to ask you some questions about the issues our nation is facing today. How much of a priority do you think each of the following issues should be to our elected officials?

## National Priorities for our Elected Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Priorities (60%+)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care costs</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal deficit</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Americans want the government to “stop spending money it doesn’t have” and “use the money it has more effectively.”
Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much.

Rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.
Making great places is key to turning around our economy
Smart growth places are in high demand!

People and businesses are moving there.
Young professionals
Adopted by:

Pikes Peak Volkswagen Club
Suburban Office Markets Trail Downtown Rivals

By A.D. Pruitt

Mack-Cali Realty Corp., one of New Jersey's largest commercial landlords, for example, saw its occupancy fall to 89.1% at the end of 2010 from 90.1% a year earlier.

---

Zappos CEO envisions a new community downtown

Thursday, March 17, 2011

---

Blue Cross has moved 3,000 workers to downtown Detroit offices

Jul 14, 2011 | Comments | Recommend | Tweet | 2
Smart growth strategies cost government less
Per Acre Cost of Roads and Water Lines

- In Town: $45,000
- In Suburb: $125,000
- At the Edge: $140,000
Analysis of multiple planning scenarios in Sacramento revealed that compact development would save the city $7.5 billion in infrastructure costs, 23% of what it currently spends.
Smart growth strategies bring in more money.
Arlington, Virginia
Reality Check
Having a car is too expensive and too much trouble I want to live where I don’t need one as much. 34%

*Data from a Ford Foundation survey conducted by Harris Interactive 4th quarter, 2010.*
We can do better
1. Tell Your Story – No Jargon!
2. Define Your Terms
3. Base it on the Economy and Local Leadership
Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide.

www.smartgrowthamerica.org

1707 L St. NW Suite 1050, Washington, DC 20036 | 202-207-3355