Suburban smart growth

...in the age of Walk Score

DUBLIN, OHIO  New Partners 2012  DAVID DIXON FAIA  GOODY CLANCY
Agenda

- Overview
- Planning for smart growth
- Creating an urban design framework for smart growth
- Paying smart growth
- Achieving smart growth
OVERVIEW: an affluent suburb replaces a sprawl with a smart growth model

Dublin emphasizing a sustainable future

“With the help of a consulting firm, City Manager is looking for ways to transform Dublin into a more walkable community.”
The first question for Ohio’s most successful suburb was: Why change?

Existing conditions: 50,000 employees—in high value, growing industries; 40,000 residents; $100,000 median household income

Dublin’s economy is focused on high value, growing industries ...all of which depend on educated, creative workers
98% of residents rated Dublin a great place...and so did the national press...

- Top Seven Intelligent Community, 2010
- Fox Business News: Top Small City to Start a Business
- Forbes.com: One of best 25 places to move in 2009
- BusinessWeek: Top Small City in Ohio to Start a Business
- Columbus Monthly: Best Suburban Community

Resident satisfaction...
PLANNING FOR SMART GROWTH

• Why worry?
• Making the case for a conversation
• Market forces
• Where can smart growth grow?
By the late 2000s demographic changes began to worry Dublin’s leaders. A rapidly aging population reduced long-term demand for single family houses.
The community began a dialog about personal...and shared...costs of sprawl

Economic development costs

HR directors reported increasing challenges the Dublin’s suburban character presented in attracting the roughly 5,000 educated, creative employees that Dublin’s employers needed to hire every year.

Health and environmental costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auto travel per year per household (miles)</th>
<th>Walkable Transit-Served</th>
<th>Traditional Suburban</th>
<th>Exurban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,000-10,000</td>
<td>10,000-15,000</td>
<td>20,000-25,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronic conditions per 100 people</td>
<td>100-120</td>
<td>120-140</td>
<td>150-200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relative carbon footprint per SF of development (all uses)</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>70-80</td>
<td>100</td>
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Transportation costs costs

Average U.S.:
- Transportation: 19%
- Housing: 32%
- All Other: 49%

Drivable Suburban:
- Transportation: 25%
- Housing: 32%
- All Other: 43%

Walkable Urban:
- Transportation: 9%
- Housing: 32%
- All Other: 59%

Savings from 16% reduction in transportation costs can be applied to housing.
A national speakers’ series described the tangible benefits of smart growth

*Chris Leinberger* talked about a reversal in which real estate markets placed a premium on mixed-use, walkable developments.

Laurie Volk noted that roughly 60% of all metropolitan area households now consisted of singles and couples, causing rapid growth for more “urban” housing models.

Carol Coletta, head of CEOs for Cities, reported that the “young creatives” sought by employers were increasingly bypassing suburbs.

CEOs for Cities: “Creative workers” are more than 30% more likely than their peers to seek urban environment.
Market forces were rapidly shifting away toward a more urban model

Real estate markets 1960-2005: sprawl had attracted roughly 50 million SF of housing and commercial development
Changing demographics generated new preferences)...for living

1990...
- Golf courses
- Large backyards
- Homogeneity
- Escape from work
- Convenient auto access

2011...
- Main Streets
- Transit
- Diversity
- Live near work
- Personal responsibility for sustainability

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...and working

- 1990...
  - Office parks
  - Convenient auto access
  - ...and parking
  - Escape to home
  - Prestige address

- 2011...
  - Main Streets
  - Transit
  - Live near work
  - Walkable environment
  - Fun
Market studies showed substantial smart growth demand.

| Anticipated development            | • Over 20 years—7–11 million SF  
|                                  | • Over 40 years—15–25 million SF  
|                                  | • Residential—roughly 60%  
| Share of community’s growth       | • Residential—5–60%  
|                                  | • Office, retail—50–55%  
| Net densities                     | • Residential—30–50 units/acre  
|                                  | • Office—FAR 1.5–2.5  
| Predominant building heights      | • 3–5 floors  

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A focus for smart growth: the 1,000 acre Bridge Street Corridor
Large sites with significant potential

Mixed-use nodes scaled for walkability

A hierarchy of walkable streets, rubber tire transit
Vision principles

1. Enhance economic vitality.
2. Integrate a new center into the community’s life.
3. Embrace and celebrate the natural setting and sustainability.
4. Expand choices available to the entire community.
5. Create places that promote community.
An office campus becomes a mixed-use district
A road and creek become a neighborhood park
An inaccessible river becomes Dublin’s Central Park
A failed strip center becomes a vital center of community life.
Sustainability

- A smart growth district offers very significant opportunities in contrast with sprawl “one off” development:
  - A comprehensive approach to storm water
  - Shared “eco district” solutions to energy, grey water
  - Funding mechanisms to replace older infrastructure
  - …and create a new generation of “green” streetscape, etc.
Paying for smart growth

• Compact development value will carry a roughly 30 premium.

• Community-funded roadway and other infrastructure will cost roughly 50% less than sprawl-based infrastructure (including three additional interchanges)

• Higher fiscal value, lower public investment enables public/private partnership to fund “smart growth infrastructure (street grid, squares, parks, etc.)

• Shared funding through TIFs, shared funding agreements, BID (SID under Ohio law)
Addressing tough issues

- Economic diversity
  - Economic development issue—employers strongest advocates
- Lower income households, young professional, retired residents pose different issues
- Dublin lacks a point in government with the authority, capacity to address affordability
- Restructuring approvals process
- Treating property owners with different goals equitably
Achieving smart growth

• Council appointed vice city manager to oversee developing the district

• Form-based code in process of adoption

• Commitment to build new street network phased with development

• Two “bookend” projects in development totally roughly 5 million SF of mixed-used development

• Dublin has initiated land acquisition to transform the river into a “central park”

Forest City Enterprises concept plan
PARADIGM SHIFT... from the perspective of a quintessential suburb