

Preparing the Smart Growth Concept Map

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan calls for better coordination between land use and transportation. The “Smart Growth Concept Map” identifies locations in the region that can support smart growth, transit, walking, and biking. The map serves as the foundation for prioritizing transportation investments and determining eligibility for local smart growth incentive funds.

The Concept Map contains over 200 existing, planned, or potential smart growth locations. Transportation and planning professionals from all jurisdictions have provided recommendations for these locations. The SANDAG Board of Directors has accepted the Concept Map for planning purposes and for use in the *TransNet* Smart Growth Incentive Program.

Smart growth in an urban center like University City looks different from a town center in Encinitas or a community center in Imperial Beach. The following defines the types of smart growth areas that are featured on the map. Details on residential, employment, and transit service targets can be found in the Site Descriptions document at sandag.org/smartgrowth.

Metropolitan Center

The region’s primary business, civic, commercial, and cultural center • Mid- and high-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings • Very high levels of employment • Draws people from throughout the region and from beyond the region’s borders • Served by numerous transportation services

Example: Downtown San Diego

Urban Center

Subregional business, civic, commercial, and cultural centers • Mid- and high-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings • Medium to high levels of employment • Draws people from throughout the region, with many from the immediate area • Served by transit lines and local bus services
Examples: University City, Uptown/Hillcrest, Chula Vista Urban Core, Downtown National City

Town Center

Suburban downtowns within the region • Low- and mid-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings • Some employment • Draws people from the immediate area • Served by corridor/regional transit lines and local services or shuttle services

Examples: Downtowns of La Mesa, Oceanside, Encinitas, Vista

Community Center

Areas with housing within walking/biking distance of transit stations • Low- to mid-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings • Draws people from nearby communities and neighborhoods • Served by local high-frequency transit

Examples: Clairemont Town Square, Otay Ranch Village 2, Ferry Landing in Coronado

Rural Village

Distinct communities within the unincorporated areas of San Diego County • Low-rise employment and residential buildings • Draws people from nearby rural areas • Concentrated local road network within the village, with possible local transit service
Examples: Alpine, Fallbrook, Ramona

Mixed Use Transit Corridor

Areas with concentrated residential and mixed use development along a linear transit corridor • Variety of low-, mid- and high-rise buildings, with employment, commercial and retail businesses • Draws people from nearby communities

Examples: University Avenue and El Cajon Blvd. in San Diego, Mission Road in Escondido, North Santa Fe in Vista, Seacoast Drive and Palm Ave. in Imperial Beach

Special Use Center

Employment areas consisting primarily of medical or educational facilities • Variety of low-, mid- and high-rise buildings • Dominated by one non-residential land use (e.g., medical or educational) • Draws people from throughout the region or immediate subregion

Examples: SDSU, Cal State San Marcos, UCSD, Palomar Hospital at Nordahl SPRINTER Station

Smart Growth in the San Diego Region

What is Smart Growth?

Smart growth is a compact, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive urban development pattern. It focuses future growth and infill development close to jobs, services, and public facilities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and preserve open space and natural resources.

Smart growth is characterized by more compact, higher density development in urbanized areas throughout the region. These areas are walkable, bike-friendly, near public transit, and promote good community design, resulting in housing and transportation choices for those who live and work in these areas.



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For more information on smart growth areas visit sandag.org/smartgrowth

