

SmartCode Customization

The SmartCode is a model land development code whose provisions and metrics are geared to shape good urban design in a generic medium-sized American city. To adapt the model code to a specific location, a variety of items must be customized to local conditions and values. Many of these items have important implications for the urban form that would be created by the code, so it is important to understand the impacts of these decisions. Other items are purely related to local political values and decisions. The best SmartCode for a particular city can only be developed with active engagement of local public officials, city staff, and citizens.

Public Policy Decisions:

- Where is growth allowed? Where is open space preserved?
- What percentage of different transect zones will be required for each community type?
- For purposes of calculating density, what are the equivalencies of office to residential and retail to residential?
- Will the code include provisions for Transfer of Development Rights or not?
- Will there be designated A- and B-grids, and if so, where?
- Will the SmartCode be implemented as mandatory, a parallel optional code, a floating optional zone (like a PUD), or some combination?
- What will the development approval process be? Who will be on the Consolidated Review Committee?
- Which requirements in the code are not open to variance?
- Will transect zones automatically change to the next higher zone at a certain point in time, and if so, when?
- Will there be incentives offered for developing under the SmartCode, and if so, which incentives?
- Language and particular provisions must be customized to work under local state enabling legislation.
- Language and particular provisions must be customized (and/or local subdivision regulations altered) so that the zoning and subdivisions provisions work together.

Transect Provisions/Metrics that can be Customized:

- Base residential density
- Size of blocks
- Design standards for streets (travel and parking lane widths, number of lanes, effective turning radius, sidewalk requirements, street tree requirements, etc.)
- Types of public frontages allowed
- Sidewalk requirements
- Types of private frontages allowed
- Types of civic spaces allowed
- Minimum and maximum sizes of different types of civic spaces
- Lot width
- Lot coverage
- Front, side, and rear setbacks for both principal and out buildings
- Minimum percentage of frontage that is required to be built out
- Where are buildings allowed to site on the lot (edgeyard, sideyard, rearyard, courtyard)
- What kinds of private frontages are allowed?
- Building height maximums and minimum, expressed in stories
- Minimum and maximum height of stories
- Required recess and/or expression lines
- Uses allowed in each zone, by right or by warrant
- Required parking amounts for each use in each zone
- Shared parking factors
- Parking placement
- Trash container placement
- Types of public planting allowed and/or required
- Types of public lighting allowed and/or required
- Any special district standards

SmartCode Customization, continued

In addition to creating and adopting the text for the land development code, a SmartCode customization includes creating the zoning map. During the customization process, a variety of elements may be mapped, depending on the implementation option to be used.

Items to be Mapped

- Location of open space and growth sectors
- Within Community Plan Areas (areas with a regulating plan), the location of the following items are mapped (some are required and others are discretionary):
 - Required:
 - Pedestrian sheds
 - Transect Zones
 - Specific thoroughfare types
 - Civic spaces and civic buildings, especially the Main Civic Space
 - Suggested:
 - A/B Grids
 - Bike and/or trail networks
 - Playgrounds
 - Site(s) reserved elementary school
 - Site(s) reserved for childcare facilities
 - Site(s) reserved for Meeting Hall
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Retail Frontage
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Arcade Frontage
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Gallery Frontage
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Coordinated Frontage
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Cross Block Passages
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Buildings of Value
 - Mandatory and/or suggested Terminated Vistas