Re: Smart Growth America Sustainable Land Use Code Audit - Six Month Report

The City of Charlottesville is continuing work on ways to incorporate recommendations from the Smart Growth America Sustainable Land Use Code Audit Workshop that was held April 28th and 29th, 2015. A one month progress report outlining multiple projects addressing sustainable development through land use practices was submitted July 9, 2015. Work is continuing in these areas and outlined below are updates and actions taken post the July 9th report:

- Energy Conservation/ Outdoor Lighting: The City is currently undertaking a Lighting Study in key parts of the City. This is a joint effort with the University of Virginia that is examining pedestrian lighting standards along West Main and the Corner districts of the City. The consultant, RKK, has submitted the existing conditions update that includes data collection methodology, existing lighting inventory, lighting observations for both study areas, and areas of concern. Next steps include a lighting improvement plan and intersection lighting preliminary design. The study is expected to be complete by Spring 2016. Below is a link to additional information.

  [http://www.charlottesville.org/home/showdocument?id=33929](http://www.charlottesville.org/home/showdocument?id=33929)

- The City has put into place a policy that expedites reviews of site plan amendments for multifamily developments that upgrade lighting or other CPTED criteria. The City continues to encourage multifamily developments to use CPTED criteria and to take advantage of the expedited review policy.

  Charlottesville is currently competing as a semifinalist in the Georgetown University Energy Prize, for a grand prize of $5 million. This prize would be rewarding for the community as it continues to achieve energy savings. The competition is based on reducing residential and City building energy consumption (electricity and natural gas) and will be judged both quantitatively and qualitatively. We are about half way through the 2-year quantitative portion of the competition. More information on the Energy Prize can be found at:

  [www.guep.org](http://www.guep.org) and [www.energizecville.org](http://www.energizecville.org)
We have received technical assistance from the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) that will help inform future code audit discussions related to solar installations, with a particular additional focus on historic properties.

- **Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure:** The City is in the process of updating the West Main Street Zoning District. Additional bike storage and allowing an exemption to parking requirements for commercial sites less than 5,000 square feet are important components of the plan. The zoning changes are set to be reviewed by City Council in December 2015.

The City’s Comprehensive Parking Analysis has been completed by its consultant. The study addressed parking inventory and utilization analysis in the Downtown and University Corner sections of the City. The resulting recommendations offer suggestions for optimizing existing resources including on-street metering in high demand areas, creating viable commute and access alternatives and maintaining existing supply. The City Council heard the report and provided feedback at an October 2015 work session. An implementation plan for moving towards a managed parking system is currently being developed.

City staff is currently working with the Tree Commission to craft regulations that are tree focused. In addition, a Designated Tree Program has been established. Citizens can nominate trees throughout the city for designation as “Heritage Trees, Specimen Trees, or Memorial Trees.” To date eight trees have been nominated and seven have received designation.

City staff is developing an online green infrastructure mapping tool that will serve as a library of green infrastructure (including the Designated Trees described above) around the City. Expected launch date is January 2016.

We have been selected as one of 11 communities to received technical assistance from the Green Infrastructure Center (GIC), a Charlottesville-based nonprofit that assists communities in developing strategies for protecting and conserving their ecological and cultural assets. This assistance will contribute to the Green Infrastructure component of the Complete Street effort we are involved with. Building on the existing datasets we have/are providing them (including the urban tree canopy coverage update that is almost “ready”), GIC will help develop tools and strategies to promote GI through mapping, assessment and analysis, narrative, and graphics. We were notified of our selection in September 2015 and expect the effort to be completed within 12 months.

A comprehensive Streets that Work Plan is currently being developed by the City. The purpose of the Plan is to develop a fully functional, comprehensive, street design guide
for Charlottesville that seeks to improve the transportation network for all modes and create vibrant and sustainable public spaces along streets. The Streets That Work Plan will focus primarily on the public right of way, but is being developed in conjunction with a city-wide code audit that will address regulations for private development. Below is a link to additional information.

http://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/neighborhood-development-services/streets-that-work

• Community Health and Safety: New robust bicycle and pedestrian requirements are key components to the updated West Main Street Zoning District. In September 2015 City Council adopted an updated Bike Plan. Below is a link to additional information.


In June 2015 City Council adopted a Sidewalk Waiver Provisions Resolution. The resolution provides developers the option of contributing to a sidewalk fund rather than dedicating land and constructing sidewalks for residential lots on existing streets. To date developers have continued to construct sidewalks in lieu of contributing to the fund.