

ENTRY FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS

The Form-Based Code Award

Smart Growth America (SGA) is pleased to announce the return of the Form-Based Codes Award, now in its 17th year. As a program of SGA, the Form-Based Codes Institute (FBCI) has supported the FBC Award program to recognize exemplary form-based codes that advance the practice of form-based zoning for equitable development, people-oriented communities, and predictable development results.

Smart Growth America is a national nonprofit organization that empowers communities through technical assistance, advocacy, and thought leadership to create livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity. SGA's team of housing, zoning, planning, land use, economic development, and transportation experts works to take an interdisciplinary approach to solving communities' most pressing challenges. FBCI, a program of SGA, works to advance SGA's mission by advancing zoning solutions, including form-based codes and other innovations, that empower communities to achieve their vision of livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.

INSTRUCTIONS

This packet includes the instructions and all necessary forms to submit a form-based code to be considered for SGA's Form-Based Code Award. **To be eligible, entries must have been adopted into law by a unit of local government.** Submission of codes that can show built results and provide "lessons learned" is strongly encouraged. Please provide the requested information and submit your entry as indicated below. *Do not include these instruction pages in your submission.*

Each submittal must include:

- One (1) completed PDF Entry Form
- One (1) print-quality (300dpi) PDF of the code document(s)

Note: Codes from non-United States jurisdictions are eligible. All submission materials must be in English.

There is no entry fee to participate in the Form-Based Code Award.

Submission deadline and email address

Send your entries via WeTransfer or similar high capacity file transfer mechanism to Jamie Zouras at jzouras@smartgrowthamerica.org.

Submissions to SGA must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, September 11, 2024.**

SGA will email a confirmation after your submission materials have been received. Please make sure that the email address listed on the Entry Form is correct. Most correspondence regarding this award will be conducted via email.

All submitted materials will be retained by SGA for use as examples of form-based codes in publications, programs, and exhibits.

Questions

Please direct all questions to:

Jamie Zouras
Senior Program Manager, Land Use and Development
Smart Growth America
(202) 516-5341
jzouras@smartgrowthamerica.org

Notification and recognition of winner(s)

SGA anticipates notifying the winner(s) the first week of October and recognizing the winners publicly later that month. SGA reserves the right to make changes to the schedule based upon organizational needs and will endeavor to provide as much advance notice as possible if there are schedule changes. Winning entries also will be featured on the Smart Growth America website and social media platforms, and as part of the Form-Based Code Award Webinar.

ENTRY FORM

Form-Based Code Official Name

Jurisdiction/Government Agency

Form-Based Code Common Name

Location

Submission Contact Person

Title

Company/Agency

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

Email Address

To be eligible for consideration, codes must be adopted into law.

Date of adoption: _____

How did you hear about the Form-Based Code Award?

Email ___ SGA website ___ Other: _____

Release statement

By submitting this application, I certify that the information contained on the Entry Form is correct and complete, and that I will hold harmless Smart Growth America (SGA) for any and all damage arising out of its use of the information on this sheet and in this submittal. I certify that permission has been obtained from the owner of any enclosed copyrighted materials, including photographs, to publish the materials. I release and authorize SGA to use all such materials.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Team members

Form-based code writing is an interdisciplinary effort. Please identify the primary team members that contributed to the creation, adoption, and implementation of this code. (Include as many copies of this page as necessary).

Company/Agency **Contact Person**

Mailing Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone Email Address

Company/Agency **Contact Person**

Mailing Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone Email Address

Company/Agency **Contact Person**

Mailing Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone Email Address

Project overview

Please check all options that apply.

Scale:

Region

Corridor

District

Neighborhood

City/Town

Other: _____

Approximate acreage: _____

Context:

Greenfield

Brownfield/Greyfield

Infill/Redevelopment

Other: _____

Code Administration:

City/County Planning Staff

Town Architect

Other: _____

Plan Implementation (please use the Project Description below to elaborate)

This code implements:

a specific physical vision or master plan

a planning process

other

Project overview *(continued)*

Please check all options that apply.

Method of implementation:

Mandatory: Any and all development within the code's defined plan area must abide by the regulations in the code.

Optional/Parallel: In a defined area, developer has the option to choose to use the pre-existing development code or this submitted form-based code to build under. However, once one or the other is chosen, development must abide by the chosen code.

Other: _____

Code basis:

Building Type Based

Frontage Type Based

Street Type Based

None of the Above

Smart-Code Based

Transect Based

Special policy issues:

Historic preservation

Public space

Environmental conditions

Other: _____

Transit

None

Affordable housing

Displacement Mitigation

Has new development begun under this code?

No

Submitted for Code Review

Approx. Number of Projects: _____

Approved

Approx. Number of Projects: _____

Broken Ground

Approx. Number of Projects: _____

Completed

Approx. Number of Projects: _____

Code description *(one page maximum)*

Please describe the code based on the following characteristics:

- Overall physical, historical, and political context in which the code was written and adopted.
- How it was initiated.
- Its purpose and goals.
- Any unique social, environmental, or economic issues present.
- How does the code foster built results consistent with a master plan and/or advance the field of form-based code writing?
- Brief explanation of how the code achieves equitable development and/or equitable community engagement processes
 - Does the code discuss cultural preservation and anti-displacement measures for residents and businesses?
 - Was the code adopted to explicitly address one or more of the following contexts in a community?
 - Formerly redlined communities
 - Neighborhoods that experienced urban renewal
 - Neighborhoods with divisive highway infrastructure
 - Economically depressed communities
 - Rural communities

Use descriptive language to help the jury to understand the context and purpose for which the Code was written and how it advances the field of form-based code writing. If new development has been approved under this code, please include a brief status/overview of the built results.

Response to FBC definition and checklist *(one page maximum not including checklist below and on the next page)*

A form-based code is officially defined as follows:

Form-Based Code: A land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a walkable public realm by using physical form—rather than separation of uses—as the primary basis and focus for the code and standards. Communities can apply form-based codes at different contexts and scales. Form-based codes are legally-binding regulations, not optional guides, and offer municipalities an alternative to conventional zoning for shaping development.

An exemplary code will meet the definition above and effectively answer the questions included in the checklist that follows below. Briefly describe how the code fulfills the definition and the checklist. Further discuss how it responds to the standards for identifying and evaluating form-based codes provided in the checklist. It would be helpful for the Jury if the applicant can identify where within the code, by citing a reference, those aspects can be demonstrated. Finally, please provide a detailed explanation about how this code will ensure equitable development within the community and/or equitable processes.

For more detailed on form-based code best practices, go to the FBCI website:

<http://formbasedcodes.org/definition/>.

Checklist for identifying and evaluating form-based codes

(This is provided for reference only; a response to each point is not necessary, but these are questions that the Awards Jury may use to evaluate the submissions. Do not include this actual list in the submission.)

Does the code follow (and match with) a community vision or master plan?

- Is the code based on a sufficiently detailed physical plan and/or other clear community vision or plan that has been developed and adopted through an inclusive community engagement process?
- How did the process reach out to community members that do not usually participate?

Has a statement of intent and purpose that ties the code to the vision or plan?

- Does the code have a statement of intent and purpose that is aligned with the vision of other local planning documents (e.g., master plan, comprehensive plan, community plan, etc.)?
- Does the code set parameters for development of and a framework for waivers and exceptions?

Building form standards have specific requirements for placement and frontages that shape public spaces?

- Are there any considerations of how building frontages will shape the streetscape/impact public access and amenities? Are windows and doors required on the frontage?
- Is there a discussion of how frontages impact the pedestrian experience of a space (e.g., retail level development, opportunities for pedestrian circulation, etc.)?

Is the code regulatory rather than advisory?

- Does the city, town, or county in which the code was adopted require new development to comply with form-based code regulations for a project to be approved?
- Is there any discretion for developers to deviate from the requirements set out in the form-based code without a relief process?

Does it focus on regulating form and less on land use?

- What is the organizing principle of the code? Is it predominantly concerned with the physical form of development, or is it more so concerned with separating commercial, residential, industrial and civic uses?
- Does the code emphasize the development of a high-quality public realm?

Regulations/standards keyed to specific locations on regulating plan?

- Does the code provide design standards that are tailored to the context of different neighborhoods?
- Does the code allow for variation in form to fit with the characteristics of particular locations in the community (e.g., allow for missing middle development in residential spaces vs. infill development along downtown/commercial corridors)?

Is the code enforceable?

- Has it been adopted and used by a municipality?
- Is the form-based code effectively coordinated with other applicable policies and regulations that control development on the same property?

- Is the code designed and programmed to be regularly updated, convenient for public distribution, and understandable to all members of the community?

Is development approved administratively (by staff)?

- Is there a pathway for a by-right development?
- Is a public hearing required for each development?

Promote/conservate interconnected street networks with pedestrian-scale streets and blocks?

- Does the code emphasize walkable neighborhoods and/or walkable contexts in a community (walkable block sizes, introduction of new streets to subdivide large parcels, introduction of alleys/service lanes for additional block permeability)?
- Does this include a proposed walkable street network? Do street rights-of-way include comfortably sized pedestrian realms with sidewalks and space for street trees?
- Are there provisions for street redundancy for vehicle, bike and pedestrian traffic?

Is the code written to allow for predictable results without sacrificing variety in the size and shape of urban spaces and the design of buildings?

- Can users readily understand and execute the physical form intended by the code?
- Are the intentions of each regulation clearly described and apparent even to planning staff and citizens who did not participate in its preparation?
- Does it include standards for one or more of the following: architecture, landscaping, signage, environmental and historic resources, affordable housing, etc.?

Clear standards for building placement/massing to shape the public realm?

- Is there a build-to zone or maximum setbacks to locate buildings close to the street? Are there requirements for managing the heights of the buildings or the building massing along the street?
- Does the code address/account for “in-between” spaces (e.g., corridors, alleyways, passages, courtyards, etc.)?
- Does it specify building frontage methods that provide access and visibility to greenspaces and civic spaces?

Specify the relationship of buildings to one another?

- Does the code address design at the street/block scale (e.g., specifying building types allowed, civic spaces and streets needed in a certain development radius)?
- Does the code characterize different zones with different desired forms (e.g., suburban neighborhood vs. core main street)?

Is the code accessible?

- Is the code available online in a user-friendly format?
- Is the table of contents organized by clear subject matter (definitions, procedures, building form, uses, signs, landscape, etc.)?
- Is it easy to understand the layout in the first few pages or by flipping through it?
- Can users easily find what is pertinent to their interest?

Is the code user-friendly?

- Is the approval process speedy and easy to understand? Does it include definitions of all technical terms in language that is understandable to everyone who uses or is affected by the code?
- No more pages than necessary for the scale of the codified area?
- Does it have just the right number of steps in the decision tree to provide results consistent with the vision or plan, while still offering options for flexibility?

Is the code annotated to provide the intent of specific code provisions?

- Does the code include comments?
- Is an annotated version of the code publicly available?

Includes a diversity of housing types within a walkable distance?

- Does it produce walkable, identifiable neighborhoods that provide for daily needs to be accessible through multiple transportation options?
- Are multiple forms of housing permitted to be developed in residential zones (e.g., ADUs, duplexes, townhouses, etc.)?
- Is there an emphasis placed on walkability to both transportation and local destinations from residential zones?

Code was adopted and/or is explicitly being used to address one or more of the following community contexts:

- Formerly redlined communities
- Neighborhoods that experienced urban renewal
- Neighborhoods with divisive highway infrastructure
- Economically depressed communities
- Rural communities (note: HUD defines rural as “Any place with a population not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants and not located in a Metropolitan Statistical Area”.)

Does the code promote equitable development?

- Does the code promote one or more kinds of equity?
 - Racial equity (e.g., increasing housing affordability, allowing for multi-generational housing typologies, increasing access to pedestrian-scale streetscapes, etc.)?
 - Gender equity (e.g., allowing for multiple mobility options, trip chaining, public realm features such as streetlights, etc.)?
 - Housing equity (e.g., allowing for housing typology diversity and a range of affordability)
 - Educational equity (e.g., is the community committed to increasing public awareness of what development is permitted; are there resources and/or plans for resources to aid homeowners who may be interested in building small-scale developments such as ADUs?)

Discusses cultural preservation and anti-displacement measures for residents and businesses?

- Are there provisions to preserve existing affordable housing units (i.e., preserve rather than redevelop)?
- Does the code make mention of increasing housing stability in the community (does the code document and preserve existing multi-unit housing vs. making it nonconforming)?
- Is cultural preservation discussed in reference to the public realm (is the code speaking to development in a particular neighborhood/district; is there a public art component; is the public art required to be local artists; is existing public space with cultural or historic elements preserved or new space required to celebrate cultural or historic elements)?
- Are there provisions for store size caps in designated areas and/or are neighborhood serving zones established that limit the size and type of stores in an area?¹

Allows for the development of multiple housing types?

- Does the code allow for the development of more than one of the following housing types:
 - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
 - Carriage house
 - Duplex (side-by-side and stacked)
 - Cottage court
 - Triplex, fourplex
 - Townhouse
 - Apartment/Courtyard building
 - Manufactured housing
- Are multiple housing types allowed to be developed in residential zones? Are there provisions for gentle density development as neighborhoods move closer to the downtown/commercial hub?

Housing is developed in the context of a complete community?

- Does the code prioritize mixed-use developments that are in close proximity to daily needs (e.g., grocery stores, employment centers, daycares, etc.)?
- Do new development projects emphasize walkability and multi-modal transit accessibility?
- Are projects located near amenity rich areas?

Addresses climate and environmental justice measures?

- This may include interventions such as:
 - Built environment provisions to mitigate urban heat island effects (including mandatory tree coverage and green space requirements)
 - Allowing renewable energy sources to be a permitted building material for new development projects
 - Permitting the development of greenhouses and/or urban agriculture hubs (e.g., allowing for the development of small-scale standalone structures to be used to advance personal or community food security)
 - Resiliency planning (greenbelt zones, [flood resilience overlay districts](#), etc.)

Was the code drafted by minority professionals?

¹ See https://antidisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Toolkit_FINAL.pdf pg. 31

Lessons learned *(one page maximum)*

Please provide details on lessons learned or expertise gained during planning, writing, adoption, and implementation of this code. Explain what makes it serve as an example for other communities. Cite particular ways in which the code breaks new ground, overcomes common barriers in the land development regulatory process, or has produced quality urbanism.

Supporting graphics and photos (20 pages maximum not including photos)

Please submit supporting illustrations and diagrams. These will further describe your code, the plan or vision upon which it is based, or the process of documentation and analysis that was completed as a basis for the code (or to test the code). These images can simply be extracts from a master plan document or single images. **Please remember that regulatory graphics— including the regulating plan—should be included in the body of the code that you submit.** They need not be reproduced here.

Built results photographs (10 image maximum)

If the code has guided built results, you are strongly encouraged to include photographic images of the new buildings, streets or spaces, clearly providing the context of the project. Before-and-after images (not computer simulated) may be submitted if relevant.

All images should be saved into a single PDF document and included on the submittal flash drives. The file should be labeled:

FBCAward2024_Images_(CodeName), with the name of the code substituted for “(CodeName)” in each file.

Captions (if not included on images directly):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Original code – *optional*

If the legally adopted version of the code was substantially modified in form or in content from the originally designed version, you may include a copy of the original version of the code. Please be sure to explain why the code was changed in the Project Description or Lessons Learned sections of this Entry Form.