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A New Voice for Smart Growth in Seattle

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Late last year a group of developers and smart growth advocates got together to talk about ways to positively affect growth in Seattle. Where, they asked, is the positive voice for new housing in single-family neighborhoods? Lots of work is going on to build new housing around light rail and to support zoning to accommodate more growth in neighborhoods zoned for multi-family. But there really isn't much of an active voice finding new ways to grow in our city's single-family neighborhoods.

So Smart Growth Seattle was formed. Smart Growth Seattle is a new advocacy group promoting fresh land use codes to manage neighborhood growth.

"We want to collaborate with homebuilders, community stakeholders, neighborhoods, and City planners to adopt code changes that meet housing demand and preserve neighborhood character," said Dan Duffus, one of the founders of Smart Growth Seattle.

Smart Growth Seattle's first initiative is finalizing changes to rules that govern small lot development in Seattle's single-family neighborhoods to make the development of new housing their more predictable.

What does Smart Growth Seattle support?

Urban Density: We support Washington's Growth Management Act, which encourages urban density as an intelligent alternative to suburban sprawl. Smart land use code saves open space by enabling more people to live in our urban neighborhoods.

Sustainable Development: We believe that our city—and planet—is best served by sustainable development. Simply put, smaller homes are more sustainable than bigger homes and new homes are more energy efficient than old homes. Smart land use code encourages development of smaller homes and more efficient homes.

Economic Opportunity: We believe that homebuilding provides an important economic contribution to our city and also recognize that economic incentive is necessary to meet housing demand. Smart land use code imposes regulation without creating unnecessary economic barriers.

Architectural Diversity: We believe that architectural diversity is part of the heritage of our neighborhoods and gives Seattle a unique personality. Smart land use code respects basic development patterns without discriminating against diverse designs.

Housing Choice: Public policies, such as those implemented through the Seattle Jobs Plan, are attracting businesses and creating jobs across all income levels. Smart land use code supports housing choice by enabling homebuilders meet the needs of new workers.

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