



A Balanced Growth Policy for Connecticut

The Connecticut Partnership for Balanced Growth believes that Connecticut needs to find a common ground on conservation and development issues that face our state. It is evident that many Connecticut residents and businesses have recognized that our state faces many obstacles and barriers to maintaining our prosperity and high quality of life. Many of these issues center around economic growth, land use planning, housing, transportation, conservation, and preservation and are often associated with the promotion of what is known as smart growth policies.

CPBG is concerned that the term smart growth has become so generalized that it now means all things to all people. In addition, we believe that many supporters of smart growth do not support growth at all and want to stop all growth outside of the urban core, limiting personal choice and opportunity.

CPBG believes that when addressing conservation and development, all forms of land-use planning tools should be considered, including smart growth principles. At the same time, we want to make certain that evolving smart growth principles don't come to mean "no growth," but instead provide citizens with reasonable choices for where they want to live, work, play and shop.

We need a new framework of thinking about growth to ensure an economically competitive Connecticut. To that end, we offer the following **Principles of Balanced Growth**:

- Planning and land use policies must protect important environmental resources while actively promoting the freedom of people to choose: 1) where they want to live, work, shop and play; 2) what type and size of home they want to live in; and 3) how they want to commute and travel in their daily lives.
- Land use policies and regulations must be reasonable and consider the ability of industry to cost-effectively supply safe, well-designed and affordable homes and the other commercial buildings people need to work, shop and play.
- Regulations must be clear and certain so that businesses, individuals and the public may know in advance what is permissible and prohibited on public and private property.
- Review processes must be timely, while allowing public input on local land use plans, regulations and specific proposals within the context of the law and regulations. Land use laws, regulations and processes must respect the freedom of individuals to use their land subject to reasonable regulation and certainty of process.
- Land use plans, maps and regulations should be created at the smallest political unit to: 1) be more accountable to the people; and 2) adjust more quickly to a constantly changing marketplace. The state and regions should provide vision, leadership, guidance, technical support, resources and incentives so that local plans and regulations are balanced, flexible and considerate of broader statewide and regional needs and goals.
- Research and data supporting any land use plan, policy or regulation must meet the highest standards of integrity and critical analysis.