

**Montana Smart Growth Coalition's**  
**Smart Growth Endorsement Criteria for**  
**Residential and Neighborhood Development**

**(Adopted 5/27/08)**

Please rate the development from zero to five. Give the development zero if it does not meet the criteria in any way and five (or more if higher points are noted in the body of the criteria) if it meets the criteria perfectly. Projects will not be rated for criteria that do not apply to the project because the project is too small - MSGC will make the determination of which criteria do not apply to the project.

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>1</b>	The project is inside city limits (20), or will be served at an urban level of service (10), or in a designated county urban growth area (5)	
<b>2</b>	The project includes deed restricted or otherwise controlled affordable housing - 100% of units (15), 50% (10), 30% (5)	
<b>3</b>	Streets are organized in a connected network internally and are connected to existing or planned adjacent streets. Blocks are short (<400 feet) - 15 points maximum	
<b>4</b>	There are a variety of housing density and housing density is higher the closer you get to the neighborhood center. The average net density is 8 units per acre or greater (10), the average net density is between 8 units per acre and the average net density of the nearest city (5)	
<b>5</b>	Streets integrate all modes of transportation, with safe and comfortable sidewalks and pathways throughout. The project has transit access (or access is planned) - 10 points maximum	
<b>6</b>	There are a variety of housing types and sizes that at least two distinct income levels can afford	
<b>7</b>	There is a neighborhood center in the development or within 1/2 mile of all residents (may/may not be part of the project) with retail, office, public meeting space, and/or a park of other green space	
<b>8</b>	Commercial buildings front directly on the sidewalk with parking to the side or rear, and/or open space/parks are visible and accessible	
<b>9</b>	On street parking is encouraged. Parking lots are generally located behind street walls and buildings with little street visibility	
<b>10</b>	The buildings are designed and use sustainable, energy efficient materials, appliances, design, and/or orientation and lighting is dark skies compliant	
<b>11</b>	Building setbacks are shallow, generally not more than one	

	quarter of the lot width, with a maximum of no more than 20 feet	
12	Street trees, sidewalks, front porches, and front doors dominate the streetscape, not garage doors and driveways	
13	Culdesacs are avoided except where absolutely necessary due to natural conditions	
14	Traffic calming measures such as curb bulb-outs are incorporated	
15	Roadways are relatively narrow (e.g., 29 feet from curb to curb for local residential streets) and parking is allowed on both sides of streets	
16	Sidewalks are 4-5 feet and detached or >10 feet at the neighborhood center.	
17	Buildings front on to collectors. Street intersection design of collectors and arterials is sensitive to the surrounding land use and usable for all modes of transportation.	
18	Developers have attempted to meet with neighborhood and have made a good faith effort to address the reasonable concerns of neighbors	
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	

**Additional points:**

**MSGC staff are responsible for deciding if additional points shall be awarded to projects and the number of points to be awarded.** Additional points may be awarded for:

- 1-20 additional points may be awarded for projects that protect in perpetuity sensitive environmental lands, waters, and other natural features that might be important to the community – (20) points will be given for a project that has or will place conservation easements on 95% of property being developed (20 points), 85% (15 points), 75% (10 points), or an equivalent amount of land on a different property that has been protected with conservation easements through an official or unofficial transfer of development rights.
- 1-10 additional points may be awarded for unique or historic design of the development and its structure. In order to receive additional points for design, the design of the development shall enhance the community's character and may include traditional neighborhood design and/or innovative or historic features.

Total possible points – 135 (or 180 for a new townsite that must include rural criteria 2, 3, 12, 16, and 17)

Points needed to get an endorsement – 100 (or 140 for a new townsite that must include rural criteria 2, 3, 12, 16, and 17)

## **MSGC's Smart Growth Endorsement Process**

Endorsement is a two-stage process involving a preliminary and a final endorsement. Developers who meet with MSGC staff earlier in the process are more likely to receive endorsement and by applying for endorsement the developer agrees to meet with MSGC staff to discuss the proposal at a time and location that is convenient for both parties.

### Conditions of Preliminary Endorsement:

- Preliminary Endorsement may be made by MSGC staff before the development proposal is submitted for consideration to the governing body or its designated agent.
- MSGC shall consult with its member groups in the locale where the development proposal is located regarding the proposal. MSGC shall not endorse a project if any of those member groups are opposed to the project or to the endorsement.
- If a proposal receives enough points and meets the conditions spelled out in this endorsement process then the project may receive a preliminary endorsement. If a proposal receives a preliminary endorsement then MSGC will write a letter to the governing body or its designated agent stating MSGC's endorsement of the project and explaining the endorsement process.
- The developer shall sign a contract as part of the preliminary endorsement process stating that he/she will not and may not use MSGC's preliminary endorsement as part of any marketing for the project.

### Conditions of Final Endorsement:

- MSGC may make a final endorsement of the project after final approval of the project has been made by the governing body, after infrastructure has been built, and after at least 1/3 of the project has been built out.
- Final endorsement must be approved by MSGC's board.
- Upon receiving final endorsement of a project the developer may use MSGC's endorsement for marketing purposes.
- MSGC may award final endorsement for projects that had not previously received preliminary endorsement.

\*MSGC reserves the right to withhold, withdraw, or deny an endorsement for any reason including but not limited to changes are made to the project during the public process that would have otherwise have resulted in the project not being endorsed in the first place.