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Alcoa to host workshop on Smart Growth Zoning Tools

CONTACT: Alex Dodds, 202-207-3355 x112 adodds@smartgrowthamerica.org
Jeremy Pearson, City of Alcoa, 865-380-4730, jpearson@cityofalcoa-tn.gov
Amy Brooks, Knoxville Regional TPO, 865-214-2500
amy.brooks@knoxtrans.org

ALCOA, TN – Small cities and towns across the country are rethinking the way they handle zoning for new development. And their new approaches are boosting the bottom lines of local city budgets while making communities more livable.

Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) staff, City of Alcoa officials, and community members will meet with representatives from Smart Growth America on September 1 and 2, 2015 to learn more about innovative zoning. This workshop, part of a free, grant-funded technical assistance program, will provide local citizens and planners with tools and techniques to begin creating a vision for Alcoa's future growth. The workshop will show how shifting development patterns towards more compact, walkable forms can boost the local economy and reduce public spending on infrastructure.

"This opportunity, made available through a Smart Growth America technical assistance grant, will allow the city to tap the expertise of nationally recognized planners to help us achieve our community goal of implementing town center development standards. Through this process, both city officials and citizens will

work together in creating this vision by addressing key issues and opportunities,” said Mark Johnson, City of Alcoa City Manager. “At the end of the process, any necessary amendments to our current development regulations will be identified and adopted in order to support and encourage the redevelopment of the Alcoa West Plant site.”

City of Alcoa residents and everyone throughout the region are invited to join the workshop’s first day. An introductory presentation will include a menu of simple changes that local government can make to their zoning codes to promote smart growth tailored for small cities and rural areas.

The public event will be held September 1, 2015 at 6:00PM at the Alcoa Service Center located at 725 Universal Street, Alcoa, TN 37701. An in-depth workshop will take place the following day for joint staff and local development professionals.

“Smart Growth America is committed to providing training to help local leaders keep cities and towns livable, vibrant places,” said Roger Millar, Smart Growth America Vice President. “Like many communities, Alcoa and the Knoxville Regional TPO service area are looking for ways to increase local revenue without raising taxes or sacrificing the community’s character. We look forward to engaging community members in a discussion of how they can best use sustainable development to benefit the community’s economic bottom line.”

In December 2014, the City of Alcoa and the TPO were one of 14 communities nationwide selected from a pool of over 120 applications by Smart Growth America to participate in the technical assistance program. Stretching from Florida to Washington State, these 14 communities represent major cities, suburban centers, and rural towns alike.

The program is made possible through a five-year Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities grant to Smart Growth America from the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Sustainable Communities. It seeks to develop local planning solutions that help communities grow in ways that benefit families and

businesses, while protecting the environment and preserving a sense of place. Two other nonprofit organizations—Project for Public Spaces and Global Green—currently have active grants under this program to help communities get the kinds of development they want.

As a national leader in the field, Smart Growth America has accumulated extensive experience working with communities to help them use land strategically, make the most of existing resources and invest strategically to catalyze private development.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

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