

GET SMART: Smart Streets, Smart Grids, and Smart Growth!

Everyone wants to be smart, right? The Sacramento region is trying to get smarter about the way we design and modernize our streets, cities, and the electrical grid. Read more below:

SMART STREETS: Smart streets, also called complete streets, are streets that are designed for everyone: pedestrians, bicyclists, and of course, cars. Smart streets include: generously sized sidewalks and bike lanes; spreading out traffic throughout the entire neighborhood with lots of small streets instead of just a few major streets (which are prone to congestion and discourage use by pedestrians and bicyclists); reduced speed limits; bump-outs and street medians, which help pedestrians to more safely cross the streets; and mixed land uses (e.g., businesses mixed in with residential areas), which ensures that shopping and services are located closer to where people live. For more information, go to:

http://www.lgc.org/freepub/docs/community_design/fact_sheets/er_street_design.pdf

SMART GROWTH: Smart growth builds off of Smart Streets. It means that cities, as they expand, are employing the concepts of Smart Streets as they grow and renovate. It also means that cities plan for public transportation to connect people and places as they design their new roads and neighborhoods. Another aspect of Smart Growth is the protection of farmland and natural resources, which can be “taken over” by urban development if city officials do not take strong steps to protect them. For more information about Smart Growth principles, go to:

http://www.sacregionblueprint.org/sacregionblueprint/the_project/smart_growth.cfm

SMART GRID: First, the “grid” refers to the amazing system of transmission lines other infrastructure that connects electricity suppliers (such as natural gas generation plants and wind turbines) to users (such as homes and businesses). A SMART Grid is “smart” because it uses digital technology to convey INFORMATION as well as power. Electrical utilities like the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) are installing a Smart Grid so that they can improve the efficiency and reliability of the electrical system, as well as to better incorporate renewable power sources. Electricity consumers like you and me will also benefit from this new system. Someday soon, we may all have in-home display panels that allow us to see how much electricity we are using, which could help motivate us to conserve energy and reduce the size of our carbon footprint. For more information about Smart Grid concepts, go to:

[http://www.oe.energy.gov/DocumentsandMedia/DOE_SG_Book_Single_Pages\(1\).pdf](http://www.oe.energy.gov/DocumentsandMedia/DOE_SG_Book_Single_Pages(1).pdf)