



WHO SHOULD USE SGRAT AND WHAT YOU WILL GET OUT OF IT

Who Should Use SGRAT?

SGRAT will be of most interest to planning commissioners, professional community planners, city-village-township-county managers, development designers (architects, landscape architects, engineers, land surveyors), realtors, developers, community foundations, neighborhood organizations, environmental groups, members of other local nonprofit organizations, and interested citizens.

What you will get out of Using SGRAT

SGRAT can help you discover how well positioned your community is to implement Smart Growth by examining the degree to which your community or organization's goals and objectives are consistent with the ten tenets of Smart Growth. Answering all the questions that are relevant to your community will give you a score that indicates how far you have come and/or how far you have to go in order to be considered a smart growth community. If the community follows guidance from the resources attached to each tenet, it could implement measures that will improve its score. Doing so will also improve the quality of life for those that live in the community.

What SGRAT Does Not Do

SGRAT is much more oriented to small and large towns, suburban communities, and large cities than to rural townships and rural counties without a central place. For that reason, interested rural townships are encouraged to complete a Smart Growth Readiness Assessment in conjunction with neighboring small cities, villages and townships. It is likely the combined score for the multi-jurisdiction effort will be much better than scores of the individual communities. Since most citizens live their daily lives on a regional basis anyway (working in one jurisdiction, shopping in another, going to school in a third and getting entertained in a fourth), a multi-jurisdictional effort is more realistic. That is also why MSU is offering assistance to communities who are willing to conduct an assessment with their neighbors and work together to achieve smart growth.

SGRAT does not measure all aspects of **livability** or of **sustainability**. Those are two other contemporary movements designed to improve local quality of life and are broader than the scope of SGRAT.

Livability is an expression of quality of life. It describes communities that stimulate the physical, mental, and spiritual potential of individuals; fosters good schools, jobs, housing, public transportation, clean air, and safety; encourages a harmonious relationship between man and nature; helps conserve energy and natural resources; brings quality to the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment; encourages a variety of choices and opportunities (balance) among new and old, large and small, intensive and quiet, communal and private; takes advantage of its unique features – climate, geography, population, history, industry – and expresses them through design; understands a community's roots; develops a participatory attitude to involve people guiding the future of the community. (Adapted from Partners for Livable Communities)

Sustainability is an economic, social, and environmental concept. It is intended to be a means of configuring community and human activity so that society and its members are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving economic, social and environmental systems, and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals indefinitely. Sustainability affects every level of organization, from the local neighborhood to the entire planet. (adapted from Wikipedia)