

we place less faith in dressing up new development with emblems of urbanity and devote more effort to wiser distribution of resources or better land management? We then call for:

### *Urban Design as Smart Growth*

While there has been a strong association of urban design with “downtowns,” demand for suburban growth management and re-investment strategies for the older rings around city centers has gathered many advocates. Indeed, to protect urbanism, not to mention minimize environmental harm and needless land consumption, it is imperative, many argue, to control sprawl and make environmental stewardship a more overt part of urban thinking. Expressed opportunistically, it is also where the action is. Since 90 percent of development takes place at the periphery of existing urbanization, the urban designer should be operating there and, if present, advocating “smarter” planning and design. Conversely, ignoring the metropolitan periphery as if it were unworthy of a true urbanist or limiting one’s efforts to urban “infill” may simply be forms of problem avoidance. As social observers have long pointed out, suburban and ex-urban areas, where most Americans live, are not nonurban, merely providing different, certainly less traditional degrees of urban experience or intensity.

That the twenty-first century will be more conservation-minded is not in doubt. That the world overall must be smarter about managing resources and land is also clear. Therefore, the traditional close allegiance of urban design to an architectural and development perspective must be broadened. Exposure to the natural sciences, to ecology, to energy management, to systems analysis, to the economics of land development, to land-use law, and to issues of public health has not been but should become fundamental to an urbanist’s training. Urban designers advocating a “smart growth” agenda today generally do so out of an ideological conviction that sprawl abatement or open-space conservation are necessary. But as they enter this territory, they quickly realize that acquiring additional skills and partners in planning is equally necessary.

To actually manage metropolitan growth requires dealing with needs—like land conservation, water management, and transportation—that cut across jurisdictional boundaries. Therefore, and increasingly for many, urban design must be about: