



September 2017

Useful Community Development... quick notes

This Month: Reliable Web Resources for Community Development, Many New Pages
Visit us and explore at www.useful-community-development.org.



Some Reliable Web Resources You Need

We received a question from one of the visitors to our website about the most insightful web resources other than our site. We're glad to provide a few starter recommendations. Use the [Contact Us](#) feature of our site if you need something specific. Obviously we can barely scratch the surface in a newsletter!

Fresh Methods of Community Engagement: Check out what the [Tamarack Institute](#) has to say.

City Neighborhoods: A favorite is the [Asset-Based Community Development Institute](#). If you have a vacant land issue, the [Center for Community Progress](#) offers excellent advice.

Small Towns and Rural Areas: A favorite resource is [Strong Towns](#). Also dig deep into web pages provided by your state's extension service, which is part of your land grant university. Specifically related to farmland issues, check out [American Farmland Trust](#).

Suburban Revitalization: Start with the [TED talk from suburban retrofit guru Ellen Dunham-Jones](#). If you need more, have your local library find her book for you. Internet resources are sparse.

Quality Development and Containment of Urban Sprawl: We like [smartgrowth.org](#). Also check out this recent [TED talk by Peter Calthorpe](#), who is associated with the new urbanism.

Academic-Level Thinking on Metropolitan Issues: Hands down, that would be an arm of the [Brookings Institution](#).

Citizen Planners: Our best advice for planning commission and board of adjustment members is to ask your city or town to pay for you to join the [American Planning Association](#) as a Planning Board member. This would allow you to receive the magazine *The Commissioner*. Alternatively, they could subscribe to the publication for you at a non-member rate.

Historic Areas: For Americans, the best source is the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#). Other nations with medium to long histories will have quasi-governmental or private preservation organizations.

Public Spaces: [Project for Public Spaces](#) is unbeatable.

Developing Countries: For our international readers in developing nations, our favorite introductory site is the UN-affiliated [Urban Gateway](#).

A Few Words About Security on Our Site

We hear that around October 1, the Google Chrome browser will start giving pop-up warnings about websites that use http instead of https. We will convert useful-community-development.org over to https as soon as practical with our hosting service, but no doubt some of you may see that warning for days or weeks. But our site will be just as secure as it always has been. We don't collect any money or information about you on our site either, so you wouldn't be at risk.

But apparently Google just plans to scare everyone anyway! It's good to be aware of this if you are in charge of a website on behalf of your community organization.

[agreements](#) between developers and neighborhood groups, and doing a [housing condition survey](#), which your neighborhood could complete with volunteers if you can't find funding. Another discusses [comprehensive plan contents](#). Great visitor contributions include [Amphitheaters as Exciting Gathering Spaces](#) and [Formerly Boarded-Up House Found New Life](#). Visitor questions with extensive answers include [What Is a Flag Lot](#), what to do when a [Minor Grandchild Inherits Abandoned House](#), [What Are Consistency Requirements in Planning](#), [Zoning for More Long Term Rentals](#) as opposed to short-term, the situation where [Deed Restriction Setbacks Are Stricter than the County's Rules](#), [Where to Find Deed Restrictions](#), [HOA Review of Window Replacement](#) concerning contradictory rules between HOA and a sub-association, [Covenants Require Approval But Do Not Set Up an HOA](#), [Neighbor Singles Me Out on Infraction](#), and [Strangers Using Common Ground by the Lake](#).

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