



## Amherst Development Park - Engaging the Community and Embracing the Environment

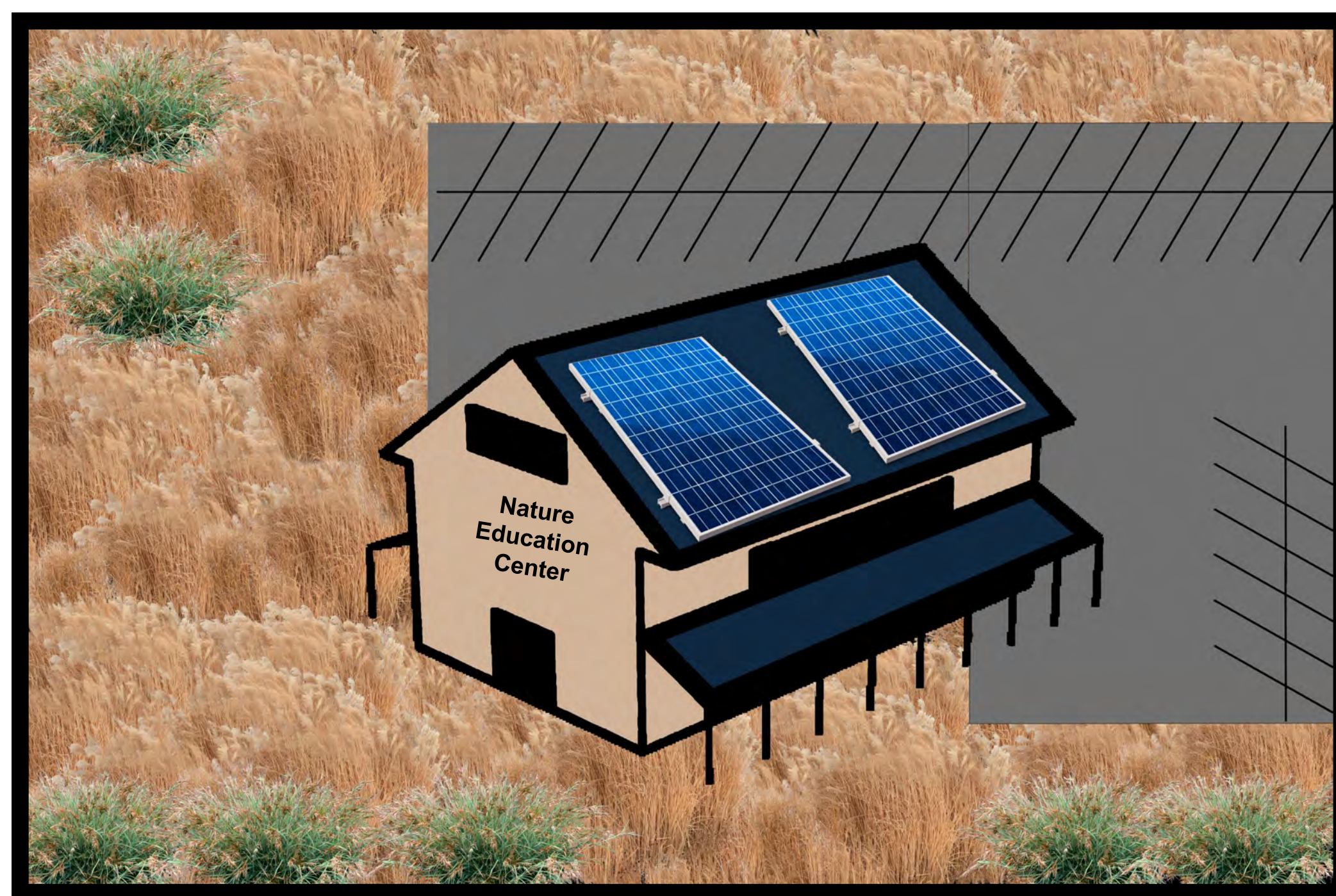
### Community Engagement Spaces

#### Nature Education Center

**Goal:** Provide an opportunity for environmental education, furthering the natural connection that Amherst already has.

**Exhibits Include:**

- Wisconsin's Glacial and Natural History
- Restorative Prairie Importance
- Nature in Your Backyard: The Tomorrow River
- Implications of Climate Change



#### Amphitheater

**Goal:** Community space for performances, meetings, and concerts to improve Amherst social capital, increase tourism, and provide entertainment.

### Master Plan

Our vision for the Village of Amherst is to blend the community and the environment together while supporting and stimulating economic growth and prosperity. Our plan includes an engaging nature education center that will have environmentally focused activities and learning opportunities for all ages, along with an amphitheater for hosting outdoor events. All nestled within a beautiful restored prairie with hiking trails weaved throughout. Our plan also includes a multi-use development that will bring new and innovative businesses along with new living opportunities for the village. All blended with light industrial development to create and sustain jobs to encourage economic growth.



### Multi-Use Development Complex

#### Lower-Level Small Businesses

**Goal:** Provide low rent, small business spaces to increase access to resources that benefit the wellness and resiliency of the community.

- Business examples: yoga studio, art gallery, Food Cooperative, tutoring center, gym, coffee shop, restaurants, low waste shop



#### Upper-Level Moderate Income Housing

**Goal:** Provide new housing opportunities to support a growing Amherst.

- Community members expressed a shortage of housing, blending this with multi-use development would provide a new opportunity for moderate income housing to allow for affective community growth

#### Community Gathering Space

**Goal:** Housed in the center of the multi-use development. Connect people of all ages through physical movement within natural settings.

- Studies show community engagement spaces increases happiness, cooperation, and overall community health
- Children have close access to outdoor spaces with parent supervision

### Duality of Industry and Conservation



#### Industrial Development

**Goal:** Create job opportunities and economic revenue for Amherst.

- Private industries that provide careers and revenue are essential for economic stimulation and community stability
- We encourage those who buy these lots to develop their buildings sustainably and use renewable energy

#### Ecological Restoration

**Goal:** Reestablish native species for the purpose of conservation and education.

- Improving soil health, carbon sequestration, water retention, biodiversity, reduction of erosion and runoff, among other important ecosystem services
- Serves as an educational tool to the public, highlighting the importance of land resources and ecosystem restoration





## Development Goals and Precedent Research for Village of Amherst

### Goal #1: Restore and protect ecosystem services

**Purpose:** Take previously disturbed land such as residential areas, farm fields and industrial areas, and restore to a more natural state using elements such as native plants, invasive species control, soil stabilization, and long-term maintenance and monitoring.

- Steps include invasive species removal, brush clearing, native plant/plug installation, and erosion control efforts. Followed with maintenance and monitoring usually done by mowing or burning.
- Improves soil health, carbon sequestration, water retention, biodiversity, reduction of erosion and runoff, among other important ecosystem services.

#### Example 1: large scale prairie restoration:

The Schulenburg Prairie at the Morton Arboretum in Chicago, Illinois expands over 100 acres. It is one of the oldest and most extensively studied prairie restorations in the Midwest. The prairie has served as an example and benchmark for other smaller scale restorations in the area. It is also an educational resource as part of the arboretum and its exhibits.



**Example 2: small scale prairie restoration:** Some ecological restoration companies specialize in prairie restoration at small scales in public and private settings. This example is from Pizzo Associates, an ecological restoration company in Illinois.

- The Village of Montgomery, Illinois has installed one native prairie and 27 stormwater basins for the entire village. This is an example of having restoration efforts throughout the entire community. This was started in 2007 and has been successful since.



### Goal #2: Improve access to natural spaces for community

**Purpose:** Provide recreational space to explore and learn in a natural environment. Providing opportunities such as a natural playground would encourage development, team building, and curiosity.

- Having a space that consists of elements and textures from the earth (such as tree logs, tree stumps, boulders, plants, drainage paths, among others) instead of a traditional steel playground structure, would give Amherst's children a unique experience.

**Example 1:** Walnut Farm Montessori School in Bentonville, Arkansas. Notable features of this natural playground include a rock wall, log stump balance beam, and interactive learning areas. An observation deck is used for parents and teachers for overseeing activity.



**Example 2:** Schmeckle Reserve, Stevens Point, WI. The visitor's center houses educational programs and a museum. There is also a gift shop and an Amphitheatre outside of the Visitor's Center. These opportunities provide access to all to learn about the local environment.

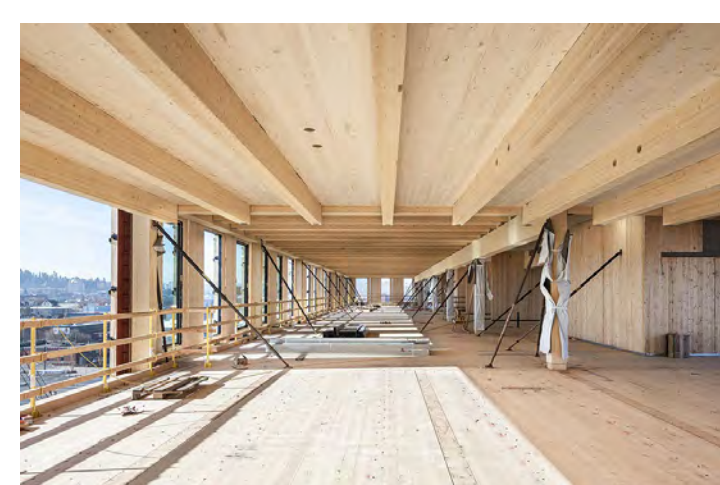


### Goal #3: Increase diverse housing and business opportunities

**Purpose:** Provide access to low-cost rental spaces for local, small, and diverse businesses such as art galleries, yoga studios, food cooperatives, restaurants, coffee shops, etc. as well as housing for moderate- and low-income families.

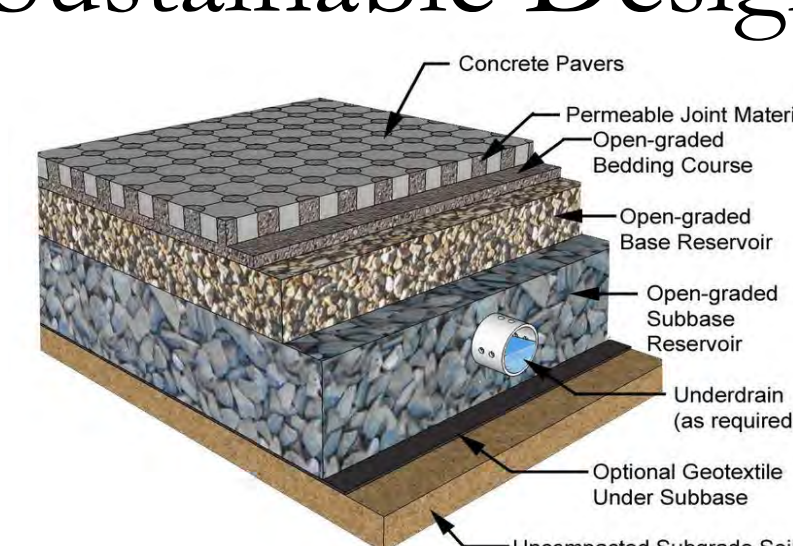
- This space will reduce the need for vehicle dependency, potentially boost property values, and increase resident access to quality products and services.

#### Possible Sustainable Design Characteristics



#### Cross Laminated Timber

**Construction:** A type of mass timber processed and fused together for superior strength. CLT is inherently fire resistant and embodies a significant amount of carbon



#### Pervious Pavement Parking Lots:

Permeable paving systems are porous; therefore, they allow water to infiltrate the pavement and drain into the ground or sub-base rock underneath

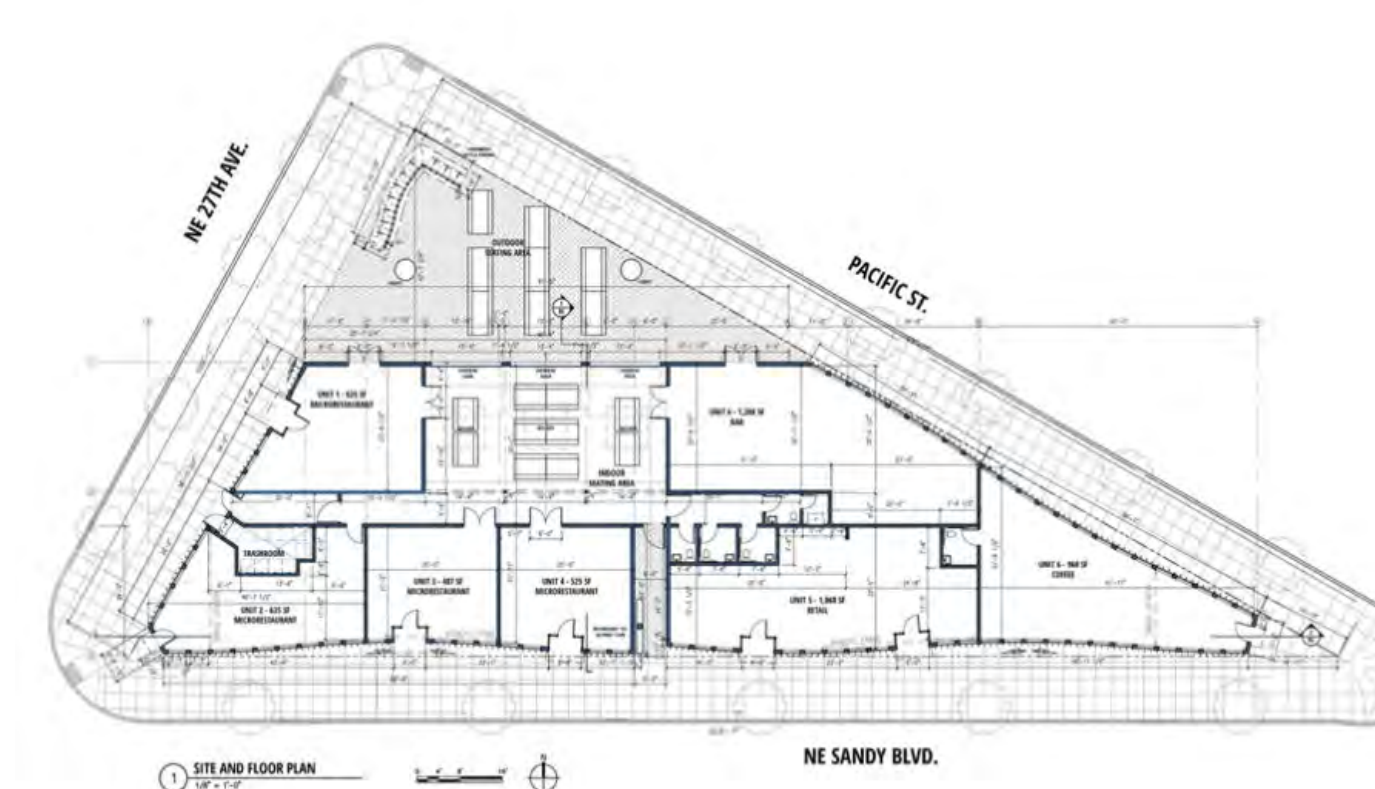


**Biophilic Design:** Emulates nature through natural colors, shapes, and designs. Studies have shown that biophilic design reduces stress, improves focus, mood, and productivity

#### Example:

#### The Zipper, Portland, Oregon

- 12,6000 square foot building, of an old car dealership
- One story building with 7 small businesses, a shared bike rack, fire pit, and shared covered outdoor eating space



### Planning Publication Research

#### Applicable Best Practices for Rural Smart Growth :



Mix Land Uses



Take Advantage of Compact Building Design



Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices



Create Walkable Neighborhoods



Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place.

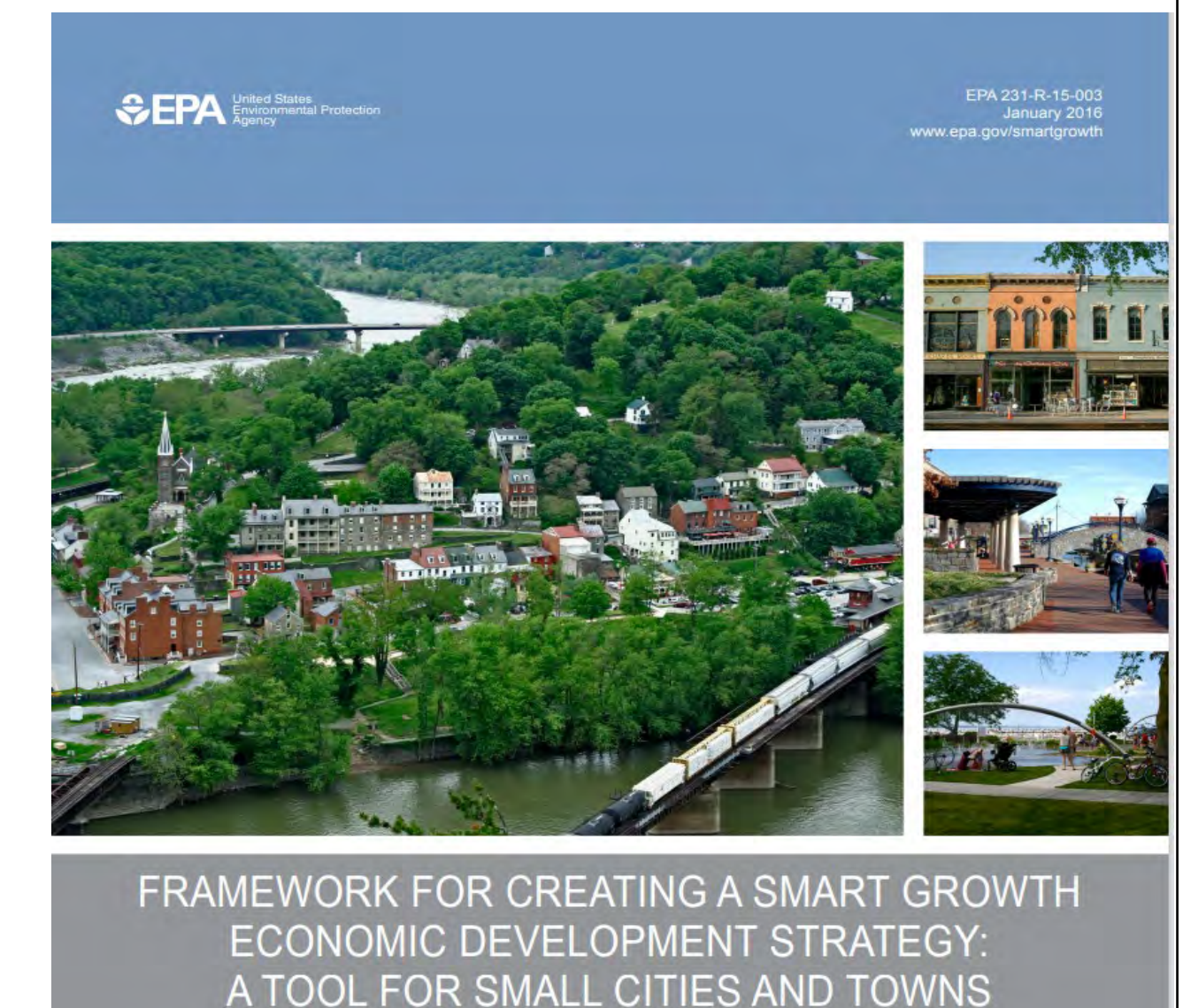


Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas.

### Framework for Creating a SMART Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns

Varying aspects discussed:

- Improve access to local employment opportunities
- Improve the quality of K-12 education
- Support quality of life
- Prepare for climate change



### Development Goals For Amherst Business Park

