



L. Benjamin (Ben) Starrett
Executive Director
Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities

Ben Starrett is the founding executive director of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, created in late-1999 to inspire, strengthen, and expand philanthropic leadership and funders' abilities to support organizations working to improve communities through better development decisions and growth policies. The Funders' Network provides funders with learning and networking opportunities and supports funder leadership and action. For more information, please visit www.fundersnetwork.org.

Ben came to the Funders' Network following a career in public service. After working for city government and the Florida Legislature, Ben joined the Florida Department of Community Affairs – Florida's state land planning agency – and served as its chief planning officer from 1989 to 1999. During this time he created the Eastward Ho! Initiative and Florida's Sustainable Communities Program, ran Florida's Affordable Housing Study Commission, served as the state energy policy director, and staffed or chaired seven gubernatorial blue-ribbon panels on diverse topics such as urban growth patterns, economic development, hurricane preparedness and recovery, Everglades restoration, and coordination of land use and transportation.

A magna cum laude graduate of Princeton University with a degree in politics and economics, Ben is a graduate of Leadership Florida Class XIX, was a Knight Fellow in Community Building, and serves on the board of the Sustainable Cities Institute. Active in numerous national and local organizations, he lives in South Florida.