

What is CommunityViz?

CommunityViz is an extension of ESRI's ArcGIS desktop software that facilitates the visualization and comparison of alternative development scenarios. It was originally developed by the Orton Family Foundation, a non-profit group that focuses on technology and tools for more-informed community decision-making.

There are two components of CommunityViz software. The first is Scenario 360, which is a two-dimensional map and data analysis component of the software. It adds the functionality of a spatial spreadsheet to ArcGIS for Desktop software, similar to how a spreadsheet program like Microsoft Excel handles numerical data. Dynamic calculations embedded in the spatial spreadsheet are controlled by user-written formulas that change value as referenced input values change. The impact of physical development or policy decisions under consideration may be measured side-by-side in two or more growth scenarios contemplated in the software.

The second component of CommunityViz software, Scenario 3D, is a visualization tool that constructs three-dimensional models of buildings, roads, landscapes, or entire communities using two-dimensional information generated in the Scenario 360 analysis.

More information on CommunityViz and its capabilities for regional planning is available on their website (www.communityviz.com) or *The Planner's Guide to CommunityViz* published by the American Planning Association in 2011.

