

A Local Government Guide

to LEED for Neighborhood Development



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ABOUT THE U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

The U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through financially-responsible, efficient buildings and communities. With a community comprising 79 local affiliates, more than 16,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 162,000 LEED credentialed professionals, USGBC leads a diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students. To learn more about greening the buildings and neighborhoods in your community, see www.usgbc.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	Page 4
II.	LEED for Neighborhood Development Basics	Page 5
III.	Considerations	Page 6
IV.	Four Approaches	
	1. Lead by Example	Page 7
	2. Remove Barriers and Pave the Way	Page 15
	3. The Case for Incentives	Page 22
	4. Technical Assistance and Education	Page 25
V.	Citizen Engagement	Page 28
VI.	Resources	Page 29

FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in implementing sustainable development and the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system in your community. The benefits of sustainable development are well documented: reduced environmental impacts, better health for residents, and greater economic opportunities. Local governments across the country, and the world, are embracing the philosophy of sustainable development and using it to advance energy conservation, green building, and healthy, livable communities. The LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system aligns the principles of smart growth, New Urbanism and green building into a set of national standards for green design at the neighborhood scale. Public officials and local government staff are recognizing its usefulness as a tool to guide future development in their communities towards greater sustainability.

This rating system represents the next evolution in the development of LEED and is intended to capture the interest of both the public and private sector in looking beyond the individual building to the larger community, recognizing that a building is only as green as its surroundings. LEED for Neighborhood Development allows local governments to achieve market transformation at a greater rate than ever before by making the “greenness” of a building as much about where it is as what it is. As our cities continue to thrive and our regions continue to urbanize, tools such as LEED for Neighborhood Development will illustrate how we can build for the future without sacrificing future generations.

Thank you for taking this next step with us towards a more sustainable future for our cities, our country and our planet.



Jason Hartke
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U.S. Green Building Council

INTRODUCTION

Local governments, sitting squarely at the intersection of law, policy, economic development, land use decisions, and the public interest, have a unique opportunity to address sustainability. Many local governments have actively pursued an environmental agenda for years, while others are new to the field, and both face the daunting task of sifting through a recent outpouring of research and technology for items of value to government entities.

The purpose of this guide is to explore one tool in particular – the LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) rating system – focusing specifically on the ways it can be best used by local governments to achieve sustainability goals. You might be reading this document because you are working on a climate action plan, revising a green building ordinance, or looking to incentivize transit-oriented development; in the following pages, you will learn how others have used LEED for Neighborhood Development to tackle similar challenges. Four key approaches are highlighted in this guide:

- 1. Lead By Example**
- 2. Remove Barriers and Pave the Way**
- 3. The Case for Incentives**
- 4. Technical Assistance and Education**

These four approaches include strategies at different levels of involvement, from direct participation in a project, like Symphony Park in Las Vegas, to identifying LEED-ND as an important tool for policymakers, as in the City of Albuquerque Climate Action Plan. LEED for Neighborhood Development can serve as a resource for whatever your sustainability goals might be, supporting your plan of action and moving one step closer to lasting change.

The U.S. Green Building Council developed this resource with input from members of the LEED for Neighborhood Development Core Committee, representatives from local and state governments and stakeholder associations which represent these entities. USGBC expects to revise and expand this guidance periodically to reflect any changes to the rating system or innovative policy approaches devised by state and local governments.

LEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT BASICS

LEED for Neighborhood Development is a rating system that incorporates the principles of smart growth, New Urbanism, and green building into a national standard for green neighborhood design. Like other LEED design and construction rating systems, it is a voluntary program designed to evaluate and guide the design and construction of development projects. The rating system distills the experience of leading professionals in environmental policy and the building industry, and the U.S. Green Building Council, the Congress for the New Urbanism, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, into objective, measurable criteria. Through certification, LEED for Neighborhood Development recognizes development projects that successfully protect and enhance the overall health and quality of our natural environment and our communities. Development projects that commit to sustainable building practices speak directly to a host of pressing issues in our modern world: vehicle use nearly tripled between 1970 and 2006¹, raising vehicular emissions to more than 20% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions²; buildings alone account for 39.7% of energy consumption and 10.1% of water use³. Development projects that incorporate smart growth strategies, green building techniques, and efficient neighborhood design have an opportunity to reduce these negative impacts of the built environment, and many more.

LEED for Neighborhood Development projects vary widely in their scope and character. Small infill projects qualify, as do large master planned communities, and projects may apply early in the development process or immediately after construction is complete. Mixed-use and single use projects can fare well in the program and a variety of location types near existing infrastructure also are admissible. For more detailed information on eligible project types and a fuller account of the benefits of the rating system, please see the introductory material in the LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System, the LEED Reference Guide for Green Neighborhood Development, and our website: usgbc.org/nd.

The LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system is made up of prerequisites, which all projects must meet, and a set of credits, from which each project can choose to earn enough points for certification. The basic components of each prerequisite and credit are a general statement of intent and specific performance thresholds or prescriptive measures. The LEED-ND rating system is divided into the following credit categories: Smart Location and Linkage (SLL), Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD), and Green Infrastructure and Buildings (GIB). You might incorporate the rating system comprehensively into your policies and projects or reference an entire credit category or individual credits or, depending on the scale of your work.

LEED for Neighborhood Development has three stages of certification, which relate to the phases of the real estate development process.

Stage 1 - Conditionally Approved Plan: provides the conditional approval of a LEED-ND Plan and is available for projects prior to completing the entitlement—or public review—process. Completion of this stage is envisioned to help projects get support from their local government and community.

Stage 2 - Pre-Certified Plan: pre-certifies a LEED-ND Plan and is available for fully entitled projects or projects under construction. Completing this review can help projects secure financing, expedite permitting or attract tenants.

Stage 3 - Certified Neighborhood Development: completed projects formally apply for LEED certification to recognize that the project has achieved all of the prerequisites and credits attempted.

Governments Take the Initiative with LEED

In recent years, thousands of projects in the United States have achieved LEED certification. As of March 2011, more than 440 localities across the U.S. are recognizing LEED as an effective tool for benchmarking the performance of buildings in their community, and more than 3,000 local government projects are pursuing LEED certification. Learn more about green building policies at: www.usgbc.org/government.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to understand that there are natural limitations to the application of the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system. LEED-ND is not a replacement for comprehensive planning by a municipality or county. It was not designed to rate public plans, such as general plans, but rather individual project development plans. If you are looking for a program suitable for an entire city, the STAR Community Index might be more appropriate (see sidebar). Because LEED-ND rates individual development projects, it is not the best program to certify an existing, established neighborhood. However, new projects in existing neighborhoods can work quite well; the system applies best when at least 50% of a project's total building square footage consists of new buildings, or buildings undergoing major renovation. Additional information on this topic is in the introduction to the LEED-ND rating system.

Selecting a good location is an important element of LEED for Neighborhood Development. Prerequisites that specify standards for locating a project mean that not all land within a given jurisdiction will be eligible for certification. Rather than issuing a blanket mandate that all new development projects must achieve certification, it is more effective to remove barriers to achieving certification and encourage and provide technical assistance to projects seeking certification.

In some subject areas, such as stormwater management, local governments might have regulations with more stringent requirements than those in the rating system. The intention of LEED-ND is not to override or replace such regulations, but to set a minimum national baseline that will encourage all projects to meet high standards.

A Complementary Program: STAR Community Index

The STAR Community Index—currently under development by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council, the Center for American Progress, and the National League of Cities—is a national, consensus-based framework for evaluating and benchmarking the sustainability of U.S. at the jurisdictional scale. The Index identifies the key components of sustainability at the city or county level, provides tools for managing and presenting related data, and offers a national rating system that allows communities to benchmark their progress. The Index will consist of credits in the following goal areas: Natural Systems, Planning & Design, Energy & Climate, Economic Development, Employment & Workforce Training, Education, Arts & Community, Children, Health & Safety, and Affordability & Social Equity. ICLEI has recently released sustainability goals and guiding principles for the nine goal areas. Currently 10 communities are helping ICLEI evaluate the goals and test an online platform to record and measure progress and performance over time.

Learn more at: www.icleiusa.org/star

STAR Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles: www.icleiusa.org/programs/sustainability/star-community-index/star-goals-and-guiding-principles

APPROACH 1: LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Jurisdictions can lead by example either through direct project involvement, or by setting goals and making commitments that set the tone and expectations for future growth in the area.

STRATEGY: SET GOALS AND MAKE COMMITMENTS

There are several ways to show commitment to a sustainable development agenda. Often, the first step is adopting a policy statement in a comprehensive plan or a standalone resolution or joining a coalition of other jurisdictions with similar sustainability goals. A key strategy is to review an existing comprehensive or general plan for barriers to LEED-ND development or include a policy statement about LEED-ND in a new or update to the comprehensive plan. When drafting a policy statement, consider reviewing the LEED-ND rating system to ensure that the statement addresses all relevant areas of sustainable practice, or to borrow specific achievement thresholds from the prerequisites and credits.

It is also vital to start an ongoing conversation about sustainability goals among a variety of stakeholders, including elected officials, municipal or county departments, business owners, and community members. LEED-ND can be an effective discussion starter and resource during formal goal-setting exercises.

EL PASO, TEXAS

In January 2011, the El Paso City Council unanimously approved a substantial new plan for the city's future. Connecting El Paso seeks to direct population growth and to incorporate former industrial sites into the urban fabric by promoting smart growth planning and transit-oriented development under the city's new transit plan. While not a comprehensive plan for the entire city, Connecting El Paso serves as a comprehensive plan for four transit growth areas: Remcon Circle, 5 Points, the Oregon Corridor, and the 450-acre former ASARCO site. Among the plan's eight policy recommendations is a proposal to use LEED-ND both to rate development projects and to prioritize infrastructure investments, permitting and grants. This recommendation included a suggestion that the City partner with the local USGBC chapter to provide education about LEED-ND to city staff and building professionals.

Connecting El Paso: connect.planelpaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Connecting-El-Paso-Report_120910_lores.pdf

STRATEGY: DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY FOR LAND UNDER YOUR CONTROL

Given that many municipal real estate portfolios include vacant or underutilized properties, one way for a local jurisdiction to encourage sustainable community development is through active participation in a LEED for Neighborhood Development project. With direct involvement in a project, the city or county can help bring to fruition a project that otherwise might have stagnated or developed in an unsustainable manner.

Certain factors contribute to a successful LEED for Neighborhood Development project and the scale and available resources will impact your level of involvement. Reviewing the questions below will help to determine whether a site under your control is eligible.



1. Is the site served by existing or planned water and wastewater infrastructure?
2. Is the site located:
 - in an infill location?
 - adjacent to existing development?
 - close to existing or planned transit?
3. Is the area located in a 100-year floodplain area?
4. Are there any wetlands or water bodies on the site or nearby?
5. Are there any known imperiled or endangered species in the area?
6. Is there any undeveloped prime agricultural land on the site?

For a complete list of criteria to consider, review the Smart Location and Linkage prerequisites of the LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Rating System. The rating system is available in PDF form at usgbc.org/leed/nd.

Once you have determined that the site is eligible, one or more of the following strategies may be appropriate, depending on your level of involvement in the project.

Several consultants have developed tools for conducting an eligible lands analysis and can lead this analysis or train local staff to do so. Please contact neighborhoods@usgbc.org for more information.

STRATEGY: INCORPORATE LEED-ND INTO AN AREA PLAN

One important focus of LEED for Neighborhood Development is the creation of walkable communities that integrate into the framework of the surrounding environment. A number of requirements in the rating system specify minimum density levels, walk distance thresholds, and street connectivity levels. By creating a plan specific to the site, you can ensure that its development will meet these requirements while allowing for flexibility to adapt to market conditions. Small area, specific area, special area, subarea, and sector plans are among the many site-specific documents that can draw on general principles or specific standards from LEED-ND in order to shepherd sustainable development.

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

The City of Bellingham, WA, has been developing “Urban Village” subarea plans for a handful of its 25 neighborhoods in order to complete a strategy—outlined in its Comprehensive Plan—of directing growth toward urban centers. These plans include new zoning and regulations that will help the City comply with Washington state growth management requirements. The Comprehensive Plan specifically encourages the use of LEED-ND to measure a subarea plan’s long-term sustainability, which planning staff has done with both the Samish Way Urban Village (SWUV) and the Fountain District Urban Village (FDUV). After drafting the plans, staff evaluated how each neighborhood, when redeveloped, might score under the LEED-ND rating system. In areas where the neighborhood might not meet criteria, staff tried to make improvements to the plans. Staff estimated that if the neighborhoods were redeveloped as envisioned, they would achieve at least Silver and Certified levels of certification, respectively. The City also offers density bonuses as an incentive to projects that obtain LEED certification under any of the LEED rating systems, including LEED-ND.

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON (CONT.)

City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan: www.cob.org/services/neighborhoods/community-planning/comprehensive-plan.aspx

Samish Way Urban Village (adopted 2009): www.cob.org/services/neighborhoods/community-planning/urban-villages-planning/samish-way-urban-village/index.aspx

Fountain District Urban Village (adopted 2010): www.cob.org/services/neighborhoods/community-planning/urban-villages-planning/fountain-district-uv/index.aspx

PLEASANTON, CALIFORNIA

Planning staff and members of the Hacienda Task Force with the City of Pleasanton recently adopted the Hacienda TOD Plan. During development of the plan, the task force discussed using LEED-ND requirements, specifically the Neighborhood Pattern & Design criteria, as a framework for sustainability requirements in the plan. The City does not require projects to pursue LEED-ND certification, but staff incorporated many of its concepts in the standards and design guidelines that the City will use to evaluate mixed use or residential projects at or near the Pleasanton/Dublin BART station.

Hacienda Transit Oriented Development Plan: www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/business/planning/hacienda/hacienda-plan.html

BOULDER, COLORADO

In 2007, the City of Boulder drafted a vision and guidance for long-term development of a 160-acre previously-developed site east of Downtown Boulder. City Council adopted the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP) for “Boulder Junction,” a site adjacent to where the Regional Transportation District plans to build new bus and rail transit facilities and the city intends to build a new multi-use neighborhood. In 2009, Farr Associates, as consultant to the city, evaluated the TVAP against the pilot version of the LEED-ND rating system and initial criteria from the LEED-ND 2009, and found that the plan would have met all pilot prerequisites, but would not have met four prerequisites in the 2009 rating system. The City has since identified solutions that will allow development to meet two of these prerequisites. Simultaneously, the City introduced the Green Building and Green Points (GBGP) program to mandate certain aspects of green building to meet the City’s Climate Action Plan and related goals.

Transit Village Area Plan: www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?Itemid=2277&id=5346&option=com_content&task=view

STRATEGY: CLEAN UP BROWNFIELD CONTAMINATION

Many brownfield sites have a level of soil or groundwater contamination that can hinder investment on the property. Helping to orchestrate the environmental remediation can eliminate uncertainty in the development community about the potential site. As the process can be expensive and time-consuming, certain departments and organizations can provide financial (loan guarantees, etc.) and technical assistance. These groups could include:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- The U.S. Department of Commerce
- The Small Business Administration (SBA)
- State departments of public health and environment
- Local business groups or partnerships
- Local brownfield organizations, if available

STRATEGY: CONSTRUCT OR INSTALL UPDATED INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE SITE

Funding the construction of updated or improved infrastructure in the area will help mitigate some of the financial costs that a site developer might otherwise bear. These infrastructure investments do not have to focus solely on roadway or water/wastewater improvements. Parks, libraries, bikeways or support for other alternative modes of transportation will help to attract investment and meet certain credits within the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system.

BABYLON, NEW YORK

The Town of Babylon has undertaken an extensive effort to turn the hamlet of Wyandanch into a model transit-oriented development. Launched in 2002, the 100-acre Wyandanch Rising project represents a comprehensive community-based planning process for revitalization of city-acquired land in the core of a historically impoverished and disinvested area. As part of this project, the Town is leveraging funds from federal, state, county, and non-profit agencies to make infrastructure improvements, such as sewer upgrades, that will remedy the barriers that have limited density around the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) station at the heart of the project. The Town is also developing a mixed-use zoning code and urban renewal plan based on guidelines in LEED-ND.

Final Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan: www.townofbabylon.com/whatsnew.cfm?id=294

WYANDANCH RISING Sparking Revitalization through Land Use and Transportation Planning: www.nymtc.org/download_file.cfm?filename=WyandanchRising.pdf

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Brewery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a new 20 acre development on the site of the former Pabst Brewery, which closed in 1996. Developers are working to revitalize the complex into a variety of residential, office and retail uses in both historic and new buildings. They are working with the City's Office of Environmental Sustainability on green-building practices and have completed LEED-ND Stage 1 review at the Platinum level. The City also created a Tax Incremental Finance District to help fund infrastructure, such as new public streets, for the Brewery project. In 2006, the City created a Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) for the brewery site to replace the underlying zoning standards with performance standards. The underlying zoning district's permitted and special uses become permitted as a matter of right in the overlay district. In January 2008, the City Common Council adopted an amendment to the Brewery DIZ to include sustainability guidelines. The guidelines cover many principles found in the LEED-ND rating system, such as the preservation and

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN (CONT.)

reuse of historic buildings, recycling of construction demolition, contamination abatement, landscaping, pocket parks, efficient street lighting, heat island reduction, water efficiency, stormwater management, and green building practices.

City of Milwaukee project information: city.milwaukee.gov/Projects/Brewerysite.htm

The Brewery: www.thebrewerymke.com

STRATEGY: ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Unless you are planning to handle the procurement and construction process of the project, you will need to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the project site. Depending on the condition of the existing site and the scope of the project, the aforementioned approaches can prepare the site prior to issuance of an RFP. In addition, to ensure that the project proceeds according to the vision of your jurisdiction, it is best to include some or all of the following stakeholders:

- Planning Department
- Economic Development Department/Agency
- Department of Real Estate & Procurement
- Department of Public Works
- Local Redevelopment Authority

Pursuing the “highest bidder” approach is not the only way to arrive at a financially-responsible development concept. A fuller life-cycle costing exercise can reveal in a traditional development model hidden costs that more sustainable development might mitigate. In such a case, one alternative approach is to select a winning proposal based on the developer’s pursuit of LEED for Neighborhood Development certification.

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

In 2004, the City of Victoria, BC, issued a unique RFP for the 12-acre Dockside Lands area. The City wanted a project that was innovative and felt that a typical bidding process would not achieve its goals for the brownfield site. The RFP used Triple Bottom Line accounting (focused on value according to social, environmental and economic criteria), which is a philosophy that LEED-ND embodies. The City allowed potential developers to propose potential land uses, density, and community amenities for the site. Then it scored proposals based on their alignment with the Triple Bottom Line approach. The resulting project, Dockside Green, has demonstrated impressive achievement and innovation thus far. Dockside Green is a LEED-ND Platinum Plan, and the developers have committed to achieving the Platinum level of certification under the LEED rating systems for the project buildings.

Dockside Green Project: www.docksidegreen.com

Dockside Lands Request for Proposals: www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/currentprojects_dockside_rfp100904.pdf?zoom_highlight=dockside

OTHER STRATEGIES

Public-Private Partnerships

A public-private partnership—where the local entity sells the land, issues a ground lease for the land, or serves as an active member of the development team—can facilitate sustainable development, especially if the development program includes new public infrastructure or multiple facilities dedicated to public use. A variety of city or county departments may be directly or tangentially involved in such a partnership, or may simply put policies in place that support sustainable development projects.

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) took a direct approach, acting as a co-developer with the JBG Companies on a project to transform 26 acres of a WMATA-owned commuter parking lot around a transit station into a mixed-use center. The Twinbrook Station project earned Gold-level certification for its plan under the LEED-ND pilot program.

Twinbrook Station: www.twinbrookstation.com

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Symphony Park in Las Vegas is an example of city-owned land (a former rail yard and a brownfield that the city remediated) undergoing redevelopment by a city selected partner – Newland Communities. Currently under construction, the 60-acre project incorporates a new park, symphony and performing arts hall, hospital center, hotel/casino and private condominium towers. Symphony Park, a LEED-ND Gold Plan, is the culmination of a set of initiatives designed to integrate green design and development into the city; these initiatives include the adoption of a Green Building Resolution and the creation of a Green Council. Newland Communities created a master plan for Symphony Park and worked with various stakeholders to craft the Symphony Park Design Standards (SP Design Standards), which provide detailed guidance for achieving the principles outlined in the master plan. Newland joined a working group with the City to prepare a LEED-ND application and compare the design standards to LEED-ND requirements. That group further customized the SP Design Guidelines to ensure that future vertical developers would meet LEED-ND requirements. To show its commitment to the long-term sustainability of the project, the City incorporated the SP Design Standards into the Downtown Centennial Plan (DCP), a component of the Las Vegas Master Plan 2020. All development in the Symphony Park District must be consistent with the SP Design Standards and the DCP, or must receive a plan amendment from City Council. Furthermore, City Council adopted the Downtown Centennial Plan Overlay District into the City's zoning code. The DCP-O is an overlay zone that is meant to be synonymous with the DCP and incorporates by reference future adopted design standards for sub-districts (such as Symphony Park). These strategies ensure that developers will adhere to the standards through build-out and beyond

Symphony Park: www.symphonypark.com/home.aspx

City of Las Vegas project summary: www.lasvegasnevada.gov/Government/7598.htm

Symphony Park Design Standards: www.lasvegasnevada.gov/files/Symphony_Park_Design_Standards.pdf

Public Transit Authorities

Transit authorities also have an opportunity to influence sustainable development practices in a variety of ways.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

In New York, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA analyzed the existing operational structure of the Metropolitan Transit Authority and issued a report outlining practices that would make the agency and region more sustainable. The report not only promoted reducing the energy load of MTA vehicles and facilities, but also promoted the integration of land-use and transit, and made recommendations about how to maximize value for both. The report specifically encouraged policies that provide incentives to developers who design and construct LEED for Neighborhood Development Gold-level projects or develop on land surrounding transit stations.

Greening Mass Transit & Metro Regions: A Synopsis of the Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA is available at: www.mta.info/sustainability/pdf/synopsis.pdf

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Prepared by Caltrans in California, Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade is a framework for integrating sustainability into all forms of transportation and mobility. Section 6.1, Resources for Smart Mobility Place Types, lists LEED-ND as a tool for creating “Close in Compact Communities.”

Smart Mobility 2010: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/smf_files/SMF_handbook_062210.pdf

Public Housing Authorities

Public Housing Authorities might be interested in pursuing LEED for Neighborhood Development certification for any sites they own or in tying certification to the competitive bid process or to grant funding for redevelopment opportunities.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

As part of its Plan for Transformation, the Chicago Housing Authority issued an RFQ for the redevelopment of the Julia C. Lathrop Homes located in Chicago’s near-northwest side. The January 2010 RFQ, seeking a master developer for the historic 35 acre-public housing complex, called for submissions focused on sustainability and affordability and required that the project be certified at a Gold or Platinum level. CHA selected a development team of private sector and nonprofit developers who are working on a master plan for the project site.

Lathrop Homes: www.thecha.org/filebin/procurements/Lathrop_RFQ_Ad.pdf

Chicago Housing Authority press release: www.landmarks.org/pdfs/Lathrop%20RFQ%20Release%201%207%2009%20Finalx.pdf

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

The San Francisco Housing Authority's HOPE SF program (modeled on the federal HOPE VI program) has been pursuing LEED-ND certification for various projects. The Hunters View project—which is pursuing certification as part of the LEED-ND pilot program—recently won two competitive California state grants. State proposition 1C, which prioritizes smart growth development of affordable housing, funded both awards—\$30 million for infill infrastructure (the maximum grant) and \$10 million for multi-family housing. The San Francisco Housing Authority is also part of public-private partnership with the City of San Francisco and developers Mercy Housing and The Related Companies of California in the redevelopment of Sunnydale using the HOPE SF program. This former public housing complex is registered for LEED-ND, and the rating system is serving as a guide for its master plan designers.

Hunter's View: www.huntersview.info

Sunnydale: hope-sf.org/sunnydale.php

APPROACH 2: REMOVE BARRIERS AND PAVE THE WAY

One of the most meaningful ways to support the use of LEED for Neighborhood Development is to ensure that a jurisdiction's zoning codes, regulations, and policies are supportive of the program and its principles. Developers—who often have spent many years learning to navigate their jurisdiction's approval process—may be wary of LEED-ND if it adds a new layer to this process. By taking a fresh look at existing regulations, your jurisdiction can proactively remove real and perceived barriers, sending a signal to the development community that sustainable development is welcome.

The potential for advancement in this particular area is substantial. Laws throughout the country often contain obstacles which make it difficult, onerous, costly, or impossible to undertake some aspects of sustainable development.

Common barriers include:

- high required parking ratios
- zoning codes that require a separation of land uses
- laws prohibiting the installation of green technologies, such as solar panels

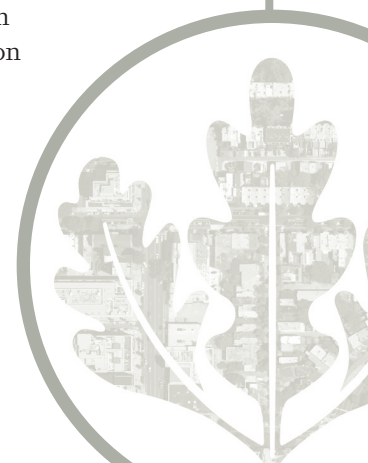
The variety of strategies below can help you identify existing barriers and create new policies in harmony with LEED for Neighborhood Development.

STRATEGY: REVISE ZONING CODES

Zoning codes are an excellent place to begin looking for opportunities for revisions that better align with LEED for Neighborhood Development principles. You might find an array of standards in your codes that differ from LEED-ND requirements, ranging from specific issues, like building setbacks, to more global issues, such as zoning that is incompatible with mixed-use development.

Specific, line item changes to existing codes might be the best way to align with LEED-ND if more comprehensive revision is not necessary or possible in your jurisdiction. If you intend to undertake a substantial code revision, you should consider the numerous ways that LEED-ND can inform less traditional zoning ordinances that are more compatible with sustainable development, such as performance zoning, form-based zoning, or design-based zoning.

Performance zoning offers a high degree of flexibility, by dictating acceptable impact levels for new projects depending on their location in the community, but not necessarily dictating land use. For example, if a project can demonstrate that it will not have negative impacts in a number of categories identified by the jurisdiction – noise, pollution, aesthetic qualities – then the actual land use can vary. LEED-ND requirements contain specific metrics that may work well as the building blocks of a performance-based zoning system. Elements of LEED-ND may also inform a form-based code (see NPDp1/NPDc1: Walkable Streets for measures appropriate for incorporation into form-based codes). Form-based codes are useful in building a cohesive style in the public realm because they focus on harmony among design elements and distinguishing neighborhood character based on the intended form and function of the area. Another possibility is to create an overlay zone that bundles together a set of sustainable guidelines, eliminating the need for each individual project to seek zoning changes when undertaking a LEED for Neighborhood Development Project.



GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

In 2007, Grand Rapids, Michigan, overhauled their 1969 urban renewal-era zoning ordinance. The antiquated code had been amended more than 300 times and did not align with the community's 2002 smart growth-based comprehensive master plan. The new zoning code follows a form- and performance-based model. Throughout the master plan and zoning ordinance for the largely built out 44 square-mile community, there is a strong focus on the "character" of neighborhoods and smart growth principles. Neighborhood types were developed based on metrics such as land use, street type, block size, building setbacks, and lot widths. Three citywide neighborhood typologies have been incorporated into nearly every zone district in the ordinance. Grand Rapids planning staff reviewed the LEED-ND checklist as they were working on the new ordinance and used it to evaluate whether any sustainability measures were missing. Their analysis found that by simply following the zoning ordinance, new projects could be eligible for a large number of LEED-ND points based on design and site requirements. In most cases, development projects would score enough points to become LEED-ND certified.

New Zoning Ordinance Text and Maps: www.grand-rapids.mi.us/index.pl?page_id=5831

Michigan Municipal League – Creating a Form-Based Code in Grand Rapids: www.mml.org/resources/publications/mmr/issue/form-based.html

CLEVELAND, OHIO

Three high-profile LEED for Neighborhood Development pilot projects in Cleveland have given the city an opportunity to rethink how to create policies and tools to support sustainable development. The projects—St. Luke's Point, Upper Chester, and Flats East Bank—aim to revitalize underutilized sites in the city and re-imagine them as compact, mixed-use neighborhoods. To support these efforts, the Mayor's executive staff initiated a Green Team to review the City's code to locate barriers to LEED-ND projects and identify possible code changes that would facilitate neighborhood development. Team members included LEED-ND project managers and staff from local utilities and various City departments. The Green Team attended monthly meetings in which development project members dissected LEED-ND requirements, and it held workshops to identify and reconcile specific roadblocks. With the help of outside experts, including the Cleveland Foundation, and Cleveland's Sustainability Office, the City Planning Commission used the LEED-ND rating system to develop Green Design Guidelines. The Commission now is developing a "Green Design Overlay (GDO) Districts" zoning amendment that incorporates the Green Design Guidelines; the City would designate a GDO District through its existing Design Review District process. The GDO District amendment is under review by the City's Department of Law; if adopted into code, the overlay will then apply on a case by case basis. Cleveland also offers incentives for LEED-ND projects, including tax abatement and a reduced parking requirement.

Green Design Overlay District (GDO): planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/ftp/GreenDesignDistrict2011A.pdf

Design review section of the Cleveland City code: caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/clevelandcodes/cco_part3_341.html

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

On February 2, 2010, Nashville adopted a new Downtown Code (DTC) to serve as the regulatory accompaniment to the 2007 Downtown Community Plan. Recognizing community desire for more distinct, cohesive downtown neighborhoods, and faced with a regulatory process in which almost every project sought rezoning or variances, the city created an alternate approach. The new DTC is form-based, giving the development community better options with respect to mixing land uses and increasing density, while creating clear standards for the character and scale of each neighborhood. The DTC drew on the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system to identify areas of consideration for the code, and in some cases borrowed metrics. Additionally, the DTC awards pre-certified LEED for Neighborhood Development projects with additional density under the Bonus Height Program. The Planning Commission determines bonuses based on ratings equivalent to LEED-ND Silver, Gold, and Platinum and these bonuses extend to every property within the LEED-ND development.

Nashville Downtown Code: www.nashville.gov/mpc/docs/dtc/DTC_OrdinanceNo_BL2009_586_adopted02Feb2010.pdf

CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

When a new highway interchange was constructed along the southwest edge of Champaign, the city recognized the opportunity to create a more sustainable vision for the new development that would soon surround the 600+ acre interchange site. The city aimed to create an overlay zone that would speak to both environmentally-sensitive design and urban form, finding in LEED for Neighborhood Development a set of standards that integrated these ideas and reflected their values. The draft overlay zone draws upon specific portions of the rating system that are most applicable and appropriate for the site; for example, the draft incorporates block size and intersection density metrics found in LEED for Neighborhood Development to support the creation of walkable streets with high connectivity. The draft overlay also signals clearly to potential developers the importance of green development practices by requiring that a member of the development team be a green building professional. In the future, this overlay will offer an excellent case study that can inform comprehensive zoning code revisions for the city of Champaign.

Curtis Road Interchange Zoning Amendments: archive.ci.champaign.il.us/archive/dsweb/Get/Document-7627/SS%202009-076.pdf

STRATEGY: REVISE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A comprehensive plan that is supportive of LEED for Neighborhood Development will include goals explicitly connected to sustainable land development, such as the clustering of growth around existing infrastructure, increased density where appropriate, investment in transportation infrastructure, the creation of an attractive pedestrian environment, and similar provisions. If your comprehensive plan already includes many of these elements, reviewing the rating system can help add specific metrics to more general goals, allowing you to measure the success of the plan. In Bellingham, WA, the Comprehensive Plan specifically encourages the use of LEED-ND to measure a subarea plan's long term sustainability. See "Incorporate LEED-ND into an Area Plan" (page 8) for more information about this initiative. LEED-ND also can help identify specific actions linked to sections of a comprehensive plan. For example, the Centers for Disease

Control prepared an analysis of the public health implications of the LEED-ND rating systems credits; a jurisdiction that identifies public health as an important goal can review this analysis on the LEED-ND website. Similarly, a jurisdiction focusing on environmental performance issues will find numerous strategies to reference in LEED-ND.

STRATEGY: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The rating system contains numerous thresholds that can help refine the general goals found in a climate action plan. For example, a climate action plan that includes an increased public transportation access goal can provide a concrete target by using specific service thresholds found in SLLc3: Locations with Reduced Automobile Dependence. A jurisdiction also might analyze existing service thresholds according to the parameters in SLLc3, to set a baseline upon which to measure percentage improvement. If your climate action plan requires that individual projects document how they will address the goals of the plan, you may want to suggest incentivizing or incorporating the principles of LEED-ND as a way to satisfy this requirement.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Beginning in 2008, the City of Albuquerque began working on a climate action plan designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050. The plan includes a clear assessment of the gap between the city's aspirations for growth and the kind of development occurring as a result of current regulations and policies. The plan calls for updating ordinances, sector plans, and master plans using LEED-ND. It also provides incentives for achieving LEED-ND certification or for incorporating a range of sustainability strategies found in the rating system, such as increased density and well-developed transit corridors.

City of Albuquerque Climate Action Plan: www.cabq.gov/cap/CAPREV11forWEB.pdf

THE STATE OF OREGON

The Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program prepared a handbook to offer guidance about how state jurisdictions can best address climate change at the local level. The handbook references LEED-ND as well as specific standards, such as connectivity and school campus size, from the rating system.

Cool Planning: A Handbook on Local Strategies to Slow Climate Change: www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/docs/cool_planning_handbook.pdf?ga=t

STRATEGY: PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

LEED for Neighborhood Development is highly structured, and includes a great number of specific metrics for each green development strategy included in the rating system. This high degree of specificity and the broad scope of the credits – touching upon everything from vicinity characteristics to the extent of glazing on retail spaces – make the rating system very useful as a tool in performing a gap analysis of an existing neighborhood. In underutilized or blighted neighborhoods that are targeted for revitalization efforts, benchmarking the neighborhood against the rating system provides a manageable starting point for what can often be an overwhelming task.

PORTLAND, OREGON

The Portland EcoDistricts initiative looks holistically at livability in largely existing neighborhoods. The goal of the initiative is to develop best practices in environmental, economic, and social sustainability, testing them in specific neighborhoods throughout Portland. The initiative references LEED-ND as a tool that can measure and monitor impacts across these categories. The EcoDistrict framework and LEED-ND are complementary strategies that will help guide development at all stages, from new development to infrastructure upgrades and best management practices in existing areas.

Portland EcoDistricts Initiative: www.pdxinstitute.org/index.php/ecodistricts

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

The SALT (Syracuse Art Life and Technology) district, a project of the Near Westside Initiative, Inc., is envisioned as a new center of artistic and cultural development in the Syracuse and Central Upstate New York area. Historically home to both a rich arts community and an industrial salt works, the Near Westside revitalization effort is aimed at alleviating poverty in the neighborhood and transforming underutilized industrial and commercial buildings into vibrant places once again. LEED for Neighborhood Development was used as a guiding framework throughout the planning process. Initially, the existing SALT district was assessed against the entire rating system, producing an initial scorecard and a clear picture of the current neighborhood's strengths and weaknesses. Plans and policies were then produced, taking into account current development activities and future development activities. The SALT district now has a set of plans and policies that will guide future development, as well as a LEED-ND Gold Plan.

The SALT District: www.saltdistrict.com

The SALT District LEED-ND Recommendations Study: www.raimiassociates.com/db_files/saltdistrictleed-ndrecommendationsfinal-withappendices.pdf

STRATEGY: WRITE OR REVISE A GREEN BUILDING OR DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Jurisdictions are increasingly realizing that sustainable building practices only begin with single buildings and that a building is only as green as its context. Green building ordinances can and should be transformed into green development ordinances that recognize the additional benefits of sustainable land development and planning at the neighborhood scale. Several different models are in use throughout the country. Some jurisdictions with existing green building ordinances that mandate or strongly recommend LEED (or equivalent) certification can be revised to include LEED for Neighborhood Development as a valid compliance path. Other jurisdictions create more specific policies that require submission of a LEED for Neighborhood Development checklist (or proof of registration or certification, potentially), based on the size of the project or other characteristics. Requiring certification is not necessary for an effective green development ordinance, unless eligible locations have been identified; rather, an analysis of the project proposal against LEED for Neighborhood Development criteria often allows the jurisdiction to see how the project measures up without mandating certification. Some jurisdictions choose to require certification, but only for projects receiving a certain level of financial support from the jurisdiction. One particularly useful connection to make would be to encourage the use of LEED for Neighborhood Development by projects in ideal growth areas, such as along transit corridors or near neighborhood centers.

GREEN BUILDING ORDINANCE EXAMPLES

Oakland, CA

The City of Oakland, CA has proposed that new Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) or projects with phased entitlements or subdivision of parcels greater than 60,000 sq. ft. must submit a LEED for Neighborhood Development checklist to the city for review. See: www.oaklandnet.com/government/ceda/revised/pdf/GreenBuilding-SPreport-Thresholds.pdf

Richmond, CA

In April 2010, the Richmond City Council adopted a mandatory Green Building Ordinance applicable to residential and non-residential development projects. The ordinance requires a LEED-ND checklist for any development of 30 detached units or larger. Completion of the checklist is for information purposes only but does raise awareness, and it is providing good data to the City in its reviews of Planned Unit Developments and Conditional Use Permits. See: www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=2121

Boston, MA

Boston, MA, requires that multi-building projects prove that they are LEED for Neighborhood Development certifiable:

City of Boston Environmental & Energy Services: www.cityofboston.gov/environmentalandenergy

Boston Zoning Code and Enabling Act (see Articles 37 and 80):
www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/zoning/zoning.asp#2

East Lansing, MI

The City of East Lansing created a green building ordinance requiring private development projects with multiple buildings receiving over 15% municipal incentives to achieve at minimum LEED for Neighborhood Development Silver certification, with at least one point earned under Green Infrastructure & Building Credit 1: Certified Green Buildings.

City of East Lansing Media Room: www.cityofeastlansing.com/Home/Departments/Communications/MediaRoom/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/121/East-Lansing-Adopts-Groundbreaking-Green-Building-Policy

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

In December 2010, the Palo Alto City Council approved changes to the City's Green Building Program to include a one-year pilot program to evaluate all development proposals larger than 3 dwelling units or ¼-acre, and major renovation projects that require planning review, against LEED-ND. Prior to design review, applicants must submit a checklist that details how the project meets—or has a challenge meeting—LEED-ND prerequisites and credits. The goal is for projects to be eligible for at least 30 points under the rating system, but failure to earn 30 points does not disqualify a development application. The checklist includes the SLL and NPD credit categories from LEED-ND; staff did not include the GIB section in the checklist since similar infrastructure and building requirements are covered in the city's green building ordinance. Staff also added a provision that rewards 5 points for retaining and/or rehabilitating historic buildings, which is a GIB credit. If a project is pursuing LEED-ND certification, they do not need to fill out this checklist, provided they can submit proof of registration and, when complete, submit their Stage 1 or Stage 2 review. City staff analyzes each checklist and summarizes the results for review by the Planning

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA (CONT.)

& Transportation Commission. Projects that have completed checklists have gone into significant detail in their responses, which has shown that the pilot is encouraging careful consideration of the principles of smart growth and urbanism. Once the pilot is complete, staff will consider whether to make this a permanent program and, if so, in which areas it will require LEED-ND certification or will require a project to achieve a certain number of points.

Palo Alto LEED for Neighborhood Development Pilot Program instructions and checklist:
www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=25961

RESOURCES

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes
www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/2009_essential_fixes.pdf

EPA's Smart Growth Program assembled a panel of national smart growth code experts to identify elements of local zoning codes that are essential to establishing a foundation for smart growth.

Institute for Local Government – California Climate Action Network
www.ca-ilg.org/sites/ilgbackup.org/files/BestPracticesFramework_v6.3_FINAL.pdf

A Best Practices Framework (version 6.0, February 2010) that calls for new housing and mixed use developments to be built to the LEED for Neighborhood Development standard or its equivalent.

Designing Low-Carbon Neighborhoods with LEED-ND
www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=6557

Analysis of LEED-ND credits with respect to carbon emission mitigation potential.

Planners Energy and Climate Database
www.planning.org/research/energy/database/index.htm

The American Planning Association's Green Communities Research Center, in collaborations with the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, which contains local government planning strategies that address climate and energy concerns.

“Overcoming Obstacles to Smart Growth through Code Reform. An Executive Summary of Smart Growth Zoning Codes: A Resource Guide”
www.lgc.org/freepub/docs/community_design/sg_code_exec_summary.pdf

Examples of codes that advance community livability through code reform; highlights language, requirements, incentives, formats and project review processes that can be useful to other jurisdictions.

Smart Codes: Model Land-Development Regulations
www.planning.org/research/smartgrowth/index.htm

Written by the American Planning Association, this report includes 21 model codes on a variety of topics promoting the U.S. EPA Smart Growth Principles.

Form-Based Codes Institute
www.formbasedcodes.org/

Playbook for Green Buildings + Neighborhoods
www.greenplaybook.org

General advice and strategies for envisioning a sustainable future and getting started on implementation.

APPROACH 3: THE CASE FOR INCENTIVES

Local governments across the country have found targeted financial and development (regulatory/process-related) incentives to be some of the most effective strategies to encourage green building and development. Rewarding developers and builders who choose to build green is an effective way to encourage the adoption of best-practices in design, construction and operations while spurring innovation and demand for green building technologies and improving the health, prosperity and quality of life for all.

The benefits of green development extend well beyond the quantifiable energy, water and financial savings to consumers and governments alike and deep into the community as a whole. Green building creates jobs, reduces strain on public infrastructure and resources, creates and maintains a healthier indoor and outdoor environment, and inspires growth and innovation in the local economy. In recognition of the positive and transformative impact that sustainable buildings and communities are having on pressing local, state, and regional issues, local governments are using effective government incentives to promote leadership in the design, construction and operation of our nation's communities.

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Simple modifications in zoning permissions and review processes can yield impressive dividends for developers and building owners alike who choose to follow green building and development standards. Incentives such as density bonuses and expedited permitting are implemented at low or no cost to government authorities and encourage developers to adopt green practices by making healthy, efficient and high-performance communities an even more attractive option. Below, several common incentives are discussed, including the LEED for Neighborhood Development stage at which the incentives are most useful.

STRATEGY: EXPEDITED REVIEW/PERMITTING PROCESSES

Review and permitting processes can vary greatly in length from one jurisdiction to another. In some communities, reducing the duration of review and permitting processes might be appealing to local developers. Both of these incentives allow a municipality to offer a significant incentive with little or no financial investment, since they only require a shift in permitting priority.

Applicable to Stage 1 and Stage 2.

SARASOTA, FLORIDA

Sarasota County approved a Green Development Incentive Resolution (No. 2006-174) that provides fast-track permitting for residential and commercial green developments. Such incentives apply to projects pursuing LEED-ND.

Resolution: www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=1908

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Creating Incentives for LID Practices through Green Development Certification Programs: share2.myfwc.com/spring/LowImpact%20Development%20Workshop%2020090508/04_Green_Building_Certifications_and_Incentives.pdf



CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Charlotte County passed an ordinance (Ord. No. 2009-020, § 1, 5-12-09) to encourage green development and included LEED for Neighborhood Development as one of the certifications that would make a developer or land owner eligible for a suite of incentives. Proposed incentives included fast-track permitting, special county recognition, reductions in parking, FAR bonuses, and reduced development plan review fees as County budget allows.

Charlotte County, Florida, Code of Ordinances, Part III, Chapter 3-2, Article V. - Green Building Program (Sec. 3-2-84. - Green building standards): library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10526&stateId=9&stateName=Florida

STRATEGY: DENSITY BONUSES

Density bonuses provide an opportunity for municipalities to tie incentives to specific local public policy priorities. Many municipalities and counties allow for percentage increases in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) or other measures of density contingent upon certification or proof of developing green. Even municipalities with height restrictions are providing height bonuses as another form of density bonus for buildings that are part of green neighborhoods, particularly for urban infill projects. These additional bonuses in density yield both short- and long-term dividends for developers and building owners through the rent or sale of additional units allowed by the bonus incentive. See the Nashville case study, above, for more information on that city's Bonus Height Program. **Applicable for Stage 1 and Stage 2.**

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Financial incentives such as tax credits or fee reductions are a highly successful means of encouraging developers to follow green building and neighborhood practices. In tough economic times, financial incentives may not always be feasible. However, in some cases these programs do not ultimately result in negative impacts on a municipality's or county's finances since the proposed development may increase the assessed property value in the city, leading to increased property tax revenue and offsetting the financial cost of the incentives.

STRATEGY: TAX CREDITS AND ABATEMENTS

Many municipalities and counties already offer tax credits and abatements as a means of advancing specific policy agendas. These incentives can be extended specifically to developers and builders who achieve measurable, verifiable green neighborhood goals. While these types of incentives have a short-term cost to the jurisdiction, the increased property value from an energy-efficient, greener neighborhood can offset a reduction in tax revenue over time. **Applicable to Stage 2 and Stage 3.**

STRATEGY: FEE REDUCTIONS OR WAIVERS

Municipalities or counties that charge fees for permit review or other processes have begun offering reduction or waivers for developers or contractors who commit to verifiable green neighborhood practices. While this incentive does have a financial cost to government authorities, the benefits of a healthier and more efficient building stock pay dividends for the entire community. Often, fee reductions and waivers are

paired with a structural incentive such as expedited permitting to give the developer increased benefit for choosing to build green. **Applicable to Stage 1 and Stage 2.**

STRATEGY: GRANTS

Grants for green neighborhood developers and green builders are being established by local governments to entice construction and renovation project teams to go green in markets that might otherwise be resistant. These programs can be funded through taxes or fees, or through federal or state funds. Such grants are usually awarded to developers to subsidize or render more profitable the design and construction of high-performance buildings. Grant programs often require developers to submit a proposal for the grant funding or meet specific program goals to ensure that they are developing in a green manner. **Applicable to Stage 1 and Stage 2.**

STATE OF ILLINOIS

In 2007, the Governor of the State of Illinois signed “The Green Neighborhood Grant Act,” which created state-level incentives for LEED-ND. While not currently funded, the Act directed the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to fund up to 1.5% of total development costs for up to three applicable projects per year. Applicable neighborhood developments were to have achieved LEED for Neighborhood Development certification.

Green Neighborhood Grant Act: www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/95/PDF/095-0325.pdf

OTHER TYPES OF INCENTIVES

Providing technical assistance (see Section 4) or marketing assistance also can be a valuable incentive to developers who are hoping for a smooth development process drawing high-profile attention.

STRATEGY: MARKETING ASSISTANCE

Developers and owners of green buildings and neighborhoods have much to gain from the increased marketability of third-party certified, high-performance green real estate. In recognition of the unique marketability of green neighborhoods, some municipalities and counties are offering free marketing assistance, including signage, awards, and recognition on city websites, press releases and other means to help green builders rent and sell their properties more effectively. **Applicable to Stage 2 and Stage 3.**

RESOURCES

Green Building Incentive Strategies:
www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=2078

“Financing and Encouraging Green Building in Your Community”:
www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=6247

American Planning Association “Model Affordable Housing Density Bonus Ordinance”:
www.planning.org/research/smartgrowth/pdf/section44.pdf

APPROACH 4: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EDUCATION

LEED for Neighborhood Development is built upon the premise that sustainable development must be the product of an integrated approach, including collaboration across a variety of disciplines and decision-making based on analysis of existing and future conditions. To design and construct a LEED for Neighborhood Development project, project teams need access to quality data about the site and vicinity, and the expertise of professionals versed in sustainable design. A number of low or no-cost ways for jurisdictions to encourage developers to undertake LEED for Neighborhood Development are to provide direct technical assistance, educate staff on the rating system to expedite review, assemble an information storehouse to simplify the data collection process for project teams, or identify land that is potentially eligible for LEED for Neighborhood Development projects.

STRATEGY: DIRECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Often, developers interested in pursuing green projects hesitate to do so because they are still unfamiliar with the standards and requirements involved in building green. Several strategies can alleviate this hurdle for developers. If your jurisdiction has a designated sustainability department or is thinking of creating one, consider designating a staff member as the point of contact for project teams interested in undertaking green projects. This person, or multiple people, could also spend a portion of their hours engaged in providing direct technical assistance to project teams. Anyone in this position should be accredited under the LEED Professional Accreditation program (several specialties are offered, including LEED-ND). In large jurisdictions where several LEED for Neighborhood Development projects are underway, consider convening members of these project teams for occasional meetings or conference calls to share their experiences. The simple act of meeting periodically has two distinct benefits: project teams get the chance to learn from each other and representatives of the jurisdiction get firsthand information about challenges that projects are facing. Another model for designating specific individuals with green development expertise is to ask each department to have one such expert on staff, and convene these individuals occasionally as an interdepartmental green team.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The Department of Planning and Development houses City Green Building, which now includes a Sustainable Communities program, facilitated by a dedicated Sustainable Communities planner. This program provides information about design strategies and tools for neighborhood and community sustainability, references LEED-ND and includes information about local LEED-ND projects.

Sustainable Communities Program: www.seattle.gov/dpd/GreenBuilding/SustainableCommunities/default.asp

City Green Building: www.seattle.gov/dpd/GreenBuilding/OurProgram/default.asp



PORTLAND, OREGON

Green Building Program: www.portlandonline.com/osd/index.cfm?c=41481

The Green Building Hotline and Resource Center provides information to various sectors of the community, including residents, schools, nonprofits, developers, and design and construction professionals. Resources include training and technical information, plus links to local financing options and education providers: www.buildgreen411.com

STRATEGY: GENERAL STAFF EDUCATION

Beyond designating individuals with extensive green expertise, providing a modest level of training to all staff involved in the review and approvals process is a simple, low-cost way to signal your jurisdiction's commitment to green to developers and the general public, and ensure that all staff members recognize key green development strategies in new project applications.

STRATEGY: COMPILE DATA

Land development projects, especially LEED for Neighborhood Development projects, are particularly concerned with accessing high quality information about project site and vicinity characteristics. Common information needed to complete a LEED for Neighborhood Development certification submittal include items like street centerline files, water and wastewater infrastructure maps, parcel level development histories, historic building and cultural landscape designations, and bicycle paths. Your jurisdiction can greatly assist the project in gathering this data by centralizing as much as possible or by training staff with oversight of this information on what to expect from project teams that need this information for a certification submittal. Additionally, if your jurisdiction does not have robust, updated geographic data (for use in Geographic Information Systems), building this database of information will be invaluable to future project teams.

STRATEGY: IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE LANDS

Your jurisdiction can identify land that is best suited for LEED for Neighborhood Development by applying the five Smart Location and Linkage prerequisites to all parcels within the jurisdiction. Prerequisites will filter land based upon: smart location characteristics, such as proximity to transit, public water and wastewater infrastructure, community services, and previously developed land; proximity to imperiled species, wetlands, and water bodies; soil characteristics; and proximity to floodplains. While such an analysis does not ensure that any project within the eligible lands will receive certification, it does identify promising areas for growth and give guidance to developers that will encourage them to strongly consider location when pursuing new projects.

STRATEGY: COLLABORATE WITH A LOCAL USGBC CHAPTER

Local chapters of the U.S. Green Building Council can serve as a valuable resource for local governments looking to use the LEED-ND as a tool for sustainability in their communities. With their diverse membership of planners, architects, builders, developers, and others, your local chapter can provide volunteers to help draft policies that incorporate components of LEED-ND into the zoning and building approval processes. Chapters also can be a strong source of advocacy and support for sustainable development—by raising

community awareness through educational offerings or media outreach or by speaking in support of specific policies or projects in community forums or council meetings. Below are examples of what a few of the USGBC chapters are doing to engage and educate regional stakeholders on LEED-ND:

USGBC COLORADO CHAPTER

The USGBC Colorado Chapter recently provided a letter of support for a LEED-ND project in the City of Lakewood and organized letters of support from other allied organizations within the region. The Chapter also had two members speak in support of the project and the benefits of sustainable development during a City Council meeting. This presentation helped win unanimous approval for the project.

USGBC ILLINOIS CHAPTER

In 2011, the USGBC Illinois Chapter is partnering with CNU Illinois and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to host a series of roundtable programs on how to achieve sustainable communities for state and local government representatives using LEED-ND as the sustainability framework and linking the principles to the specific goals and elements of the GO TO 2040 seven-county regional plan.

USGBC MINNESOTA CHAPTER

In 2010, the USGBC Minnesota Chapter held a series of Sustainable Communities Forums to convene local government officials and staff on how LEED-ND could serve as a planning and sustainability tool. The sessions included presentations and discussion on barriers and challenges to implementation as well as opportunities.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Citizen engagement can be critical to the success of a specific project, regulation or other government effort to promote sustainable development. Engaged civic associations or other advocacy groups should be government partners, helping to advance key policy changes, rather than a source of opposition. Local governments can reduce resistance to new projects and smart growth initiatives by beginning with a community-led planning process. This process might evaluate the relevance of LEED-ND to the community, express a vision that draws on specific principles embodied in LEED-ND, or assess the quality of an existing or planned neighborhood using the rating system.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

The Loring Park neighborhood is in the midst of a community-led planning process to identify and plan for the assets, issues and opportunities that will provide the basis of an integrated plan and vision. The Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC), in collaboration with a consultant, are leading the planning process and drafting of a master plan. The citizen group conducted an assessment of the neighborhood's sustainability based on LEED-ND in cooperation with the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) summer program. In its RFP for a consultant, CLPC called for application of LEED-ND principles, derived from credits such as walkable streets, housing and jobs proximity, mixed income and diverse communities and energy efficient buildings, into the planning document and an investigation of how to certify the plan or future redevelopment opportunities in the neighborhood to LEED-ND. CLPC will propose that the City of Minneapolis and Metropolitan Council adopt the completed Small Area Master Plan, making it an official part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

LEED for Neighborhood Development and the Loring Park Neighborhood:

www.loringpark.org/minagen/home%20page%20pdfs/LEED_ND%20Report.pdf

Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan:

www.loringpark.org/minagen/home%20page%20pdfs/MastrplnEventRecord.html

A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO LEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

This free publication, produced by Raimi + Associates with the Natural Resources Defense Council, is tailored to individuals interested in promoting sustainable development. The guide will help grassroots advocates and concerned citizens assess the sustainability of proposed projects in their towns, and communicate the benefits of LEED-ND to local officials in plain language. Visit www.nrdc.org/leednd for more information and to download the guide.

RESOURCES

There is a growing network of resources available to support understanding and implementation of the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system.

LEED Reference Guide for Neighborhood Development

The LEED Reference Guide for Green Neighborhood Development, 2009 Edition, is a user's manual that guides a LEED-ND project from registration to certification. This guide helps developers, planners, architects and others involved in the vertical and horizontal development of a neighborhood development project make sustainable choices. The Reference Guide includes detailed information on the process for achieving LEED-ND certification, credit and prerequisite information, resources, and standards for the LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Rating System. For each credit or prerequisite, the guide provides: intent, requirements, point values, environmental, economic and social issues, related credits, summary of referenced standards, credit implementation discussion, timeline, and team recommendations, calculation methods and formulas, documentation guidance, examples, exemplary performance options, regional variations, resources, and definitions. Hard copies and electronic versions are available for purchase. usgbc.org/store

USGBC Course Catalog

USGBC has developed a range of educational offerings about LEED-ND, from webinar series to day-long in-person workshops. Search the link below by LEED rating system to find detailed information on cost and delivery for the following courses:

- **ND 201: LEED for Neighborhood Development: Sustainability Beyond Buildings.**
An introductory, three-part webinar series about the conceptual foundation of the LEED-ND program.
- **ND 251: Understanding the LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System**
A day-long, facilitator-led workshop about the core concepts and strategies of the rating system.
- **ND 252: LEED for Neighborhood Development Credit-by-Credit Review.**
A six-part webinar series about each credit in the LEED-ND Rating System.
- **ND 301: Implementing the LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System.**
A day-long, facilitator-led workshop at a more advanced level.

www.usgbc.org/CourseCatalog/CourseCatalog.aspx

In addition to USGBC-developed educational offerings, USGBC approves and lists courses developed by outside organizations that are relevant to LEED rating systems. The network includes many courses with content pertinent to LEED-ND. Below is an example of a course developed particularly for local government staff.

Local Government Leveraging of LEED-ND Course

Criterion Planners has developed a day-long, intensive workshop specifically for local government land use, transportation and environmental planning staff, which is offered as part of the USGBC Education Provider Network. Attendees learn about the parts of the LEED-ND rating system that interface with local plans and regulations, steps to leverage LEED-ND according to local conditions and priorities, and gain access to a model LEED-ND overlay zone.

www.crit.com/documents/leedndworkshop.pdf

www.usgbc.org/CourseCatalog/courseDetail.aspx?ID=90003850

USGBC Local Government LEED-ND Webpage

This new webpage includes resources and tools for local government officials and staff to implement green, sustainable neighborhoods in their jurisdictions. Examples of policy tools, such as design guidelines and model codes, accompany educational resources, a deck of PowerPoint slides that highlight the strategies in this guide, and links to related organizations.

www.usgbc.org/ndlocalgov

Technical Guidance Manual and Model Zoning Ordinance

Sustainable development practices—such as providing a mix of uses, building narrower streets and locating parking behind or beside buildings—are illegal under many local codes. USGBC has partnered with Pace University School of Law’s Land Use Law Center to identify best practices for local government officials and planners seeking to use LEED-ND to evaluate their codes and regulations or to incentivize developers and landowners to follow LEED-ND. By fall 2011, USGBC and Pace expect to offer a technical guidance manual of these best practices as well as a model floating zoning ordinance that would encourage voluntary compliance with LEED-ND.

www.pace.edu/school-of-law/centers-and-special-programs/centers/land-use-law-center-0

LEED-ND Connections Tool

The Connections Tool is an extension for ESRI’s ArcMap software, developed specifically to assist LEED-ND project teams. This software product can be used to evaluate a location or project design against 56 thresholds in 15 different LEED-ND prerequisites and credits. These 56 thresholds all measure some aspect of one of the following broad topic areas: quality of networks (including pedestrian/bicycle) or walking/bicycling distance to a range of amenities (parks, schools, shops). The concepts of connectivity and walk distance are fundamental to the LEED-ND rating system, and the Connections Tool addresses all of the places that they appear in the rating system. The output

LEED-ND Connections Tool (CONT.)

of the Connections Tool is a set of maps and tables that can be used to document compliance with the thresholds. This program is free to LEED-ND registered project teams, and is compatible with ArcEditor 9.3 or ArcInfo 9.3.

Practitioners looking for further experience using the Connections Tool can choose to take a course on this topic: www.usgbc.org/CourseCatalog/CourseDetail.aspx?ID=90003964

Please write to neighborhoods@usgbc.org to request access to the Connections Tool.

Connections Tool User Guide, Version 1.0 (November 2010): www.crit.com/documents/leednd_connections_tool.pdf

LEED Regional Priority Credits

Regional Priority Credits (RPC) provide an incentive to achieve credits that address geographically-specific environmental priorities. RPCs are existing credits that USGBC chapters and other regional stakeholder groups designated as being particularly important for their areas. If a project earns an RPC, then they also earn a bonus point toward the project's total point score. Each ZIP code has six RPCs per rating system. A project may earn one bonus point per RPC, up to four bonus points. Local government staff looking to remove barriers to LEED-ND might put extra effort into facilitating achievement of the credits designated as RPCs in their area.

www.usgbc.org/RPC/RegionalPriorityCredits.aspx?CMSPageID=2435

RESOURCES

LEED for Neighborhood Development Links

usgbc.org/leed/nd

usgbc.org/nd

usgbc.org/ndlocalgov

neighborhoods@usgbc.org

ENDNOTES

1. National Transportation Statistics, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, U.S. Department of Transportation, 2008. Accessed at www.bts.gov/publications/national_transportation_statistics
2. Energy Information Administration, Emissions of Greenhouse Gases in the United States 2005. Report DOE/EIA-0573(2005). Released November 2006.
3. U.S. DOE Buildings Energy Data Book, October 2009 (1.1.3 Buildings Share of U.S. Primary Energy Consumption (Percent); 8.1.1 Total Use of Water by Buildings (Billion Gallons per Day)). Accessed at buildingsdatabook.eren.doe.gov

LEED® 2009

for Neighborhood
Development

Total Possible Points 110***

 **Smart Location & Linkage 27**

 **Neighborhood Pattern
& Design 44**

 **Green Infrastructure
& Buildings 29**

** Out of a possible 100 points + 10 bonus points*

*** Certified 40+ points, Silver 50+ points,
Gold 60+ points, Platinum 80+ points*

 **Innovation & Design Process 6**

 **Regional Priority Credit 4**



LEED-ND

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