

**DATE:** September 16, 2013

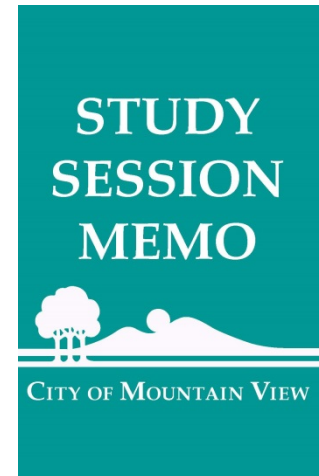
**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Martin Alkire, Principal Planner  
Randal Tsuda, Community Development  
Director

**VIA:** Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

**TITLE:** **North Bayshore District Sustainability  
Concepts**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this workshop is for Councilmembers to discuss their sustainability vision for North Bayshore and how district-wide sustainability concepts may be applied to the North Bayshore Precise Plan. Council direction from this workshop will help refine the principles for the North Bayshore Precise Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

This report presents a brief summary and overview of district-level sustainability concepts and how they could be applied to the North Bayshore Precise Plan area.

### *Precise Plan Consultant Team*

The City has hired Raimi + Associates to lead the Precise Plan consultant team. Raimi + Associates worked on the preparation of the City's General Plan update, developing policy, and contributing to a variety of topics, including the land use, urban design, infrastructure, health, and sustainability sections. Raimi + Associates also helped develop the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED-ND rating system.

Along with Raimi + Associates, the City hired EcoDistricts (formerly the Portland Sustainability Institute) through a State sustainability planning grant to provide technical assistance to the City. EcoDistricts have developed resources to help cities develop "ecodistricts." At the Study Session, the City's consultants will discuss LEED-ND and ecodistricts in greater detail, provide examples of how other cities are using these tools, and discuss options for how these concepts may be applied to the North Bayshore Precise Plan.

### *2030 General Plan and North Bayshore*

The General Plan established a new vision, goals, and policies for North Bayshore. Through many public meetings, the City Council, EPC, and the community articulated that North Bayshore is a very special place, with unique natural and recreational surroundings and a significant area of future job growth in the City. The General Plan noted the challenges of the area, such as traffic congestion and protecting natural habitat areas and species. The General Plan set a high bar for North Bayshore in terms of future growth and change. The General Plan includes the following broad goals to focus future planning efforts:

- **Goal LUD-15.** An area that is a model of highly sustainable and innovative development, protective of the natural and biological assets of the area.
- **Goal LUD-16.** A diverse area of complementary land uses and open space resources.
- **Goal LUD-17.** A sustainable and efficient multi-modal transportation system.
- **Goal LUD-18.** A comprehensive strategy for reducing the effects of future sea-level rise.

The goal of the Precise Plan is to implement the General Plan's aspirations for the area in terms of strategies, policies, development regulations, and improvements.

### *North Bayshore Precise Plan – Process Update*

The North Bayshore Precise Plan process started again following adoption of the City's General Plan in July 2012 and completion of the North Shoreline Transportation Study in 2013. The Precise Plan team will also continue to conduct targeted outreach to key North Bayshore stakeholders, including major companies, small businesses, and other area stakeholders. In addition, the project website has relaunched ([www.northbayshorepreciseplan.org](http://www.northbayshorepreciseplan.org)) as another project outreach tool. The Precise Plan process includes the following next steps:

- **September 25**—Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) Study Session on issues, opportunities, and development concepts and ideas, including the form and character of the area, land uses and intensities, and transportation and open space networks.

- **October 15**—City Council Study Session on issues, opportunities, and development concepts and ideas discussed at the EPC's September 25 meeting.
- **December 4**—EPC Study Session on Plan alternatives for land use and transportation. Several Plan alternatives will be presented, and the EPC will provide comments on a preferred Plan alternative.
- **December 10**—City Council Study Session on Plan alternatives for land use and transportation, including the EPC's comments on a preferred Plan alternative. The Council will provide direction on a preferred Plan alternative.

Once a preferred Plan alternative is identified, the EIR process will begin and the Precise Plan will be drafted. Both the EIR and Precise Plan will then be reviewed by the EPC and City Council in 2014, with formal action on these documents scheduled for late 2014.

#### *EPC Study Session – North Bayshore Precise Plan and Sustainability*

On August 17, 2011, the EPC held a Study Session to discuss how the North Bayshore Precise Plan could address the topic of sustainability. Several of the EPC's main points relating to sustainability from this meeting include:

- There was interest in a district-level approach to sustainability, one that goes beyond individual projects;
- The Plan should include a combination of development contributions to both district and individual projects;
- The Plan should not pick an individual sustainability protocol. It should adapt features from various protocols most applicable to Mountain View. The City should be able to quantify the sustainability benefits over time.

Attached to this report is information from: (1) the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) regarding their LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Neighborhood Development) rating system; and (2) EcoDistricts. These documents provide an overview of how these organizations have developed neighborhood-level sustainability concepts and resources. These are provided for the City Council to consider when discussing district-level sustainability approaches for the North Bayshore Precise Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **LEED-ND and EcoDistricts: An Overview**

LEED-ND and EcoDistricts are examples of leading, innovative approaches cities are using to meet ambitious sustainability goals at the neighborhood or district level. A key concept behind both these approaches is that “green” buildings by themselves do not create “green” communities, and that only through planning at a larger district scale can cities create more sustainable communities. A district-level approach to sustainability requires new ways of thinking, partnerships, and an overall strategy.

#### *LEED-ND*

LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) is a rating system developed by the USGBC to assess the sustainability of a neighborhood. It is similar to the LEED rating system (Silver, Gold, etc.) for green buildings; however, it awards “credits” at the neighborhood scale based on factors such as:

- *Smart locations and connections*
  - Categories include: Sensitive to its natural setting and surrounding habitat. Well connected by streets and paths to surrounding areas. Close or accessible to public transit.
- *Neighborhood pattern and design*
  - Categories include: Efficient use of land. Comfortable, safe, and inviting streets for pedestrians. Reduced parking standards and efficient parking lot design. Bicycle-friendly design. A mix of uses and community spaces.
- *Green infrastructure and buildings*
  - Categories include: Green buildings. Reusing older buildings. Reducing pollution from construction, stormwater, and light sources. Reducing the “heat island” effect with greater landscaping and tree canopy. Neighborhood-scale renewable energy sources and distribution systems. Recycling materials for infrastructure, reusing wastewater.

There are a number of certified LEED-ND projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. Examples include Treasure Island (San Francisco), Shipyard/Candlestick Point (San

Francisco), Rebuild Potrero (San Francisco), Alameda Landing (Alameda), and Station Park Green (San Mateo).

Attachment 1 provides a more complete summary of LEED-ND.

### *EcoDistricts*

EcoDistricts is a nonprofit organization working to educate and assist communities looking to develop ecodistricts. Ecodistricts are essentially public-private partnerships that emphasize innovation and implementation of district-scale sustainability best practices. Ecodistrict projects can vary based on a community's particular needs. Some project examples include "green streets," car-/bike-sharing programs, district energy and water management systems, rainwater harvesting, and urban agriculture.

EcoDistricts have developed tools and resources to help cities develop their own ecodistricts. EcoDistricts describes the key ecodistrict development phases as follows:

- *District organization*—engaging stakeholders to create a neighborhood-governing entity to set goals and manage district sustainability;
- *District assessment*—creating a performance-based neighborhood sustainability roadmap that addresses key performance areas;
- *Project feasibility and development*—launching catalytic district-scale sustainability projects;
- *District monitoring*—developing district governance to guide long-term project implementation.

EcoDistricts "performance areas" assess how an ecodistrict is achieving district sustainability goals and objectives in terms of equitable development, health and well-being, community identity, access and mobility, energy, water, habitat and ecosystem, and materials management.

There are a number of cities worldwide currently using EcoDistricts tools and resources. Current examples in the U.S. include San Francisco (Central Corridor Ecodistrict); Austin, Texas; Boston, Massachusetts; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon.

Attachment 2 includes additional background information on EcoDistricts.

## **Opportunities and Constraints for the North Bayshore Precise Plan**

### *What is North Bayshore doing already?*

The City is already implementing district-level sustainability projects in North Bayshore. One example is the City's recycled water system, which includes infrastructure that spans a large area and requires property owners to connect to the system. This project enables the City to achieve increased recycled water usage for properties in the district. Another example is the initial steps already under way to form a Transportation Management Association (TMA). The TMA is being planned to help fund and develop transportation improvements, such as a new publicly accessible shuttle system to the area from the Downtown Transit Center. This will result in a more efficient shared shuttle service for area employees and residents.

Both of these examples illustrate how scaling sustainability to the district level can allow the City to improve its sustainability performance for the area.

## **Key Questions and Discussion Points**

Below are key sustainability discussion points to potentially direct development of the Precise Plan:

### **1. Highly sustainable goals, programs, and monitoring**

The General Plan's vision for North Bayshore—as a highly sustainable and innovative district—will be implemented by the new Precise Plan. The Precise Plan will include highly ambitious transportation goals through the North Shoreline Transportation Study's mode-share targets (i.e., achieving a 45 percent single-occupancy vehicle trip target). The Precise Plan will establish specific Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to meet these ambitious targets. One overarching strategy to help coordinate how highly sustainable goals and programs could be implemented and monitored is through creation of a Sustainability Management Association (SMA). A North Bayshore SMA could become an outgrowth of the TMA, and could set sustainability targets for area water, energy, habitat, etc.; help implement projects; and monitor district performance in these sustainability target areas over time.

Question No. 1: Does Council support more ambitious sustainability strategies, such as a North Bayshore Sustainability Management Association?

## 2. LEED-ND and/or EcoDistricts approaches

If desired by Council, LEED-ND and/or EcoDistricts strategies could guide the development of the Precise Plan. For example, Precise Plan policies, standards, and guidelines could use or emphasize particular LEED-ND categories, such as **smart location and linkage** (e.g., conserving and/or restoring species and habitat areas, avoiding floodplains); **neighborhood pattern and design** (e.g., creating walkable streets, emphasizing compact development, minimizing surface parking lots, improving street network and connections, etc.); or **green infrastructure and buildings** (e.g., provide superior building energy efficiency and superior building water efficiency, district-level approaches to stormwater treatment, district heating and cooling, light pollution reduction, etc.). Attachment 1 includes a more complete list of potential LEED-ND categories and strategies.

An EcoDistricts approach could include developing a list of potential district-level projects for North Bayshore. Examples of projects include habitat restoration/expansion; green streets; shared parking garages; enhanced TDM strategies; car-/bike-sharing programs; district-level urban agriculture and composting; and district-level heating and cooling systems. These projects could then be potentially implemented through a combination of CIP projects, new development, or public-private partnerships. Attachment 2 (Page 7) includes a more complete list of potential EcoDistricts projects.

Question No. 2: What, if any, LEED-ND standards or EcoDistricts approaches could be used for the Precise Plan?

## 3. Sustainability expectations for new development

The General Plan sets the expectation that new development in North Bayshore above 0.35 floor area ratio (FAR) be highly sustainable. This means exceeding the City's Green Building Code level (LEED Silver), as several recent higher-intensity development projects, such as the Intuit campus, have proposed. Based on the General Plan and recent Council direction, the Precise Plan will likely include higher LEED requirements for projects above 0.35 FAR. New development above 0.35 FAR could also be required to contribute to implementation of district-level sustainability projects.

Question No. 3: What should the Precise Plan require for higher FAR projects—additional sustainability measures; contributions to district-level sustainability measures; or a combination?

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council discuss the issues raised in this report and provide direction to the Precise Plan process.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Precise Plan team will synthesize comments from this meeting into the next phases and deliverables of the Precise Plan process.

## **PUBLIC NOTICING**

Courtesy notices were sent to the North Bayshore Precise Plan interested parties list and e-zine subscribers.

MA-RT/7/CAM  
891-09-16-13SS-E

Attachments: 1. A Citizen's Guide to LEED for Neighborhood Development  
2. EcoDistricts Framework





# The EcoDistricts™ Framework

## Building Blocks of Sustainable Cities

May 2013



# Executive Summary

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EcoDistricts are the right scale to accelerate sustainability — small enough to innovate quickly and big enough to have a meaningful impact.

EcoDistricts™ are a comprehensive strategy to accelerate sustainable development at the neighborhood<sup>1</sup> scale by integrating building and infrastructure projects with community and individual action. They are an important scale to accelerate sustainability — small enough to innovate quickly and big enough to have a meaningful impact.

District-scale projects, such as district energy, green streets, smart grid, demand management and resource sharing, are well known. However, the widespread deployment of these strategies has been slow to develop due to a lack of comprehensive policy or implementation frameworks at the municipal level.

EcoDistricts (formerly Portland Sustainability Institute) launched in 2009 as an initiative to help cities remove these implementation barriers and create an enabling strategy to accelerate neighborhood-scale sustainability.<sup>2</sup> Success requires a comprehensive approach that includes active community participation, assessment, new forms of capital and public policy support.

EcoDistricts include the following phases:

1. District Formation
2. District Assessment
3. Project Feasibility + Development
4. District Management

An EcoDistrict is a new model of public-private partnership that emphasizes innovation and deployment of district-scale best practices to create the neighborhoods of the future - resilient, vibrant, resource efficient and just.

Fundamentally, EcoDistricts are an effort to deploy high-impact, district-scale sustainable projects that drive experimentation and innovation. They are a replicable model for cities to accelerate neighborhood sustainability to achieve city-wide goals. Our work focuses on maximizing replicability through creating the following:

- A framework and implementation strategy
- Implementation toolkits with strategies for assessment, governance, finance and municipal policy support
- Training tools and services to promote widespread adoption of EcoDistricts

- A successful pilot program launched in the City of Portland

The economic benefits of sustainability investments create significant competitive and livability advantages while providing long-term value for existing business communities and creative job opportunities for citizens. EcoDistricts bring together neighborhood stakeholders, property developers, utilities and municipalities. The goal is to achieve outcomes including improved environmental performance, deployment of emerging technologies, improved community participation, new patterns of behavior, economic development for local businesses and job creation.



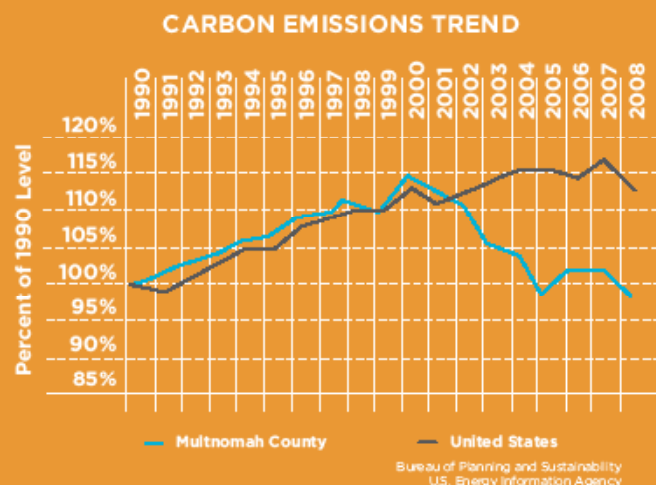
To learn more visit [www.ecodistricts.org](http://www.ecodistricts.org)  
or contact [info@ecodistricts.org](mailto:info@ecodistricts.org)

## I. Why

Global challenges like climate change, resource scarcity and urbanization threaten the stability of life in metropolitan regions. For the first time in history, the majority of the world's population lives in cities, and these urban regions anticipate even greater growth. This concentration of people and resources means that cities are increasingly critical in addressing these challenges, compelling the search for and adoption of urban sustainability solutions. Fortunately, the most powerful venues for transformative solutions are cities themselves. Cities contain the fundamental ingredients to enable innovation: talent, capital, technologies and networks.

As cities around the world grapple with these pressing issues, the question of scale becomes increasingly important — scale of change, scale of impact and scale of risk. While a large number of cities are adopting ambitious climate and energy reduction goals, most are struggling to bridge the gap between policy aspirations and practical investments that have significant on-the-ground impacts. Given the modest results to date, more ambitious performance-based planning, investment and monitoring strategies are essential. International precedents show that districts and neighborhoods provide the appropriate scale to test integrated sustainability strategies because they concentrate resources and make size and risk more manageable.

Districts like Western Harbor in Malmö, Sweden; Southeast False Creek in Vancouver, Canada; and Dockside Green in Victoria, Canada, are creating a new generation of integrated district-scale community investment strategies at a scale large enough to create significant social and environmental benefits, but small enough to support quick innovation cycles in public policy, governance, technology development and consumer behavior. Each of these districts is measuring a set of important sustainability indicators — local greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled, transportation mode splits, stormwater quality, access to healthy local food, utility savings, job creation and access to services, among others.





However, most of these projects are not designed to be replicable. For sustainable neighborhoods to succeed and propagate over time, cities must align efforts in the following four areas:

1. Coordinating stakeholders across a neighborhood who bring disparate interests and scales of impact
2. Developing and testing a new decision tool, the EcoDistricts Assessment Method™, to determine project priorities
3. Developing finance tools and joint venture structures to attract private capital to neighborhood projects
4. Creating supportive public policy to encourage EcoDistrict implementation and institutionalization

#### Western Harbor Bo01:

This district in Malmö, Sweden is an international example of a sustainable urban community — a dense and bustling district that meets multiple environmental goals.



## Why EcoDistricts Matter

- **For Municipalities:** Supports a neighborhood sustainability assessment and investment strategy to help meet broader sustainability policy and economic development goals. EcoDistricts put demonstration projects on the ground, save local money and resources, and stimulate new business development.
- **For Utilities:** Creates a model for integrated infrastructure planning to guide the development of more cost-effective and resilient green infrastructure investments over time. EcoDistricts also provide a mechanism for scaling conservation and demand-side management goals by aggregating district-wide projects.
- **For Developers and Property Owners:** Creates a mechanism to reduce development and operating costs by linking individual building investments to neighborhood infrastructure.
- **For Businesses:** Provides a platform to deliver district-scale infrastructure and building products and services to market.
- **For Neighbors:** Provides a tangible way to get involved in improving and enhancing the neighborhood's economic vitality and sustainability, as well as a new form of organization.

## II. What

EcoDistricts are neighborhoods or districts where neighbors, community institutions and businesses join with city leaders and utility providers to meet ambitious sustainability goals and co-develop innovative district-scale projects. EcoDistricts commit to self organizing, setting ambitious sustainability performance goals, implementing projects and tracking the results over time.

Technologies and strategies for enhancing neighborhood sustainability, such as district energy, green streets, smart grid, demand management and resource sharing, are well known. However, the widespread deployment of these strategies has been slow to develop due to lack of comprehensive policies or implementation frameworks at the municipal level. We have created an implementation strategy to accelerate neighborhood-scale sustainability with the understanding that it provides a platform for innovation and integration of sustainability strategies.



### EcoDistrict Outcomes

- A framework and implementation strategy for cities to accelerate neighborhood sustainability
- Implementation tools and strategies for governance, assessment, project finance and municipal policy adoptions
- New business models and opportunities for neighborhood investment
- High-impact projects such as district energy, green streets, smart grid, demand management and resource sharing
- A municipal policy agenda with laws, incentives, and processes that support sustainable neighborhood development
- Neighborhoods as laboratories for sustainability innovation

EcoDistricts are distinct from most green development strategies that focus on brownfield or greenfield development and are led primarily by master developers or public agencies. Instead, EcoDistricts focus on existing neighborhoods as well as traditional development through the powerful combination of public policy, catalytic investments from local municipalities and utilities, private development and the participation of neighbors who are motivated to improve the quality of life and environmental health of their communities. EcoDistricts help neighborhoods achieve ratings like LEED-ND with a comprehensive set of tools and supporting strategies for community engagement, integrated performance assessment and project implementation.

EcoDistricts create a foundation for a range of strategies that can be applied at several different scales. Within an EcoDistrict, there will be catalytic projects at the site and block scale, as well as larger-scale infrastructure investments.

EcoDistricts bring together neighborhood stakeholders, property developers, utilities and municipalities to create neighborhood sustainability innovation with a range of outcomes, including improved environmental performance, local examples of emerging technologies, equitable distribution of investments, community participation, new patterns of behavior, economic development for local businesses and job creation.

## EcoDistrict Projects

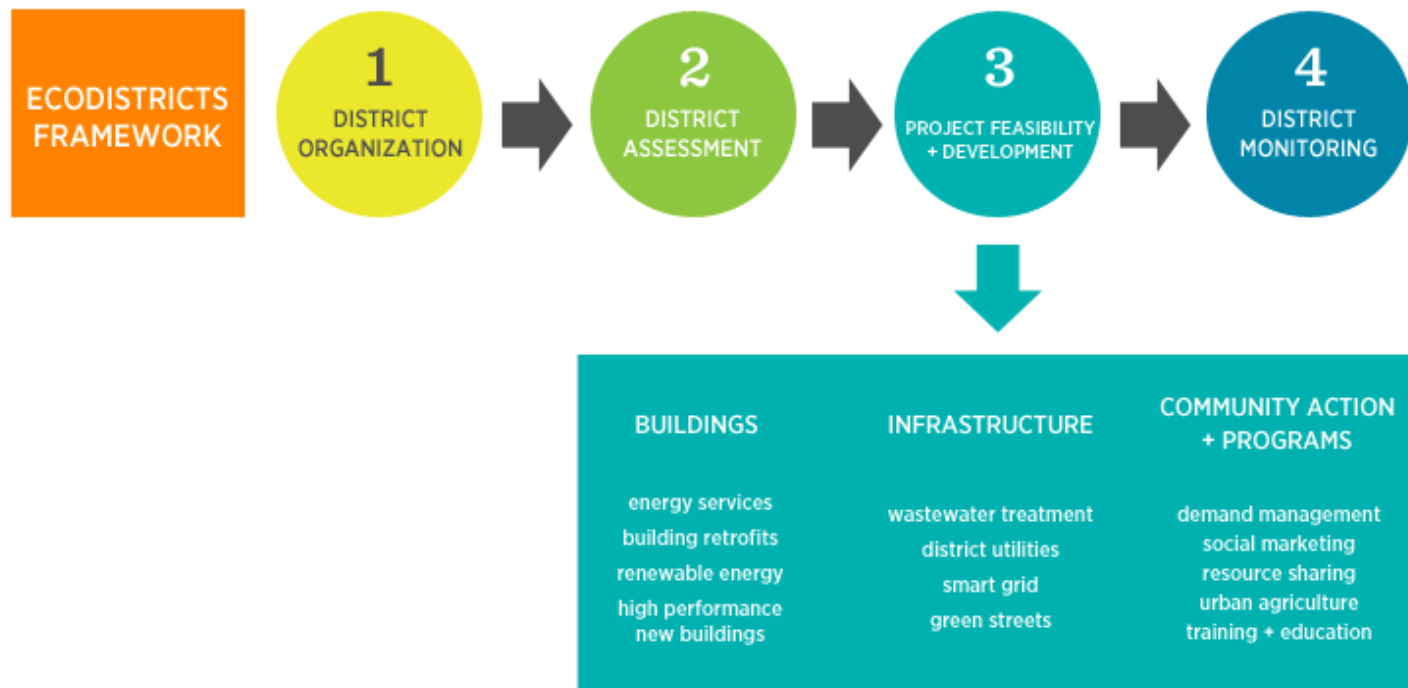
EcoDistrict projects can take many forms, depending on the unique characteristics of a neighborhood and a community's priorities. Examples of potential projects include:

- Smart grid
- District energy and water management
- Bike sharing
- Rainwater harvesting
- Green streets
- Zero waste programs
- District composting
- Waste to energy
- Safe routes to schools
- Tree planting campaigns
- Transportation demand management
- Car sharing
- Bike lanes
- Sidewalk improvements
- Urban agriculture
- Public art
- Green maps
- Multi-modal transit

# THE **EcoDistricts** APPROACH

POLICY

FUNDING





## Performance Areas

The EcoDistrict Performance Areas were developed through an exhaustive consultation process with sustainable development experts and informed by a range of international certification and rating systems. The nine Performance Areas each include a vision and a set of specific goals, targets and indicators. Note: The vision and goals described below are high-level; the EcoDistrict Performance and Assessment Method™ Toolkit provides specific targets, metrics and strategies to support these aspirations.<sup>4</sup>



### 1 Equitable Development

**Goal:** Promote equity and opportunity and ensure fair distribution of benefits and burdens of investment and development.

**Objectives:**

1. Ensure neighborhood investments provide direct community benefit through job creation and investment opportunities
2. Provide quality and consistent local job opportunities through EcoDistrict projects
3. Mitigate the forced displacement of existing residents and businesses
4. Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement in all EcoDistrict activities and decision making

### 2 Health + Well Being

**Goal:** Promote human health and community well being.

**Objectives:**

1. Provide access to safe and functional local recreation and natural areas
2. Provide access to healthy, local and affordable food
3. Ensure safe and connected streets
4. Expand economic opportunities to support a socially and economically diverse population
5. Improve indoor and outdoor air quality

### 3 Community Identity

**Goal:** Create cohesive neighborhood identity through the built environment and a culture of community.

**Objectives:**

1. Create beautiful, accessible and safe places that promote interaction and access
2. Foster social networks that are inclusive, flexible and cohesive
3. Develop local governance with the leadership and capacity to act on behalf of the neighborhood

### 4 Access + Mobility

**Goal:** Provide access to clean and affordable transportation options

**Objectives:**

1. Provide accessible services through mixed-uses and improved street access
2. Prioritize active transportation<sup>7</sup>
3. Reduce vehicle miles traveled
4. Use low and zero emission vehicles

### 5 Energy

**Goal:** Achieve net zero energy usage annually

**Objectives:**

1. Conserve energy use by minimizing demand and maximizing conservation
2. Optimize infrastructure performance at all scales
3. Use renewable energy





## 6 Water

**Goal:** Meet both human and natural needs through reliable and affordable water management

**Objectives:**

1. Reduce water consumption through conservation
2. Reuse and recycle water resources wherever possible, using potable water only for potable needs
3. Manage stormwater and building water discharge within the district

## 7 Habitat + Ecosystem Function

**Goal:** Achieve healthy urban ecosystems that protect and regenerate habitat and ecosystem function.

**Objectives:**

1. Protect and enhance local watersheds
2. Prioritize native and structurally diverse vegetation
3. Create habitat connectivity within and beyond the district
4. Avoid human-made hazards to wildlife and promote nature-friendly urban design

## 8 Materials Management

**Goal:** Zero waste and optimized materials management.

**Objectives:**

1. Eliminate practices that produce waste wherever possible
2. Minimize use of virgin materials and minimize toxic chemicals in new products
3. Optimize material reuse and salvage and encourage use of regionally manufactured products or parts
4. Where opportunities for waste prevention are limited, maximize use of products made with recycled content
5. Capture greatest residual value of organic wastes (including food) through energy recovery and/or composting



## III. How

### Approach

EcoDistricts has standardized a comprehensive approach for EcoDistrict development that includes the five phases illustrated below.



#### 1 District Formation

EcoDistrict stakeholders organize to create a shared vision and governance structure to ensure that a neighborhood has the capacity and resources to implement its vision. Community engagement and active citizen participation are fundamental for ongoing EcoDistrict success. It includes the creation of a neighborhood governing entity with the explicit charge to manage district sustainability, and the next steps of EcoDistrict formation, over time.

#### 2 District Assessment

To achieve the ambitious goals for each performance area, a neighborhood assessment is essential to determine the most effective project priorities for a unique district. An assessment enables districts to determine strategies of greatest impact and prioritize the most appropriate projects.

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### Project Feasibility + Development

Successful EcoDistrict projects require careful alignment and coordination between district stakeholders, private developers, public agencies and utilities. Integrating infrastructure, building and behavior projects to meet ambitious performance goals may require new joint ventures, comprehensive financing, effective governance models and extensive community involvement.

Successful EcoDistrict projects require careful alignment and coordination between district stakeholders, private developers, public agencies and utilities. Integrating infrastructure, building and behavior projects to meet ambitious performance goals may require new joint ventures, comprehensive financing, effective governance models and

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### District Management

As EcoDistrict projects are planned and built, ongoing monitoring is essential to understand the full range of social, economic and environmental impacts. EcoDistrict performance standards can be used to regularly collect data to show the overall value of particular project interventions. In addition, qualitative documentation and lessons learned about EcoDistrict implementation will be essential to refining the EcoDistricts approach.



## IV. Tools for Implementation

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We have developed the following toolkits to guide EcoDistrict™ implementation:

- EcoDistrict Organization
- EcoDistrict Performance and Assessment Method
- EcoDistrict Financing
- EcoDistrict Policy Support

The current toolkits (version 1.1) have been refined as a result of feedback on version 1.0 and through our experience implementing the Portland pilots.



### Organization

Community engagement and active citizen participation are fundamental for ongoing EcoDistrict success. EcoDistricts require an engaged community with a shared sustainability vision and a neighborhood governing structure with the explicit charge to meet ambitious performance goals, guide investments, and monitor and report results over time. The EcoDistrict Organization Toolkit outlines steps for neighborhood engagement and visioning, and offers potential models for district governance. It recommends creating a new governance entity, a Sustainability Management Association.

### Performance and Assessment Method™

In order to identify project priorities, an EcoDistrict must measure current performance and set clear goals. This toolkit guides EcoDistrict assessment, baselining and project identification that spans two areas:

- Performance Areas: a set of eight performance areas that include goals, targets and indicators
- EcoDistrict Assessment Method: a rigorous ten-step approach for baselining district performance and setting project priorities



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## Financing

The ability to finance EcoDistrict governance and secure funds for district-scale projects is essential to the success of EcoDistricts. There are three primary categories that require funding: district organization and staffing, feasibility and small-scale project development, and district utilities and large-scale project development. The EcoDistrict Financing Toolkit describes the range of financing options to support these three categories and offers related case studies. It catalogues public and private funding streams, explores potential new funding mechanisms and outlines strategies to blend various types of funding sources to finance projects.

## Policy Support

Municipalities will play a central role in supporting the creation of EcoDistricts by providing direct support and by realigning existing policies to overcome barriers and encourage innovation. The EcoDistrict Policy Support Toolkit provides municipal policy recommendations for supporting pilot projects and targeted investments, and for integrating public policies and actions. Key areas of opportunity exist in regulations, public-private partnerships, financial incentives and assistance, technical assistance, shared ownership models, demand management programs, education, third-party certifications and infrastructure investments.



## V. About Us

Around the world, more people live in cities than ever before. How we live in cities is one of the great challenges of our time.

Our name, EcoDistricts, sums up our shared vision for creating sustainable cities from the neighborhood up. Our larger scope is designed to better serve you, the growing number of innovative practitioners and policy makers who are making a demonstrable impact in your communities and helping to grow the global green neighborhood movement.

Urban development leaders of all stripes, from mayors to universities to affordable housing providers, see EcoDistricts as the key to solving many of their pressing challenges. In response, we're creating a powerful convening, advocacy, technical assistance and research platform to inform and drive EcoDistrict innovation - strategic in nature, collaborative in approach and practical in application.



At EcoDistricts you'll find people, tools, services and training to help cities and urban development practitioners create the neighborhoods of the future - resilient, vibrant, resource efficient and just.

- **Target Cities Program:**  
A two year program designed to help cities innovate, to embed performance metrics into projects, and to apply sustainability to a range of neighborhoods, including low income communities that are often left out of sustainable planning and development.
- **The EcoDistricts Incubator:**  
A three-day executive level training program for leaders who are revitalizing their cities from the neighborhood up. Through a mix of interactive plenary presentations and facilitated work sessions, the Incubator curates and presents the best ways to help cities work effectively with private, nonprofit and academic partners to implement sustainable neighborhood strategies for their community.
- **The EcoDistricts Summit:**  
The world's premier conference dedicated to big ideas and a worldwide movement to transform entire neighborhoods. The Summit is a three-day forum to catalyze the conversation on sustainable development at the district scale.
- **Tools and Services:**  
Our tools and services are designed specifically to help revitalize neighborhoods that feature the full complexity of modern urban reality: multiple landowners, aging



## Appendix: Footnotes

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of an EcoDistrict, the terms “district” and “neighborhood” are used interchangeably. Both refer to a particular scale that is the planning unit of modern cities with a spatially or community-defined geography. Boundaries may include neighborhood or business association boundaries, urban renewal areas, local and business improvement districts, major redevelopment sites, watersheds or geographic demarcations, as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Sustainability in this sense means triple-bottom-line sustainability with environmentally driven projects that bring social and economic returns.

<sup>3</sup> EcoDistricts worked with the City of Portland Mayor’s Office, Portland Development Commission and Bureau of Planning and Sustainability to identify the five pilot districts, which represent diverse neighborhood typologies and community assets. They include the South of Market District (PSU area), the Lloyd District, Gateway, Foster Green (Lents) and South Waterfront.

<sup>4</sup> The EcoDistricts Performance Areas are available on our website: [www.pdxinstitute.org](http://www.pdxinstitute.org).

<sup>5</sup> Unlike the other performance areas, Equitable Development, Placemaking and Social Cohesion are not focused on environmental factors. They are included with the recognition that their targets and metrics will be more challenging to grasp; as a result, they may become more of a filter to inform project decisions because ongoing data collection in these areas is challenging.

<sup>6</sup> Defined as operational emissions including building energy consumption, transportation, waste generation and construction.

<sup>7</sup> Active transportation refers to human-powered modes of transit such as biking, walking, or running.

<sup>8</sup> A variety of green-district efforts include the Clinton Foundation’s Climate Positive program, LEED for Neighborhood Development, scale jumping in the Living Building Challenge and One Planet Living, all of which aim to reorient design, development and policy at the neighborhood scale.

<sup>9</sup> Joe Cortright’s 2008 study “Portland’s Green Dividend” documents the economic benefits of land use and transportation investments. <http://www.ceosforcities.org/files/PGD%20FINAL.pdf>



**ECODISTRICTS**

info@ecodistricts.org  
www.ecodistricts.org



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