

SMART GROWTH LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Sponsor Organizations

American Institute of Architects Central Valley Chapter (AIA-CV)

Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS)

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This program is for projects proposed in Sacramento County. However, it could be utilized for others in the Metropolitan Sacramento Region and Sacramento Valley Urban Areas through the AIA Central Valley. For such applications, contact the AIA Central Valley at (916) 444-3658.

GOALS

The SMART GROWTH LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM shall:

- **Promote and support coordinated land use and transportation planning that: represents compact, intelligent, non sprawl urban development; preserves and enhances the natural ecology of our open spaces; reinforces the urban ecology/quality of existing communities through reinvestment; and reduces pollution in our air, water, and land.**
- **Enable the Sacramento region to become a sustainable community through the application of Smart Growth principles in all planning and development actions.**
- **Foster community design excellence that improves the quality of the built environment.**
- **Provide public awareness and support of projects that embody the “public good” as described above through project recognition.**
- **Provide an incentive to the development community to produce exemplary projects that embody the “public good” as described above through project recognition and endorsements.**
- **Be used as a positive tool to attain these goals.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles that define Smart Growth and Sustainability are as follows:

- **Promote infill development. Take advantage of existing community assets by accommodating additional growth in already developed areas.**
- **Foster walkable, close-knit neighborhoods through a system of fully connected streets, pedestrian paths and bicycle routes.**
- **Promote distinctive, attractive communities of distinguished design that create a strong sense of place.**
- **Mix land uses at an appropriate scale either vertically or horizontally within projects to create vibrant urban places.**
- **Promote rehabilitation and use of historic buildings.**
- **Promote distinguished design of the “public realm” that emphasizes a pedestrian and ecological focus.**
- **Promote social equity in residential, commercial, recreational and transportation usage.**
- **Create a range of housing opportunities and choices with a diversity of affordable housing options.**
- **Provide and strengthen a variety of transportation choices that promote walking, bicycling, and public transit usage.**
- **Support appropriate and safe reuse of brownfields.**

- **Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas within the urban environment and on the urban edge.**
- **Provide for minimal and managed storm and wastewater runoff.**
- **Discourage projects that reinforce urban sprawl and its resultant infrastructure costs, excessive vehicle usage, environmental degradation, social isolation, and public transit inefficiency.**

(NOTE: These Guiding Principles were developed from those utilized by the City of Sacramento and the County of Sacramento.)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

OVERVIEW

The Evaluation Criteria contain the following 10 elements: **Land Use, Transportation, Environment, Health and Safety, Community, Equity, Design, Planning, Services, and Funding**. The issues listed under those elements represent the range of issues that will be evaluated. The specific criteria rankings required to receive an overall positive assessment of a project will be determined based on appropriateness to the scale and location of each project. It is recognized that no project will include all the elements or all of their contents. The **bolded** criteria will be given highest priority during the evaluation process.

LAND USE

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Provides mixed use development
					Provides transit oriented / transit route related development
					Lies within 1993 Urban Policy Area for Sacramento County and within existing city limits for incorporated cities
					Does not facilitate growth beyond 1993 Urban Policy Area for Sacramento County or beyond existing city limits for incorporated cities
					Reinforces existing urbanized community structure
					Utilizes brownfields and/or underutilized & vacant commercial & industrial land
					Provides appropriate infill development

PLANNING

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Reinforces transit oriented development and urban infill policies
					Sufficiently addresses the impact on funding for public infrastructure needs generated by project's development
					Acts as a catalyst to community improvement
					Fully integrates mixed uses into project

TRANSPORTATION

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Reduces potential vehicle trips
					Provides opportunities for work related and recreational bicycle use
					Encourages pedestrian use both within project and with connections to the neighboring community
					Minimizes impact of private automobile usage both on and off site
					Is Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
					Utilizes auto management strategies such as traffic calming
					Enhances pedestrian & bicycle safety (no sound walls)
					Contributes to public transit usage
					Minimizes congestion on local and community road network
					Does not expand the major infrastructure capacity for automobile use

ENVIRONMENT

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Utilizes alternate and renewable energy sources
					Promotes water conservation
					Minimizes intervention in natural ecosystems
					Protects habitats
					Provides for conservation of natural ecosystems and agricultural lands
					Conserves and preserves stream corridors
					Protects water supplies
					Manages storm water runoff to reduce pollutants and allow groundwater to recharge
					Incorporates principles of integrated pest management design

HEALTH and SAFETY

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Encourages and accommodates an active lifestyle
					Improves air quality
					Provides non-toxic living conditions
					Minimizes impact on waste stream
					Avoids building in locations that place people's health and safety at risk

COMMUNITY

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Reinforces sense of community
					Strengthens neighborhood structure
					Contributes to community sense of place using elements such as: common open space, meeting places, safe sidewalks, front porches, and eyes (windows) on the street (NOTE: community sense of place should be an enhancement to the neighboring urban fabric)
					Improves adjacent public realm and engages the street (no sound walls)
					Respects overall neighborhood / area physical and social context
					Involves community stakeholders in development review process

EQUITY

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Provides housing choice
					Increases affordable housing supply
					Provides for legally required and reasonable disabled community access and usage
					Provides economic benefit to total community
					Reflects Inclusionary Housing Policy
					Provides open and ungated development
					Provides support for regionally necessary social services such as halfway houses and soup kitchens

DESIGN

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Exemplifies sustainable design practices
					Building design makes a positive aesthetic contribution to the community
					Conforms to Green Building standards and principles
					Maximizes energy efficiency and reduces use of fossil fuels
					Respects history of area and community
					Mixed uses are aesthetically integrated into the design both vertically and horizontally
					Preserves dark sky at night
					Reduces overall parking provided
					Reinforces the urban ecology/quality of existing communities through reinvestment

SERVICES

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Provides that project's ecological intervention does not negatively impact neighborhood's existing infrastructure and environmental conditions
					Provides that project's infrastructure does not negatively impact neighborhood's existing conditions

FUNDING

N/A	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Evaluation Criteria
					Produces public revenues (i.e. taxes, exactions, etc.) that equal or exceed public service costs related to project (i.e., off-site services such as police, fire, school, library, increase in infrastructure service capacity, etc.)
					Provides operational support for community public transit
					Provides support for community's affordable housing needs
					Provides funding or adequate mechanism for continuing maintenance of project

ENDORSEMENT PROCESS / METHODOLOGY

Presentation of Project to ECOS / AIA Project Review Committee

Evaluation of Project by ECOS / AIA Project Review Team using the SMART GROWTH LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM EVALUATION CRITERIA as described in the OVERVIEW.

Approval (or rejection) of Project for SMART GROWTH LEADERSHIP recognition designation by ECOS and AIA Boards based on ECOS / AIA Project Review Team evaluation.

Composition and Operating Procedure for the Project Review Team

The Project Review Team shall comprise three (3) members of AIA Central Valley and three (3) members of ECOS to be appointed by the Board of Directors of each organization. A quorum shall be at least four (4) members including at least two (2) members from each organization. The term of service shall be two (2) years and shall begin on January 1.

The Review Team shall evaluate projects by applying the Evaluation Criteria contained in this document using a holistic* approach. The Review Team shall select projects for recognition and submit their choices to the Board of Directors of each organization for approval. Projects selected for recognition by the Review Team and approved by both Boards of Directors will be notified with a letter of support as described under Endorsement Benefits. For projects selected for recognition by the Review Team and approved by both Boards of Directors, the Review Team shall decide if active advocacy is indicated and the level of such advocacy.

For projects submitted to the Review Team but not selected for recognition, the Review Team shall prepare a report to the applicant stating reasons why the project did not meet the threshold for recognition. The Review Team shall offer to meet with the applicant to review the project and make suggestions, by the implementation of which, the project might become eligible for recognition.

There shall be no application fee for the first two years of this program. After two years, the Boards of Directors of each organization shall reconsider the question of an application fee for this program.

* Emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts.

ENDORSEMENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

We encourage developers to contact us at the earliest possible date, preferably at the schematic design stage of the project.

This is a voluntary, non-regulatory program designed to promote exemplary Smart Growth projects.

Material should be submitted either to:

Environmental Council of Sacramento
909 12th Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 444-0022

www.ecosacramento.net

or

AIA Central Valley
1400 S Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

(916) 444-3658

www.aiacv.org

Provide to-scale drawings.

Please ensure that all drawings, schematics, and other papers are easily reproducible on 8.5 x 11 paper or 11 x 17 paper.

Please include the following information when applying:

1. Project Name: Developer Name, Address, Phone, Fax #, and email.

2. Description of Project: Existing zoning and General Plan designation for site and applicable city and county policies such as general plan, housing element and other infill development goals. Location and site plans: plans, sections and elevations of buildings. Size of site (acreage). For residential or mixed use projects indicate number and type of units, net density (units/acre), and density range. The proposed price of units and the number of units at each price level. If below market rate units, list specific prices.

3. Description of the project's response to the SMART GROWTH LEADERSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM Evaluation Criteria. Each Element and the relevant issue within it should be addressed.

3. Environmental Clearance: Give status of the Draft EIR or Negative Declaration.

4. Description of Surrounding Area (include the following): Zoning and General Plan designation for surrounding properties. Description of uses of surrounding area. including height of structures and architectural context. Location of nearest transit route, stops, and service frequency. Distances from major and service commercial services, downtown, recreational facilities and parks, and major job centers.

5. Public Hearing Process: If known, provide public hearing timetable including dates of Planning Commission and City Council hearings. Please include a list of interested parties, both of supporters and any known opponents.

6. Planning Staff Contact: List name, phone #, and email of planning staff assigned to review project proposal.

ENDORSEMENT BENEFITS

Endorsement typically consists of the following:

- **Letter of Support:**

When a project is endorsed by ECOS /AIA, the developer or project sponsor will receive an official ECOS / AIA letter of support that can be used publicly to promote the project. ECOS / AIA may also issue a news release highlighting the benefits of the project and the ECOS / AIA endorsement.

- **Active Advocacy:**

ECOS / AIA may also actively support an endorsed development project at hearings and other public forums. The level of such advocacy will depend upon the importance of the project, innovative use of the site, and the extent to which it supports Smart Growth.

Note:

ECOS/AIA endorsement will be re-evaluated if project undergoes significant changes subsequent to its receipt of Recognition.

RELEVANT REFERENCES

CityDesign - Seattle Design Commission

www.seattle.gov/dclu/citydesign/projects

City of Austin Green Building program

www.ci.austin.tx.us/greenbuilder

City of Austin Smart Growth Matrix

www.ci.austin.tx.us/smartgrowthmatrix.htm

City of Portland, Bureau of Planning, Infill Design Project

www.planningci.portland.or.us/cp_infill_over.html

City of San Jose Smart Growth

www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/planning/sjplan

Greenbelt Alliance

www.Greenbelt.org

Green Home Remodel

www.seattle.gov/sustainablebuilding/gr

Livable Places

www.livableplaces.org

Local Government Commission

www.lgc.org

Meet the USGBC

www.usgbc.org

Multifamily Green Building Guidelines

www.multifamilygreen.org

Smart Growth Caucus

www.assembly.cagov/sgc

Smart Growth Resource Library

www.smartgrowth.org/library

Urban Ecology

www.urbanecology