



Tool: Using LEED-ND to accelerate the development of sustainable communities

Provider: Smart Growth America and Criterion Planners

Summary:

The planning and development of sustainable communities can be accelerated through local government leveraging of the LEED for Neighborhood Development (ND) rating system. This one-day workshop teaches local government staff a three-step leveraging process:

- 1) identifying ND-eligible lands;
- 2) catalyzing projects on those lands; and
- 3) amending land-use and transportation plans to expand eligible land supply and improve vicinity conditions so as to increase achievable ND points.

Description:

The LEED for Neighborhood Development (ND) rating system combines the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, social equity, and green construction into the nation's first integrated system for certifying sustainable neighborhood development. This workshop focuses on the power of LEED-ND to accelerate green economic development. Research indicates that green neighborhoods produce more business opportunities, jobs, household savings, and fiscal benefits than conventional development. Jurisdictions that leverage LEED-ND to amplify its benefits will therefore garner a larger share of their region's green economic dividend.

This workshop reviews the ND rating system, highlights elements that interface with local regulations, and presents how cities and counties can leverage LEED-ND. First, participants learn about a GIS method for identifying properties that meet ND smart location criteria, including infill, adjacent, transit-served, and walkable sites. Catalyzing ND projects on those lands is step two, including removal of code barriers, establishment of incentives, and leadership on public lands. Case studies of city and county incentives around the country are presented, including financial and technical assistance measures; and participants have an opportunity to rate their own local codes for ND-friendliness. The final leveraging step explores ways in which land-use, transportation, and capital improvement plans can be strategically amended and funded over time to expand ND-eligible areas and improve ND scoring conditions in those areas.

Using this technique, a local government can set realistic long-term goals for:

- a) the percent of the jurisdiction that will eventually achieve ND location eligibility;
- b) creating infrastructure and transportation systems that equate to ND Silver, Gold, or Platinum criteria, and thereby count toward higher certification levels for projects served by those systems;
- c) the jobs, economic activity, and fiscal outcomes that are possible with ND leveraging.

A tool kit of resources for the leveraging process is distributed to participants, including the ND rating system annotated with local government interface points, and a planner's guide and model ordinance for leveraging.

