

A map of North America is shown in a light tan color against a dark green background. A single green dot is placed on the Pacific Northwest coast of the United States, indicating the location of the Portland Sustainability Institute. The text is positioned to the right of the map.

# A NORTH AMERICAN ECODISTRICTS PROGRAM

Research + Program Design

NOVEMBER 2012



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# Executive Summary

## BACKGROUND

In March 2012, the City of San Francisco and a consortium of 11 cities partnered with the Portland Sustainability Institute (PoSI) and CH2M HILL to secure a grant from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) Innovation Opportunity Fund to research and design a pilot program to accelerate sustainable neighborhood development (EcoDistricts) in North America. This report summarizes the results of the research and describes a comprehensive program of capacity building and technical assistance to accelerate the deployment of sustainable neighborhood practices and projects and support a growing EcoDistrict market.

Today, city leaders simultaneously grapple with providing resources, responding to energy and climate issues, and revitalizing neighborhoods. Addressing these issues at the district or neighborhood level provides an important scale to test and replicate integrated sustainable development solutions.

Municipal policymakers and development industry leaders are becoming familiar with many district-scale solutions that simultaneously help to revitalize neighborhoods, improve environmental conditions, and encourage healthier and more active lifestyles. However, there are significant leadership and knowledge gaps and few processes and tools outside of LEED ND to support sustainable neighborhood development, leaving early adopter cities to “go it alone”. Other challenges include lack of institutional capacity to pur-

**“Operating between building-level programs and city-wide policy, EcoDistricts are an important economy-of-scale approach to furthering urban sustainability.”**

—Brian Swett, Boston

sue sustainable strategies; fragmented coordination among public and utility agencies, developers, and neighborhood stakeholders; limited project finance for district-scale projects; and conflicting or outdated laws, policies and regulations. As a result, sustainable development is not occurring at the pace it should given the knowledge and technology available and the urgency of the need.

Recognizing the need for a consistent approach to sustainable neighborhood implementation, PoSI developed the EcoDistrict Framework in 2009-2010. EcoDistricts is a simple idea: neighbors, community institutions and businesses join with city leaders, real estate developers, and utility providers to develop and achieve ambitious sustainability goals through the co-development of innovative district-scale projects.

The Framework focuses on four key action areas:

- **District Organization**  
building alliances and local governance;
- **District Assessment**  
creating a performance-based neighborhood sustainability roadmap;
- **Project Development**  
launching catalytic district-scale sustainability projects; and
- **District Management**  
forming district management to guide project implementation over time.

For the past three years, PoSI has been testing EcoDistricts in five distinct Portland, Oregon neighborhoods. Simultaneously PoSI began facilitating a national conversation among city and industry leaders that has included launching the EcoDistricts Summit, an annual international conference on sustainable neighborhood best practices, and the EcoDistricts Institute, a leadership training program for city, business, and community leaders across North America.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Through this grant, PoSI convened a multi-city advisory group to inform and shape the North American EcoDistrict Program design. Advisory members joined from a diverse range of cities that partnered on the USDN grant application

and/or participated in the 2012 EcoDistricts Institute. This research had four goals:

- understand the cities’ needs, interests and barriers;
- identify and assess existing tools and technical assistance that support sustainable neighborhoods
- peer review the EcoDistricts approach; and
- develop a program design and budget to support the creation of a North American EcoDistricts program.

The research included a mix of focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and a survey of city leaders, urban sustainability experts, utility professionals, and academics. In addition, PoSI staff researched existing technical assistance programs, governance strategies, financing tools, and rating systems designed to support sustainable neighborhood development (e.g., U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), American Institute of Architects, Urban Land Institute (ULI), Institute for Sustainable Communities, Environmental Protection Agency, and others).

The research identified a significant number of cities actively looking to develop EcoDistrict-type projects in their communities. Projects range from inner city brownfields and abandoned military bases to low-income neighborhoods and university and corporate campuses. However, project implementation is hampered by a variety of challenges, including:

**Leadership and Coordination** Lack of leadership and alignment among stakeholders, including policymakers, city agencies, community-based organizations, and utility providers

**Partnerships and Governance** Lack of flexible governance models to manage sustainability projects at the neighborhood level

**Finance** Project finance, especially pre-feasibility funding

**Public Policy and Regulations** Lack of public policy support and regulatory framework to encourage district-scale projects

In response, the Advisory Group and research participants concluded that an effort to systematically address district scale action in the areas of neighborhood planning, integrated infrastructure deployment, and district asset management was needed for cities to overcome implementa-

tion barriers and inertia. They expressed enthusiasm for the EcoDistricts approach as a promising process management tool with clear activities, outcomes and methods for meeting their cities' sustainability goals. Research also confirmed that PoSI's approach and tools are valued and unique in the market, with many research participants showing a specific interest in engagement and governance, integrated infrastructure, project finance, and consistent metrics.

## NORTH AMERICAN ECODISTRICTS PROGRAM DESIGN

Using the input from the research findings and lessons drawn from the Portland Pilot program, PoSI proposes the following four-tier program to accelerate EcoDistrict implementation and market development throughout North America. It is designed to address implementation barriers that were identified and focus on a mix of capacity building and peer learning among willing and able cities. It also requires modest resources to launch, by building on the infrastructure that PoSI has built over the past three years. The proposed program includes:

### Target Cities Program

Designed to accelerate EcoDistrict implementation, PoSI will provide technical support for up to six cities over two years to integrate the EcoDistricts Framework into catalytic neighborhood development and revitalization projects. Applying the four-step EcoDistricts Framework, the Target Cities Program will help communities identify a target neighborhood, align stakeholder interests and responsibilities, develop a long-term governance model, complete an EcoDistricts Roadmap and launch catalytic projects. Participating cities will be selected through a competitive process and will receive a mix of on-site technical assistance and peer learning, with specific deliverables and outcomes.

### EcoDistricts Institute

At the EcoDistricts Institute, a three-day leadership training program, key city, business, and community leaders build an EcoDistrict Roadmap for their community. The format includes a mix of interactive plenary presentations with leading sustainable neighborhood experts as productive work sessions in which each city team builds an EcoDistrict strategy.

# THE EcoDistricts APPROACH



### EcoDistricts Summit

At the EcoDistricts Summit, PoSI's annual conference on district scale sustainability, urban leaders convene to share lessons learned and best practices. Participants cover a large range of sectors: economic development organizations, community based organizations, urban designers, utility providers, and city policy makers. The conference educates and inspires while building capacity among industry leaders.

### Tools & Resources

PoSI will develop new and expand existing resources to be made available to any cities, neighborhoods, and project developers to guide project implementation and accelerate market transformation of sustainable neighborhood best practices. They include:

- **EcoDistricts Resource Guide**  
Comprehensive, step-by-step approach to EcoDistricts implementation, including tools, best practices, case

studies, and EcoDistrict Performance Areas.

- **EcoDistricts Training and Consulting**  
Customized support to cities and project developers through workshops and technical assistance
- **Research**  
Case studies and analyses on a range of topics from district utilities to transportation demand management

The program is designed to respond to the challenges faced by cities around sustainable neighborhood development and to implement EcoDistricts in a number of pilot cities in North America over the next two years.

Based on the research conducted and advisory group feedback, this four part programmatic approach will accelerate neighborhood sustainability in cities across North America.

# Research Findings

## RESEARCH APPROACH

In response to the growing interest in EcoDistricts, this grant funded research to inform the design of an EcoDistricts Technical Assistance Program. The goal of the research was to understand cities' needs, interests and barriers in creating sustainable neighborhoods, to assess existing tools and to peer review the EcoDistricts approach. The research and development approach included three components:

### I. Advisory Group

PoSI convened a group of leading cities to inform and shape the research and design of the North American EcoDistricts program. The advisory group consisted of co-submitters on the USDN grant application and participants in the 2012 EcoDistricts Institute. Each city indicated an interest in launching an EcoDistrict and identified target neighborhoods or projects.

*Names of participants are listed in the Appendix.*

### II. Research and Scan

To better understand the state of sustainable neighborhood development, PoSI conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with all advisory group members, technical assistance organizations, and leading practitioners. The interviews were designed to uncover specific challenges that city leaders and practitioners are facing in developing district-scale sustainable development projects. PoSI also issued a survey to a network of municipal policy makers and industry professionals.

The survey, circulated by email to several national networks, captured similar information from a broader spectrum of urban sustainability practitioners. To initiate the research phase, PoSI staff held a focus group at the EcoDistricts Institute to identify interests in and priorities for the program. Finally, PoSI staff researched existing technical assistance programs, governance strategies, financing tools, and rating systems designed to support sustainable neighborhood development.

*A complete list of participants, interview transcripts, and survey results can be found in the Appendix.*

### III. Refinement and Testing of the EcoDistricts Approach

Recognizing that the EcoDistricts approach requires refinement to broaden its application, PoSI gathered feedback on

## Advisory Group Cities



the EcoDistricts Framework and supporting toolkits through three targeted workshops in Portland, Boston, and San Francisco and invited peer reviews by leading green neighborhood development practitioners. The findings resulted in a draft scope of work to create an updated EcoDistricts Resource Guide as part of the North American program launch. Draft scope is included in Appendix.

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

Today, city leaders simultaneously struggle with providing basic services, rebuilding infrastructure, revitalizing neighborhoods, and responding to the urgency of climate adaptation, energy security, and rising food and resource costs.

The urban concentration of people and resources means that cities are increasingly critical in addressing these challenges, which requires the adoption of new urban sustainability solutions.

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 planning and per-

formance-based project investments are critical to linking large development and infrastructure and community driven projects together. Addressing these issues at the district or neighborhood level provides an important scale to test and replicate such an approach.

The last decade has seen explosive growth in demand and interest in green neighborhood development. Districts like Western Harbor in Malmö, Sweden; Southeast False Creek in Vancouver, Canada; Dockside Green in Victoria, Canada; South Waterfront in Portland, Ore.; Masdar, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; and Treasure Island, San Francisco, Calif. 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 enable quick innovation cycles in public policy, governance, technology development, and consumer behavior. Each of these districts is measuring a set of important sustainability indicators — 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.

While many municipal policymakers and development industry leaders are becoming familiar with district-scale solutions, significant barriers to mainstreaming green neighborhood practices remain, especially in existing neighborhoods where a majority of residents live and businesses are located. Moreover, few readily applicable tools are available to support sustainable neighborhood development, leaving early adopter cities to “go it alone”. Challenges include significant leadership and knowledge gaps; limited practical tools outside of LEED-ND to support sustainable neighborhood development; lack of institutional capacity to pursue sustainable strategies; fragmented coordination among public and utility agencies, developers, and neighborhood stakeholders; limited project finance for district-scale projects; and conflicting, outdated or missing laws, policies and regulations. As a result, sustainable development is not occurring at the pace it should given the knowledge and technology available and the urgent need.

## IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS

During the course of the research, several key challenges emerged that centered around four major themes:

### 1. Leadership and Coordination

2. Partnerships and Governance
3. Finance
4. Public Policy and Regulations

#### Leadership and Coordination

While municipal policymakers and development industry leaders are becoming familiar with district-scale sustainability best practices, significant leadership and knowledge gaps remain. Most cities have extensive experience in the areas of planning, zoning, and urban renewal at the neighborhood level, but only a handful have or are developing a comprehensive sustainability agenda that links energy efficiency, water management, transportation, and green infrastructure with economic goals, social priorities, and neighborhood vitality.

In addition, the lack of coordination between city agencies was repeatedly raised as significant barrier to EcoDistrict implementation. City staff and technical assistance organizations consistently pointed to the lack of agency coordination or clear political leadership in planning and delivering projects as significant barriers. The fundamental question was often “who’s in the lead?”. Lack of coordination among non-city stakeholders such as utility companies, community development corporations, and private developers was also identified as a significant barrier, with the rare exception in cities that have active smart grid, energy efficiency, or thermal energy projects in development.

#### Partnerships and Governance

Interviewees expressed general agreement that EcoDistricts require new forms of partnerships and governance models to coordinate decision-making between disparate stakeholders, including public agencies. These models can take the form of “advisory” partnerships (e.g., green ribbon committees, urban renewable advisory committees, etc.), “organizational” governance that focuses on collective action (e.g., business improvement districts, transportation management associations, building association management, etc.) or “project-related” partnerships (e.g., local improvement districts, public-private partnerships, etc.). While there are many models to draw on, the research found few cities developing rigorous partnerships and governance models that focus substantively on sustainability or that bring multiple partners together to convene and lead projects. Many interviewees noted how difficult it is to get organizations and individuals to agree to a common set of outcomes and metrics or share power and

responsibilities across agencies and organizations. Many of the Advisory Group participants expressed hope that EcoDistricts would provide a useful management framework for institutionalizing greater coordination and building practical governance structures among relevant city agencies, utility providers, developers, and community-based stakeholders.

**“There are two things that are important for Mexican cities: building new forms of governance to ensure equitable involvement and transparency and catalytic projects that make sustainability real and demonstrably improve our quality of life.”**

—Alfredo Hidalgo, Guadalajara

#### Finance

Research participants consistently called out organizational/operational funding and project finance (e.g., aggregated building retrofits, district utilities) as a significant barrier to EcoDistrict implementation. Operational funding to support essential functions such as agency and district coordination, training and knowledge sharing, facilitating governance agreements, and managing assessments can be difficult to come by. Participants identified that local and national foundations could play an important role in providing matching funding to cities for early-phase investment in EcoDistricts.

In contrast, project financing, whether public or private, is typically easier to secure if there is a strong business case. However, pre-feasibility funding can be hard to secure, leaving many promising projects without the necessary funding to conduct project assessment and scoping to evaluate the business case. In addition, research participants identified

a need for more patient forms of capital and loan security to make long-term projects more attractive to build. For instance, the economics and scalability of privately developed district utility projects can often be improved with public investments in the form of incentives and direct investment.

### Public Policy & Regulations

EcoDistricts require a strong public policy framework to support successful implementation. In precedent EcoDistrict projects PoSI studied, the cities that took a strong leadership role in zoning innovation (e.g., passive design standards), infrastructure development, encouraging or requiring building performance, etc. In many cases, EcoDistrict implementation would require the phasing out of existing zoning regulations and building codes that discourage or prohibit sustainable neighborhood best practices. Common barriers include high required parking ratios regardless of building location or transit service, restrictions on sharing resources across property lines, requiring a separation of land uses (e.g., barriers to mixed use development), and prohibitions on the installation of green technologies such as rainwater harvesting or solar panels.

These four challenge areas are essential to helping cities overcome barriers of sustainable neighborhood implementation and informed the design of the North American Program.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE + TOOLS

To better understand the availability, quality, and impact of technical assistance and resources that are currently available to cities and practitioners in the field of sustainable neighborhood development, PoSI spoke with multiple “peer” organizations—primarily non-profit and government agencies—that provide or support such technical assistance.

Technical assistance offerings are summarized in six basic areas:

#### Site Workshops

The majority of organizations we interviewed and studied provide technical assistance through targeted “site workshops” that bring outside experts to a city for a concentrated set of working meetings and public engagement (usually lasting 3-5 days) to support a specific project or community challenge. The results are usually a public workshop and/or report to be presented to the client and key stakeholders.

While the details vary between supporting organizations, all of them use some type of selection process to identify and



select cities/projects to work with based on internal criteria and demonstrated interest on the part of the applicant (typically a city, developer, or community-based organization). Once the participating project is selected, the technical assistance provider conducts a preliminary site visit and stakeholder interviews to better understand the context of the project (e.g., political environment, site, general challenges and opportunities). The results of the initial intake process and site visit is used to design the site workshop, including the gathering of key background information (e.g., zoning documents, technical reports, case studies) and recruiting content experts to participate in the workshop. Workshop-based assistance programs usually take 3-6 months to organize and complete. Once the recommendations have been presented, there is little follow-up to see if recommendations have been implemented and no expectation by the applicant of further assistance from the organization.

#### Convening

The Urban Land Institute’s Daniel Rose Fellowship follows a convener model, bringing together city teams multiple times over one year to address specific land use development problems and use the project as a catalyst for systemic

changes. Similar to the site workshop approach, ULI facilitates workshops with city teams, project stakeholders, and outside experts to uncover key issues facing the project and identify solutions. However, by requiring many convenings over the year, the convening model better supports project implementation and peer-to-peer learning.

#### Fellowship/Embedded Professionals

Two of the organizations, C40 with the Bloomberg Innovation Delivery Fellowship and USGBC with the Green School Fellows, embed content experts within a city government and school district to collaborate with staff. The fellows serve as a point of connection between a city government or school district and the larger sustainability community, providing more opportunities to create change as an integrated staff member. The fellowship model was well received by the Advisory Group, despite concerns that it could be expensive to implement and would require significant local match.

#### Networks

There are a growing number of municipally focused networks to share best practices and resources and create a more unified urban sustainability agenda. The Urban Sustainability

Directors Network, the C40 Sustainable Communities Initiative, and the USGBC's Mayors' Alliance for Green Schools provide a peer-to-peer support community for those working on sustainability issues, resources for their members (including funding in the case of USDN), and the opportunity to speak frankly with their peers about the opportunities and challenges they face. Networks are limited, however, by their ability to maintain momentum on a particular subject over time.

#### Resources

A growing number of national organizations including the National League of Cities, Smart Growth America, EPA Smart Growth Office, Centers for Disease Control, Institute for Sustainable Communities, and Urban Land Institute have developed a variety of tools and resources that broadly promote sustainable development. These include city/project profiles, case studies, model policies, and best practices for use by municipal policymakers, developers, infrastructure providers, and redevelopment professionals. Topics range from implementing form based codes, financing transit oriented development, developing safe bicycle routes to schools, and engineering green streets.

#### Tool/Rating Systems

A growing number of green neighborhood-scale rating systems have been developed in the past five years. The USGBC's LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system is the most well known in the US and Canada. A multi-year partnership between the Congress for New Urbanism, Natural Resources Defense Council, and USGBC, LEED ND incorporates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green buildings into a rating and certification system.

Similar neighborhood rating systems have been developed including CASBEE for Urban Development (Japan), BREEAM Communities (UK), One Planet Living Communities (UK), Green Star Communities (Australia), and Pearl Rating System for Estidama (UAE). Each of these rating systems includes a set of best practices for developers to evaluate and implement through the phases of development – planning, design, and construction—in order to earn a final score/ranking. Marketed primarily to developers, such rating systems are best suited for master planned infill or greenfield development. In contrast to the other rating systems, One Planet Living embeds staff into each project and emphasizes long term community action, engagement, and lifestyle choices, with the goal of reducing a community's overall ecological

footprint (e.g., zero carbon homes and transportation strategies, programs that increase local food consumption, procurement policies that support a local green economy).

In summary, PoSI found that none of these models provide the kind of in-depth, ongoing technical assistance that cities need to create sustainable neighborhoods. This research, and our interviews, demonstrate a clear place for the EcoDistricts approach and PoSI's technical assistance to provide the “how to” of sustainable neighborhood implementation.

#### PEER REVIEW OF ECODISTRICTS APPROACH

As part of the USDN research, PoSI conducted one-on-one peer reviews with leaders actively implementing sustainable neighborhoods. In addition, PoSI hosted three workshops with the Cities of Portland, San Francisco, and Boston to improve the approach and make it more broadly applicable. This review included comments and revisions to existing EcoDistricts Framework and Toolkits created in 2009-2010. The review identified the following challenges and gaps not currently addressed in the EcoDistricts Toolkits:

##### EcoDistrict Performance

There is a tension between developing prescriptive vs. in-recommended metrics and performance requirements. Key questions include: How prescriptive is the approach? Are there prerequisites? Is there a certification and quality assurance process, and if so, at what points during implementation?

##### Policy Framework

Experience in Portland and in other EcoDistrict precedent projects suggest that a robust policy framework is needed to guide implementation and encourage best practices. Cities must be clear about what they are committing to, and perhaps most importantly, what they are asking of district stakeholders (businesses, property owners, residents, etc.). Key questions include: Are there new regulatory requirements within a pilot district? Is their regulatory flexibility to encourage innovation? Is the City bringing additional resources and creating incentives to spur new investments?

##### District Selection

Clear guidance in vetting and selecting candidate neighborhoods is needed. Selection criteria needs to include the following factors: proposed development and infrastructure investments, level of neighborhood engagement, analysis of district scale challenges and project opportunities, project replicability, alignment of existing sustainability goals, etc.

**“The two most useful forms of technical assistance are peer-to-peer learning with other cities and deep dives with consultants on how to get from point A to B.”**

—Melanie Nutter, San Francisco

#### Roles and Responsibilities

In each of the city workshops, agency staff called for a further clarifying of roles and responsibilities of the EcoDistrict implementation team, specifically leadership and project management responsibilities. This suggests a robust model of project governance is needed that respects the complexities of knitting public, private and non-profit organizations together—each with varying levels of power and responsibilities. Research participants noted that transparency is crucial for EcoDistricts to succeed.

#### Clear Outcomes for Every Phase

Reviewers wanted clearer and stronger outcomes and deliverables at each phase of the EcoDistrict Framework. For example, in the District Organization step, expectations for the Memorandum of Understanding and formalizing stakeholder roles and responsibilities needs detailing.

As part of the North American Program, PoSI will revise the existing documents (Framework, Action Guide, Performance Areas, Toolkits, etc.) into a comprehensive EcoDistricts Resource Guide that reflects this feedback and addresses key gaps in the existing tools.

# Proposed North American EcoDistricts Program

## APPROACH

Based on the research findings and the confirmed interest of cities, PoSI proposes the creation of a North American EcoDistricts program that follows the EcoDistricts Framework with action in the following four areas:

1. **District Organization:** building alliances and local governance;
2. **District Assessment:** creating a performance-based neighborhood sustainability roadmap;
3. **Project Development:** launching catalytic district-scale sustainability projects; and
4. **District Management:** forming district management to guide project implementation over time.

The Framework includes eight EcoDistrict Performance Areas (at right) to develop, guide and measure project outcomes specifically enumerating community priorities such as social equity, job creation, and access to healthy food, etc. The approach emphasizes cross agency and city-to-neighborhood coordination, integrated project solutions, and new models of engagement and governance.

The program has four core components:

## I. Target Cities Program

PoSI will provide technical support for up to six cities over two years to integrate the EcoDistricts Framework into catalytic neighborhood development and revitalization projects in their communities. Through applying the four-step EcoDistricts Framework, Target Cities Program will help communities identify a neighborhood, align stakeholder interests, and responsibilities, develop a long-term governance model, complete an EcoDistricts Roadmap, and launch catalytic projects. Participating cities will be selected through a competitive process and will receive a mix of on-site technical assistance and peer learning, with specific deliverables and targets. Participating cities will receive:

- In depth technical assistance implementation guidance
- Site visits and consultant workshops
- In-person peer-to-peer gatherings
- Tools & Resources

## Expectations of Participating Cities

PoSI proposes the following requirements for participation:

- **Local Sponsor with Dedicated Staff**  
Participating cities must have a local sponsor organization (city agency, developer, CDC, etc.) to lead and coordinate EcoDistrict implementation on the ground. A full time project manager must be assigned/hired by the sponsoring organization with day-to-day program development responsibilities including coordination with PoSI.
- **EcoDistrict Implementation Team**  
Applicants must convene an “EcoDistricts Implementation Team,” made up of key city agency, utility and neighborhood leaders who will guide and oversee EcoDistricts implementation. An appropriate mix of leadership from the following organizations is recommended:

**City:** key agencies that are responsible for neighborhood planning, development and revitalization, conservation, transportation, economic development, and project finance

**Neighborhood based organization(s):** local community development corporations, business & neighborhood associations, and community based organizations

**Utility(ies):** companies that provide electric, natural gas, and water management (potable, storm, waste), and waste management services

**Developers/major property owners:** company(ies) that own land for redevelopment

**University:** department or research center to coordinate faculty and student research

**Foundations:** committed funder to support seed EcoDistrict development

**Individuals:** key residents, businesses, or neighborhood champions who are critical “agents of change” in the identified pilot district.

- **Pilot Neighborhood(s)**  
Teams must select a neighborhood(s) through a PoSI vetted analysis and engagement process. Selection criteria include: area targeted for future redevelopment; discrete geographical boundaries; multi-sector stakeholder support and engagement; strong community leadership; and implementation funding.

## EcoDistricts Performance Areas

- **Equitable Development**
- **Health and Well Being**
- **Community Identity**
- **Access + Mobility**
- **Energy**
- **Water**
- **Habitat + Ecosystem Function**
- **Materials Management**

## Technical Assistance Implementation

Technical assistance for the Target Cities Program follows the four key action areas in the EcoDistricts Framework. Each step includes a set of activities and deliverables that must be achieved in order for project teams to participate. Activities include:

- I. District Organization (Engagement + Leadership)
- II. District Assessment (Roadmap)
- III. District Projects (Project Selection + Development)
- IV. District Management: (Governance + Reporting)

*Please see next page for detailed activities, roles, and outcomes.*

## II. EcoDistricts Institute

At the EcoDistricts Institute, a three-day leadership training program, key city, business, and community leaders build an EcoDistrict Roadmap for their community. The format includes a mix of interactive plenary presentations with leading sustainable neighborhood experts as productive work sessions in which each city team builds an EcoDistrict strategy.

## III. EcoDistricts Summit

At the EcoDistricts Summit, PoSI's annual conference on district scale sustainability, urban leaders convene to share lessons learned and best practices. Participants cover a large range of sectors: economic development organizations,

community based organizations, urban designers, utility providers, and city policy makers. The conference educates and inspires while building capacity among industry leaders.

#### IV. Tools & Resources

PoSI will develop resources to be made available to cities and community developers to guide project implementation and accelerate market transformation of sustainable neighborhood best practices. They include:

- **EcoDistricts Resource Guide** Comprehensive, step-by-step approach to EcoDistricts implementation, including tools, best practices, case studies, and EcoDistrict Performance Areas
- **EcoDistricts Training and Consulting** Customized support to cities and project developers through workshops and technical assistance
- **Research** Case studies and analyses on a range of topics from district utilities to transportation demand management

As part of the North American program, PoSI will revise the existing resources (Framework, Action Guide, Performance Areas, Toolkits, etc.) into a comprehensive EcoDistricts Resource Guide that reflects peer feedback and addresses gaps in the existing tools.

#### NEXT STEPS

With a proposed program in place, PoSI is developing a business plan to further clarify market opportunities, assess demand, refine programmatic activities, and develop a funding strategy. In addition, PoSI is recruiting implementation and content partners from the private, non-profit, and academic sectors to help deliver the program. To date, PoSI has secured partnerships with Portland State University, US Green Building Council, Canada Green Building Council, and C40. Pending foundation support, PoSI expects to launch the program in the first quarter of 2013.



# Target Cities Technical Assistance

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	POSI ROLE	SPONSOR ROLE	OUTCOMES
<p><b>1</b> <b>District Organization</b> Engagement + Leadership</p>	Organize stakeholders to create shared vision and governance structure to guide long term EcoDistrict implementation	Provide strategic assistance in areas of stakeholder engagement, steering committee formation, governance and funding, and policy development; host workshop; develop work plan and strategy for process; peer review and vet: vision, MOU, governance models, and policy framework	Develop and lead an engagement strategy to build neighborhood support for EcoDistricts; recruit Steering Committee members; shape vision; and help build a governance model to lead local EcoDistrict implementation; draft policy framework to be adopted by City Council	<p>Municipal policy framework to support EcoDistrict implementation</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding between partners</p> <p>Proposed governance structure to manage district sustainability</p> <p>Funding agreement(s)</p>
<p><b>2</b> <b>District Assessment</b> Roadmap</p>	Create implementation roadmap with priority projects that addresses eight EcoDistrict Performance Areas	Provide strategic assistance in developing EcoDistrict Roadmap, peer review local consultant plans/analysis	Lead roadmap development including: gather data, work with stakeholders to refine goals, manage local consultants to conduct analysis, and identifying projects	EcoDistrict Roadmap with performance baseline, adopted goals, and priority projects to guide implementation
<p><b>3</b> <b>District Projects</b> Project Selection + Development</p>	Launch projects: conduct project feasibility, align partners, organize financing, and implement projects over time.	Provide support in scoping priority projects, help scope requests for proposals (RFPs) and peer review consultant work	Develop business plan for 1-2 priority projects to kick off EcoDistrict implementation; identify resources for staffing & consulting services, project finance, and implementation; work with identified implementation partner/s	First year project business plan for priority project(s)
<p><b>4</b> <b>District Management</b> Governance + Reporting</p>	Build robust long term EcoDistrict governance and reporting regime	Advise on governance model, funding strategies and reporting protocols	Develop long term governance, publish annual report	<p>Governance model and funding plan</p> <p>Annual report documenting implementation and impacts measured against EcoDistrict Performance Areas</p>

# APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Advisory Group Members

Appendix B  
Additional Contributors

Appendix C  
Financials

## APPENDIX A

# Advisory Group Members

City of New York, NY

**Adam Freed**

Deputy Director at NYC Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability

Centro de Infotectura y Tecnologia Aplicada (Guadalajara)

**Alfredo Hidalgo Rasmussen**

Director

City of Boston, MA

**Brad Swing**

Director of Energy Policy at City of Boston, Office of the Mayor

City of Washington, DC

**Brendan Shane**

Chief, Office of Policy and Sustainability

City of San Francisco, CA

**Cal Broomhead**

Energy Programs Manager, Dept of Environment

City of Minneapolis, MN

**Cathy Polasky**

Director of Economic Policy and Development

City of Vancouver, BC

**David Ramslie**

Senior Sustainability Programs Manager

City of Bloomington, IN

**Jacqueline Bauer**

Sustainability Coordinator

City of Cleveland, OH

**Jenita McGowan**

Chief Sustainability Officer

City of Boston, MA

**Jim Hunt**

Chief of Environmental and Energy Services

City of Boston, MA

**John Dalzell**

Boston Redevelopment Authority

City of San Francisco, CA

**Kate McGee**

Lead Planner, Sustainable Development Program

University of British Columbia (City of Vancouver, BC)

**Lisa Colby**

Director, Policy Planning, Campus and Community Planning

University of British Columbia (City of Vancouver, BC)

**Kera McArthur**

Campus and Community Planning

City of Austin, TX

**Lucia Athens**

Chief Sustainability Officer

Ciudad para Todos (Guadalajara)

**Maria Elena de la Torre**

Independent Consultant, Urban Planning and Sustainable Mobility

City of Mountain View, CA

**Martin Alkire**

Principal Planner

City of San Francisco, CA

**Melanie Nutter**

Director, Dept of Environment

City of Portland, OR

**Michael Armstrong**

Senior Sustainability Manager

Enterprise Community Partners (Cleveland)

**Michelle Mulcahy**

Program Officer

City of Charlotte, NC

**Nicole Storey**

Community Energy Conservation Coordinator

City of Memphis and Shelby County, TN

**Paul A. Young**

Administrator, Office of Sustainability

City of Denver, CO

**Paul Schmiechen**

EMS and Outreach Supervisor

CH2M Hill

**Steph Stoppenhagen**

Client Services Director

## APPENDIX B

# Additional Contributors

### Interviews with Technical Assistance Organizations/ Programs

American Architectural Foundation – Sustainable Cities  
Design Academy

C40/Clinton Climate Initiative – Climate Positive  
Development Program

Canada Green Building Council

Global Green

Innovation Network for Communities

Living City Block

National League of Cities

Public Financial Management, Inc

Raimi+Associates

Urban Land Institute – Daniel Rose Fellowship

US Environmental Protection Agency – Smart Growth  
Implementation Assistance Program; Building Blocks for  
Sustainable Communities; Greening America's Capitals

US Green Building Council – LEED for Neighborhood  
Development

Seattle 2030 District

### Peer Reviewers of Framework + Toolkits

Criterion Planners

Living City Block

Raimi + Associates

SERA Architects

University of Virginia

US Green Building Council

### Distribution Networks for Electronic Surveys

Urban Sustainability Directors Network

LEED for Neighborhood Development

National League of Cities

Urban Land Institute listserves

# Financials NORTH AMERICAN PROGRAM TWO-YEAR BUDGET

EXPENSES	FTE	2013	2014	NOTES
<b>EcoDistricts Institute (annual training for 10 cities)</b>				
Staffing				
Education Coordinator	35%	\$19,561	\$21,517	
Program Coordinator	5%	\$3,414	\$3,756	
Technical Director	5%	\$6,217	\$6,839	
Operations & Comms Coordinator	15%	\$7,731	\$8,504	
Development Director	10%	\$8,216	\$9,038	Develop org and corporate partnerships
Executive Director	10%	\$15,103	\$16,613	
Curriculum Development/Facilitation		\$6,000	\$7,500	
Faculty Honoraria		\$10,000	\$10,000	10 faculty (\$1K honorarium)
Travel				
Participant travel costs (flight, hotel, incidentals)		\$42,500	\$50,000	50 attendees (5 participants per project)
Faculty travel costs (flight, hotel, incidentals)		\$8,500	\$10,000	10 faculty
Venue				
Rental		\$3,000	\$3,300	
Food		\$7,500	\$8,250	
AV		\$7,500	\$8,250	
Communications & Marketing		\$3,000	\$3,300	
Materials & supplies		\$3,000	\$3,300	
Admin & Overhead (30% of staff costs)		\$18,073	\$19,880	
<b>Total Institute:</b>		<b>\$169,316</b>	<b>\$190,048</b>	Per participant cost: \$3K
<b>EcoDistricts Summit (annual conference)</b>				
Staffing	FTE			
Education Coordinator	35%	\$19,561	\$21,517	
Program Coordinator	5%	\$3,414	\$3,756	
Technical Director	5%	\$6,217	\$6,839	
Operations & Comms Coordinator	15%	\$7,731	\$8,504	
Development Director (org/corp partnerships)	10%	\$8,216	\$9,038	Develop org and corporate partnerships
Executive Director	10%	\$15,103	\$16,613	
Event management		\$24,000	\$26,400	
Communications & Marketing		\$5,000	\$5,500	
Event logistics (venue, AV, travel, food, materials, etc.)		\$80,000	\$88,000	
Admin & Overhead (30% of staff costs)		\$18,073	\$19,880	
<b>Total Summit:</b>		<b>\$187,316</b>	<b>\$206,048</b>	

EXPENSES	FTE	2013	2014	NOTES
<b>Target Cities Program (6 cities over 2 yrs.)</b>				
Staffing	FTE			
Education Coordinator	10%	\$5,589	\$6,148	
Program Coordinator	70%	\$47,800	\$52,581	to manage all activities of NA program to deliver TA, provide peer reviews/ workshops
Technical Director	60%	\$74,605	\$82,066	
Operations & Comms Coordinator	10%	\$5,154	\$5,670	
Development Director	20%	\$16,432	\$18,075	Develop org and corporate partnerships
Executive Director	30%	\$45,309	\$49,840	
PoSI staff travel		\$12,000	\$12,000	2 trips/city/yr. (site prep, workshops) (2 staff)
Contractors - travel & honorarium		\$27,000	\$30,600	6 workshops/yr. (3 consultants)
PoSI technical assistance support		\$30,000	\$33,000	
Communications & Marketing		\$10,000	\$11,000	
Misc. materials, supplies, IT		\$10,000	\$11,000	
Admin & Overhead (30% of staff costs)		\$58,467	\$64,314	
<b>Total Technical Assistance:</b>		<b>\$342,357</b>	<b>\$376,292</b>	Per project costs \$125K
<b>EcoDistrict Resource Guide/Tools</b>				
Staffing	FTE			
Program Coordinator	10%	\$6,829	\$7,512	
Technical Director	10%	\$12,434	\$13,678	
Executive Director	5%	\$7,551	\$8,307	
Technical Consultant		\$70,000		Tech consultant to lead resource guide
Advisory Committee (honorarium, travel)		\$15,000	\$10,000	Advisory Committee
Copy Edit		\$3,000	\$1,000	
Misc. materials and production		\$3,000	\$3,500	
Admin & Overhead (30% of staff costs)		\$8,044	\$8,849	
<b>Total Tools + Resources</b>		<b>\$125,859</b>	<b>\$52,844</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE:</b>		<b>\$824,847</b>	<b>\$825,232</b>	

REVENUE	BUDGET	BUDGET	NOTES
Institute revenue (participant fees)	\$37,500	\$37,500	\$750 participant fee (50 participants)
Target City Participation Fees	\$150,000	\$150,000	Each city pays annual \$25K participation fee
Summit revenue (tickets & training fees)	\$100,000	\$100,000	Based on natural growth of Summit revenue
Grants	\$400,000	\$400,000	
Corporate partnerships / sponsorships	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$5 & 10K partnerships to support NA program
Resource Guide sales	\$15,000	\$15,000	EcoDistrict Guide - \$200/copy
<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$827,500</b>	<b>\$827,500</b>	



1600 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 110, Portland, Oregon 97201, USA

Phone: (011) 503-922-1661 | Fax: (011) 503-725-2690

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