



YOU'RE
INVITED

The EcoDistricts Protocol

THE SCOPING PAPER V.2, JUNE 2014

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OVERVIEW

ABOUT ECODISTRICTS

EcoDistricts is a fast-paced and entrepreneurial non-profit working towards a big idea to create a global movement and marketplace for revitalizing every city from the neighborhood up. We are creating a convening, advocacy, technical assistance and research platform that brings together leading city builders and urban innovators to promote district-scale sustainable development best practices. For more information about our programs, visit www.ecodistricts.org.

Prior to May 2013, EcoDistricts was operating as the Portland Sustainability Institute, focused on developing a model for accelerating district scale sustainable development projects in Portland, Oregon.

SOME CONTEXT

In 2009 the Portland Sustainability Institute (PoSI) released the EcoDistricts Framework (herein referred to as the Framework), a document that has provided the market, for more than four years, with guidance on how to accelerate efforts in delivering district and neighborhood scale strategies that promote more resilient, healthy and just cities.

The Framework has been used by cities, consultants, academia and community organizations across the world. In their policy, projects, research and advocacy agenda's, the document has presented a simple, yet fundamental, set of steps to accelerate the execution of sustainability strategies. These four steps are known as the 'EcoDistricts approach' to project delivery, and seek to establish the conditions for 'getting integrated sustainability projects done'.

This 'process' part of the Framework has been supported by an 'outcomes' part, comprising eight performance areas representing a holistic view of neighborhood and district-scale sustainability. The performance areas touch on social, economic and environmental objectives, like any good sustainability system. The performance areas form the lens through which we view district scale sustainability. For our team, our stakeholders and partners, these performance areas are non-negotiable.

To date, the performance areas have been 'loose-fit', and do not define specific benchmarks, but rather provide goals and objectives that allow a project to be guided rather than prescribed. Each district and neighborhood is unique, and our approach is to build capacity within project teams, and the local community, to define their own vision and deploy those strategies that make the most sense.

For a Portland-focused organization that PoSI was, and given its agenda at the time, the Framework was appropriate. It responded to local conditions and local needs. Its impact has however extended well beyond its original roots, and we now think its time for the Framework to evolve. This Scoping Paper describes how we propose to evolve the Framework into a global protocol.

THE SCOPING PAPER

This scoping paper provides information about our ambition to develop a global Ecodistricts Protocol. Its purpose is to also act as a catalyst in gathering feedback. We want to know what you think.

In this document you will find information about:

- The objectives of the new global EcoDistricts Protocol;
- What might be in the new Protocol;
- Who the audience(s) might be;
- How we plan to develop it; and
- The idea of rewarding EcoDistricts leadership.

The information in this scoping paper has been informed by early engagement with a number of stakeholders¹. However we have much more engagement to do. Throughout this paper you will find questions (like the one below) that we are asking of stakeholders - those champions who will help us develop this new Protocol. Please take a moment to tell us what you think. These questions are contained in an online survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W55M8DT>

This scoping paper will serve as a source of reference for the work we will undertake over the coming 12 months as we develop the Protocol. It will remain a live document, continually updated as we gather feedback.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. IS THERE ANYTHING MISSING FROM THIS DOCUMENT THAT WE CAN ADDRESS IN THE NEXT REVISION?

¹EcoDistricts facilitated Industry Briefing sessions in early 2014 in San Francisco, Washington DC, Boston, Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, and Portland, OR. A summary of key issues and a list of organizations represented at these sessions are contained within Appendix A.

SO, WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA BEHIND ECODISTRICTS?

So, what's the big idea behind EcoDistricts? Projects that adopt the EcoDistricts approach focus on 'doing'. It's about making projects happen. Establishing the conditions for accelerated integrated sustainability at a district and neighborhood scale.

These projects seek to do more, but better, quicker, and with greater collaboration. Collective impact is what we aspire to achieve.²

It's about supercharging the implementation phase of great projects that build jobs and equity in our communities, reduce environmental footprint, strengthen social fabric and promote innovation.

A project adopting the Ecodistrict approach doesn't sit back and wait for the 'market' to respond to a plan. It will create the market conditions necessary for great strategies to be executed, connecting project ideas with the right stakeholders and the opportunities for finance.

Therefore, we view the EcoDistrict approach as a new model of project delivery. It is about building a civic-public-private partnership approach that builds shared commitment between stakeholders, joint responsibility and distributed decision making frameworks that will help execute sustainability projects.

Oh, and by the way, these projects view sustainability with a holistic lens, not just a green lens.

And don't forget, your project that adopts the EcoDistrict approach should start as a pilot, your vehicle for innovating in a safe environment, where stakeholder support has been established. It's your opportunity to demonstrate success and articulate value to the wider community, showing that it can be done. You will also research, report, institutionalize and celebrate your success, along the way. We will also share our learnings, and help others succeed.

And then you will replicate, across the city, the methods, tools and techniques that led to your project success.

And this is how we build sustainable cities, from the neighborhood up.

²Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration. It was first articulated in the 2011 Stanford Social Innovation Review article [Collective Impact](#), written by John Kania and Mark Kramer.

DEFINING THE ECODISTRICTS APPROACH

The new global Ecodistricts Protocol will define the requirements for delivering integrated district and neighborhood sustainability projects. However, those adopting the EcoDistricts approach must display the following 10 characteristics:

1. Be a community, neighborhood or district undergoing social, environmental and/or economic change;
2. Be building social and natural capital is a non-negotiable goal for the project;
3. Have a commitment to implementation is paramount, in delivering integrated green building, smart infrastructure and community action projects;
4. Have stakeholders and partners who are critical to the successful delivery of the project vision are engaged, not just present;
5. Have a collaborative governance structure is established, that binds those stakeholders to a set of commitments that ensures lasting change;
6. Be undertaking a district assessment, identifying a sustainability baseline for the purposes of target setting and project scoping, and these are documented in an Ecodistricts Roadmap;
7. Have a clear set of catalytic projects has been defined and assessed for their feasibility, with funding commitments identified and established, across the three areas of Green Buildings, smart Infrastructure and Community Action;
8. Have catalytic projects that are being (or plan to be) deployed, that contribute to achieving all eight of the EcoDistricts Performance Areas;
9. Have an established district management framework, whereby strategies delivered can be monitored and performance reported, by an entity that is committed to ongoing district improvement; and
10. Have a project that is implemented with a commitment to replication, by informing policy making and plan making within the City.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

2. ARE WE MISSING ANY OTHER FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ECODISTRICTS APPROACH?

WHY WE NEED AN ECODISTRICTS PROTOCOL

A lot of people may think, 'oh no, not another tool, the market is already too congested'. And this is understandable.

However the EcoDistricts Protocol is not new, but rather an evolution of something that already exists, and has for sometime—the EcoDistricts Framework.

The Framework was developed to accelerate district and neighborhood scale sustainable development, assisting project teams navigate the multiple challenges to successful project delivery. The global EcoDistricts Protocol will build upon the Framework and continue to help projects overcome challenges such as:

- Lack of rigorous project governance, and the need to build multi-stakeholder ownership and commitment to delivering and managing district-scale strategies.
- Lack of interdisciplinary goal setting, and the need to establish metrics that are appropriately scaled down from the city level and embraced corporately by development organizations, and embedded across the multiple development phases of a project.
- Fragmented project assessment processes, and the need to facilitate collaborative (and not individual) assessment and strategy related actions that help identify integrated project opportunities

- Continued reliance on traditional funding sources, and the need to innovate and embrace emerging models and platforms, whilst improving our ability to capture land and asset value and 'do-deals' with public, private and third party stakeholders.
- Need to embrace lighter, faster and cheaper strategies to advance district and neighborhood sustainability, and not a continued reliance on capital intensive buildings and infrastructure projects.

These challenges remain, and result in projects 'falling over'. Every day we continue to see projects fail. Excellent plans that fail to be implemented.

And whilst the EcoDistricts Framework is good, it needs some work. The Performance Areas need to be updated and the four step methodology needs some greater clarity and definition. This will help projects adopting the EcoDistricts approach succeed.

Rewarding the leadership of projects, as we propose to do, will help build momentum and promote innovation. The Protocol will also help build the skills of practitioners, helping to grow the district-scale sustainability marketplace.

We need the EcoDistricts Framework to evolve, and the Protocol to become the next generation blueprint for accelerating integrated district and neighborhood scale sustainability.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

3. WHAT OTHER CHALLENGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE ECODISTRICTS PROTOCOL ADDRESSING?



THE SCOPE OF THE ECODISTRICTS PROTOCOL

OBJECTIVES + PRINCIPLES

Our stakeholders continue to remind us of the important role we play, which is to provide an implementation blueprint for cities to accelerate district- and neighborhood-scale sustainability.

This has been the fundamental objective of the EcoDistricts Framework for many years, and we propose the same objective for the new global Ecodistricts Protocol.

The objective of the global EcoDistricts Protocol is to therefore:

“PROVIDE AN IMPLEMENTATION BLUEPRINT FOR CITIES TO ACCELERATE DISTRICT AND NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE SUSTAINABILITY AND BE REWARDED FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP.”

To achieve this objective, the Protocol will set performance requirements for the four step EcoDistricts approach to development. It will provide guidance on how to create the conditions for project success, how we establish the ‘ways and means’ of bringing people together, across diverse sectors, to identify transformative projects, fund them and deliver them.

The Protocol will provide a blueprint for accelerating district- and neighborhood-scale sustainability projects, or in other words—doing more, better projects, quicker.

OUR PRINCIPLES FOR INFORMING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROTOCOL ARE THAT:

- it is developed with and has the support of urban development leaders of all stripes
- it works, and people want to use it - it is well designed and user friendly
- the audience is clear
- it helps address the complexity of working at scale with multiple stakeholders
- it is global - its flexible and can be adapted if required
- it works with other rating and certification schemes
- it rewards leadership, and clearly articulates exemplar global performance
- it inspires, yet is practical
- it has a sustainable business model
- it makes an impact - we can measure impact, knowing it is helping build better cities

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

4. WOULD YOU ADD ANY OTHER PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROTOCOL?

5. IS THERE ANYTHING MISSING FROM OUR OBJECTIVE FOR THE PROTOCOL?

OUR AUDIENCE

Knowing our audience is important. It helps us write the Protocol in a way that will be useable, and impactful. Currently, the EcoDistricts Framework influences many, including those listed below.

FOR MUNICIPALITIES: The Protocol will support neighborhood sustainability assessment and investment strategies to help meet broader sustainability policy and economic development goals. EcoDistricts puts demonstration projects on the ground, saves local money and resources, and stimulates new business development.

FOR DEVELOPERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS: The Protocol will help create mechanisms to reduce development and operating costs by linking individual building investments to neighborhood infrastructure, constructively engage stakeholders in development priorities and establishing governance structures that promote shared responsibility and decision making.

FOR BUSINESSES: The Protocol will provide a platform to deliver district-scale infrastructure and building products and services to a growing marketplace.

FOR RESIDENTS: The Protocol 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.

FOR UTILITIES: The Protocol creates a model for integrated infrastructure planning to guide the development of more cost-effective and resilient green infrastructure investments over time.

FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS: The Protocol provides a framework for engaging with public and private sector entities, taking part in goal setting and project development and delivery. The Protocol also provides a framework for ongoing neighborhood management and improvement.

FOR CIVIC ENTREPRENEURS: The Protocol provides an opportunity to be part of transformative projects that are seeking to accelerate change, among a diverse set of stakeholders.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

6. ARE THERE OTHER AUDIENCES FOR WHICH THE PROTOCOL SHOULD ASSIST?

7. IS THERE A PRIMARY AUDIENCE THE PROTOCOL SHOULD BE WRITTEN FOR?

THE SCOPE

The Foundations Are Built

The current EcoDistricts Framework was released in 2009, and is being used internationally by many organizations across public, private and community-based sectors. For some it provides structure in planning and managing the delivery of sustainable projects. For academia it has provided rich content for curricular and various student activities. And for others, it has provided guidance and inspiration in developing their own approach to key tasks in planning and designing projects, such as establishing community governance structures.

Furthermore, we continue to train practitioners around the world, run workshops with policy makers and assist development organizations on how they can embed the Framework in their projects. We believe the Framework has had an impact in the marketplace, as it is specifically designed to help cities and urban development practitioners team up to be more successful, with an emphasis on process management, integrated project delivery and community collaboration.

The Framework currently has two components, namely:

1. EIGHT PERFORMANCE AREAS that describe the outcomes we are seeking to achieve when revitalizing our districts, neighborhoods and cities; and
2. A FOUR-STEP PROCESS management methodology for achieving those outcomes.

The Current Performance Areas

An EcoDistricts Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was convened in 2008 to review related industry tools and frameworks that would assist in developing the EcoDistricts Performance Areas (Goals, Intent, Objectives and Metrics). The TAC also reviewed local and regional policies in Portland, Oregon with requirements related to the each of the Performance Areas.

THE SCOPE

The current goals of each of the eight Performance Areas are:



EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

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



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Promote human health and community well being.



COMMUNITY IDENTITY

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



ACCESS AND MOBILITY

Provide access to clean and affordable transportation options.



ENERGY

Achieve net zero energy usage annually.



WATER

Meet both human and natural needs through reliable and affordable water management.



HABITAT AND ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION

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



MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Zero waste and optimized materials management.

THE SCOPE

The Four-Step EcoDistricts Methodology

The Framework has standardized a comprehensive approach for district and neighborhood sustainable development that includes four key steps. These are:

STEP 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

District project 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 project formation, over time.

STEP 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.

THE SCOPE

STEP 3: DISTRICT PROJECTS

Successful integrated sustainable development 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.

STEP 4: DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

As projects adopting the Ecodistricts approach are planned and built, ongoing monitoring is essential to understand the full range of social, economic and environmental benefits realized. District 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 project implementation will be essential to continually improving outcomes.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

8. WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ROLE OF THE PERFORMANCE AREAS SHOULD BE (EG. REMAIN AS STRATEGIC GOALS OR BE MORE REFINED)?
9. SHOULD THE FOUR STEP METHODOLOGY REMAIN THE FOCUS OF OUR WORK?

REWARDING LEADERSHIP

The Framework is currently free to download from the EcoDistricts website, with no structure provided around its use, or the celebration of projects that benefit from it. There is no framework to verify or reward those who take a leadership position and embrace it.

Rewarding leadership is an important part of driving change, promoting innovation and stimulating further investment in integrated sustainable development outcomes.

There are various models for rewarding leadership, including, but limited to:

- Project award schemes (eg. AIA Committee on the Environment Top Ten Green Projects Awards)
- Self-assessment and reporting (eg. The Global Reporting Initiative)
- Second party assessment and verification (eg. Rainforest Alliance certification)
- Third party assessment and verification (eg. LEED ND)
- Membership-based schemes, where members comply with a code (eg. ISEAL)
- Charters, that drive organizational commitment to a set of principles (eg. The Charter for the New Urbanism)
- Performance declarations (eg. BCorp)
- Leadership awards for individuals and organizations (e.g. ICLEI Sustainability Leadership Awards)

“CITIES ARE HYPER-COMPETITIVE. THE PROTOCOL NEEDS TO HELP THEM BE COMPETITIVE. VERIFICATION IS IMPORTANT.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

10. SHOULD WE DEVELOP A MODEL FOR REWARDING LEADERSHIP?
IF NOT, WHY NOT? IF SO, WHICH MODEL?

OUR PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE NEW PROTOCOL

We have an ambitious goal of having a draft Protocol completed by mid 2015. We will be working hard in 2014, with the support of our advisory committee and our Target Cities pilot projects, to build-out the Protocol. As we have highlighted in this scoping paper, much of the work from the Framework will be used, and therefore we are not starting from scratch.

We have developed three core principles in our approach to developing the Protocol. These are:

COLLABORATION—by reaching out to stakeholders of all types, asking questions, seeking their feedback and directly involving them in our work.

TECHNICALLY ROBUST—by establishing a national and international Advisory Committee representing public, private, and third sector organizations who will provide strong direction and input in the development of the performance areas, methodology and model for rewarding leadership.

GENUINE—being honest and transparent in our approach and dealings with stakeholders, acknowledging that this work is evolving, that we don't have all the answers and that we need input, guidance and support.

And our method for developing the Protocol is quite simple, and will involve:

REVIEWING PRIOR LEARNINGS—we are a late starter to this, and have much to learn from others who have been developing rating tools, frameworks and similar systems. We will learn from them, and ensure we do not reinvent the wheel;

ENGAGING WITH INDUSTRY—by implementing a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process with our advisory committee's and other stakeholders;

TEST AND REVISE, AND THEN REVISE AGAIN—by using our Target Cities pilot projects we will have the opportunity to test the draft Protocol in real time, receive feedback and help us to continually improve the Protocol as we draft it;

LAUNCH, CELEBRATE AND LEARN—we will launch the Protocol, celebrate projects that lead, and build the platform for ongoing learning and support.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

11. COULD WE IMPROVE OUR APPROACH IN DEVELOPING THE PROTOCOL? IF SO, HOW?

OUR PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE NEW PROTOCOL

We will be using key questions to guide our work.

Such questions include:

ON THE PERFORMANCE AREAS

How many and to what level of detail should they be? (ie. a detailed performance benchmark versus a guiding principle)

ON THE FOUR STEP METHODOLOGY

How much detail do we need to provide in articulating the four steps, and in what language do we write the compliance requirements and for who?

ON REWARDING LEADERSHIP

What type of model is the market interested in?

ON ADMINISTRATION

What role does EcoDistricts want to play in administering the Protocol, and what is the role of current and future partners and networks?

ON THE AUDIENCE / USERS OF THE PROTOCOL

What challenges do city makers face, and what tools for implementation do they need?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

12. WHAT OTHER KEY QUESTIONS DO YOU THINK WE NEED TO NAVIGATE IN DEVELOPING THE ECODISTRICTS PROTOCOL?

ECODISTRICTS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

EcoDistricts has always maintained an approach to its work that is collaborative in nature and strategic in approach.

The EcoDistricts Framework was originally developed with strong support and guidance from a diverse group of stakeholders. This approach will continue to influence the development of the Protocol, and we invite stakeholders interested in participating to contact us.

In developing the Protocol we will be drawing upon the wealth of knowledge from practitioners across North America and beyond, who will participate on a range of committees that will review our technical performance areas, our process methodology, and advise on the key strategic issues we need to navigate, such as partnerships, models for rewarding leadership, professional accreditation and others.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

13. WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN US ON THIS JOURNEY? IF SO, LET'S TALK.

ADAM BECK
503.367.1108
ADAM@ECODISTRICTS.ORG

ECODISTRICTS & OTHER TOOLS

A number of tools and frameworks provided inspiration in the development of the EcoDistricts Framework back in 2008, and continue to do so. We believe that the global marketplace for rating tools is rich and diverse, and they play a critical role in transforming our practices.

The Living Communities Challenge (International Living Future Institute), the Sustainable Sites Initiative (ASLA, The Lady Wildflower Center and Royal Botanical Society), LEED for Neighborhood Development (USGBC), One Planet Communities (Bioregional) and the STAR Community Index (ICLEI) have provided inspiration in our development of the EcoDistricts Framework.

Since this time more tools and frameworks have emerged in the market, and others remain under development. The Estidama (Pearl) rating system (Abu Dhabi Ministry of Planning), Green Star – Communities (Green Building Council of Australia), GreenMark Districts (Singapore Green Building Council), STARS (AASHE), District 2030 (Architecture 2030) and numerous others are providing support to local and international markets in transforming their urban development outcomes.

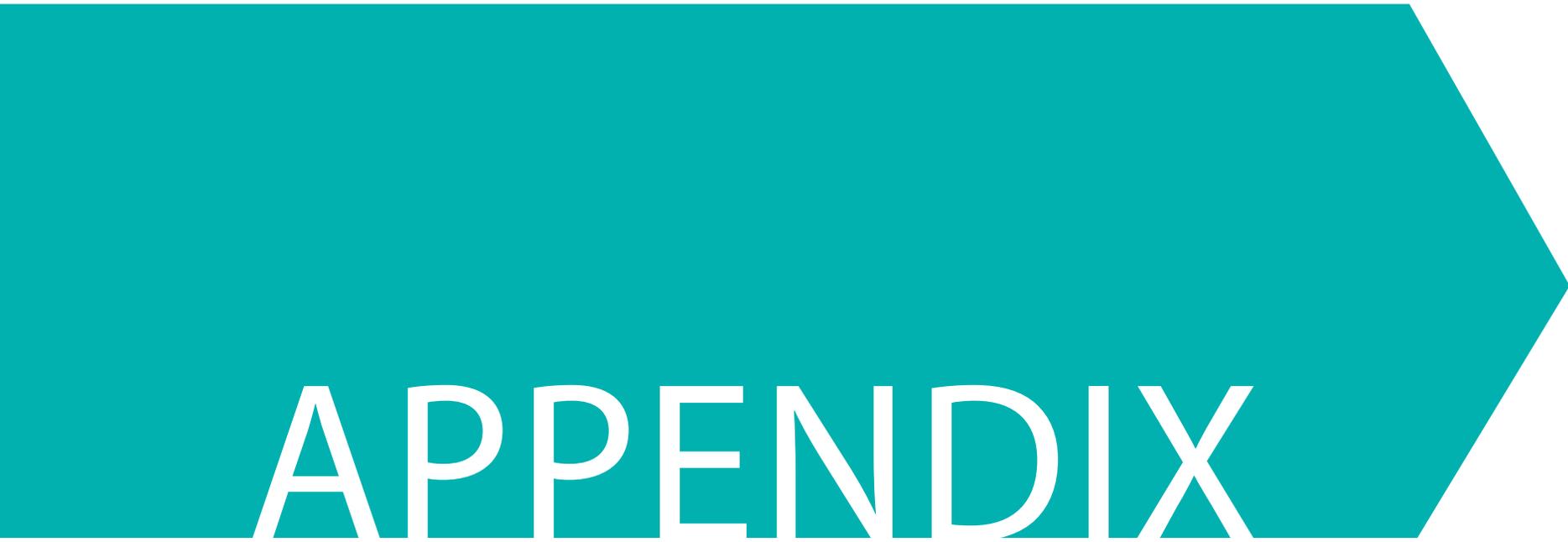
Whilst many tools exist, it is important for us as a marketplace to understand the subtle and not so subtle differences between them. Each and every sustainability rating tool,

framework and system is designed with a specific purpose in mind. They are often developed for different audiences, some are developed collectively with industry and others are not. Independent certification, self assessment, and on-site auditing are just some of the differing certification and compliance methods. Some are focused on environmental outcomes, whilst others are more holistic.

From the view of EcoDistricts, the Protocol will be complementary, and not competitive, to most of the available rating tools and systems in the market. Our focus on process (our four step methodology) provides the ideal support to those specifying sustainability outcomes (ie. benchmarks contained within rating tools).

To ensure a high level of complementarity, we will be inviting organizations responsible for the diversity of rating tools, frameworks and systems to contribute and provide feedback on the development of the Protocol.

Our view at EcoDistricts is we will go further and faster when we go together.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: INDUSTRY BRIEFING

Between January and April 2014, EcoDistricts hosted briefing sessions across North America on its plan to develop a global Ecodistricts Protocol. These sessions served as an opportunity to seek early feedback from stakeholders on our proposal.

Organizations represented at the briefing sessions included:

- Perkins + Will
- Webcor
- Arup
- ZGF
- Mithun
- City of Portland
- City of San Francisco
- Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Denver Housing Authority
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Regenesis
- Sustainable Atlanta
- Four Elements Engineering
- Downtown D.C.
- BC Engineering
- Landscape Architecture Foundation
- American Architectural Foundation
- ZipCar
- A Better City
- Urban Habitat Initiatives
- Nichols Partnership
- City of Denver
- Colorado State University
- Boston Redevelopment Authority
- Integral Group
- LISC
- CH2MHill
- City of Boston
- City of Atlanta
- Rocky Mountains Institute
- Place Matters
- Cadmus Group
- GreenForm
- American Institute of Architecture
- HRA Advisors
- PSE Equity
- Pareto Energy
- Trust for the National Mall
- Commodore Builders
- Sustainable Performance Institute
- Real Food Colorado
- Midtown Alliance Atlanta

APPENDIX A: INDUSTRY BRIEFING

Summarized below are some highlights on what stakeholders think of our ambition in developing the Protocol:

- Rewarding leadership is important for the development industry, this is a good idea.
- Municipalities need to share information regarding successful projects, this is important.
- If a 'Process Manager' is in place, a process management tool like this will work.
- Incentivizing process is important, work towards these types of outcomes.
- It is critical to provide toolkits and professional development opportunities to practitioners.
- Social and organizational capacity building is needed, quickly.
- The power in the Ecodistricts model is the stakeholder engagement, getting it done.
- The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a good model, self assessment and third part assessment are both options you should consider.
- The existing tools on the market (eg. LEED ND, LBC etc) provide the certification, you don't need to produce another one.
- Use the term 'methodology,' not 'standard'.
- If something is missing from the existing rating tools, work with them to fill the gaps, don't do it yourself.
- There are a lot of plans in the que, we need to activate them. Identify gaps of where the backlog is occurring and build capacity to remove barriers.
- You need to disrupt some existing business models to be successful.
- Brand and audience is important, what is the driver? (eg. Fair Trade etc).
- Two steps should be considered (1) the process should be the four step methodology, with commitments for each. If you commit, you are an ecodistrict. (2) the performance areas then determine what level of performance you reach, this is what you verify.
- EcoDistricts should become an intermediary in delivering projects.
- We need to help organizations push beyond their traditional business models.
- You need to define the four steps for key stakeholder groups.

APPENDIX A: INDUSTRY BRIEFING

Summarized below are some highlights on what stakeholders think of our ambition in developing the Protocol:

- The standard needs to be clear, strong and definitive.
- The standard needs to help solve problems, needs to be a problem solving framework.
- You have something that's likely to have more success than all the others.
- You need to help navigate all the other tools.
- You need to eliminate borders, it needs to be a bridging tool.
- The performance areas need to push us.
- Be clear on who your audience is.
- You should set clear benchmarks for the performance areas.
- Cities are hyper-competitive, the standard needs to help them be competitive – verification is important.
- Governance is important, need to build community ownership and trust – communities need to be part of projects.
- Marketing is important to attract private sector interest and investment.
- Clearly define how the EcoDistricts Framework works with other systems.
- With the eight performance areas, don't prescribe that you have to do all of them, this is not realistic.
- The value of Ecodistricts is that it sets up an assessment model and governance structure for projects, therefore the investment opportunities are strengthened.
- With respect to the performance areas, it needs to be an aggregative model, not prescribing individually – the whole is bigger than the sum of the parts.
- The standard needs to be accessible and easy.
- The standard needs to have good case studies.
- The standard needs to be a framework for stakeholders to participate.
- The ecodistricts brand brings people together.
- It should be a platform, where other tools can plug and play.

About EcoDistricts

Our name, EcoDistricts, sums up our shared vision for creating sustainable cities from the neighborhood up by bringing together builders and entrepreneurs, policymakers and urban innovators to create vibrant neighborhoods, smart cities and a healthy planet.

Urban development leaders of all stripes see the EcoDistricts approach as the powerful way to address many of their pressing challenges, from climate change to neighborhood revitalization. Districts or neighborhoods provide an important scale to accelerate local sustainability goals — small enough to innovate quickly and big enough to have a meaningful impact to inform broader policy and community-wide investments.

At EcoDistricts, we're creating a powerful convening, advocacy, technical assistance and research platform to serve the growing number of sustainable development practitioners, policymakers and change makers who are making a demonstrable impact in their communities — strategic in nature, collaborative in approach and practical in application.

The EcoDistricts approach is a public-private-civic partnership that emphasizes innovation and deployment of district-scale best practices to create the neighborhoods we desperately need — healthy, vibrant, sustainable, and just. Key ingredients include:

- Catalytic district-scale projects that maximize environmental, community, and economic benefits, with an emphasis on integrated infrastructure solutions, next generation green buildings, and civic engagement and entrepreneurship
- Robust neighborhood-scale public-private-civic leadership and governance to guide implementation over time, ensuring that collective objectives are simultaneously addressed and advanced
- Integration of comprehensive sustainability performance metrics and assessment to guide neighborhood development

