

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

**DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**

DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2007

CMR 436:07

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF AN AMENDED GREEN BUILDING POLICY FOR CITY
FACILITIES.**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Council adopt the amended policy (Attachment A) on sustainable, “green” building practices for City construction and building maintenance operations.

BACKGROUND

On April 21, 2003, the City Council adopted the current Green Building Policy to implement goals of the City Sustainability Policy. The initial policy, as noted in the attached staff report (CMR 243:03, Attachment C), addressed five key areas: new construction, renovation, site improvement projects, maintenance and demolition. The adopted policy requires that construction of new City facilities over 10,000 square feet achieve a LEED “certified” rating level. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and “Certified” is the first level of the series, with Platinum as the highest level of green building.

On April 23, 2007, the City Council reviewed proposals prepared by staff and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for green building levels, thresholds and timelines for implementing a mandatory green building program for City and private projects. Staff suggested requiring a “LEED Silver” rating level for new City buildings at a threshold of 5,000 square feet. The ARB suggested a more aggressive proposal to require “LEED Silver” at the 1,000 square feet threshold.

On August 6, 2007, the City Council adopted an ordinance to update the ARB’s Approval Finding #15 and to require green building checklists as a consideration for staff evaluation of planning and building applications. The ordinance became effective October 11, 2007, and applies to both City and private projects. The August 6, 2007 report noted that staff would return in the fall of 2007 with a revised policy for City buildings to address the City’s particular goals, needs and resource issues.

DISCUSSION

The proposed revisions are set forth in Attachment A, as well as in an annotated redlined format (Attachment B) to view the changes to the existing policy. The revised policy and criteria were discussed and developed in interdepartmental meetings.

Eight key criteria are contained in the proposed policy. Four of the original five criteria were modified. The three new criteria include Exceptions (#3), Certification (#4), and Demonstration

and Education (#8). In summary, the first of the criteria would lower the green building threshold to 5,000 square feet and require a LEED Silver rating for new City buildings. The second sets forth a requirement for the use of green building checklists, a review of costs and benefits, and an objective of LEED certification for renovations, additions and other buildings. The third of the criteria lists exceptions and provides examples of projects that may be considered for exceptions. The fourth would allow an alternate method of verifying LEED compliance in lieu of using the US Green Building Council (USGBC) standards. The fifth regarding site design was strengthened with additional measures, the sixth regarding maintenance and life cycle cost analysis remains unmodified, and the seventh added “reuse” to demolition to explicitly set a goal for reuse of facilities and materials. The eighth proposes that the City demonstrate leadership and provide public education regarding sustainability.

RESOURCE IMPACT

The Public Safety Building and Mitchell Park Library are targeted and will be budgeted for construction at the LEED Silver level. Staff will return to the Council with information regarding costs for obtaining LEED Silver certification for those buildings. As noted in the revised policy criterion #2, additions over 5,000 square feet would be evaluated by a designated green building professional to determine costs and benefits of adding or enhancing green building features. As noted in criterion #3 (Exceptions), adherence to the green building standards would be determined on a case by case basis depending on the outcome of the cost/benefit analysis.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The amendment of the City’s threshold to 5,000 square feet and provision of the LEED Silver goal in the amended policy is an important step prior to the establishment of a mandatory green building ordinance and program for non-City projects. .

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This policy does not require environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as it does not meet the definition of a project pursuant to section 21065 of the California Public Resources Code.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Amended Green Building Policy for City Buildings

Attachment B: Annotated Revised Green Building Policy

Attachment C: CMR 243:03