

CITY OF PALO ALTO
GREEN BUILDING POLICY FOR CITY BUILDINGS
CLEAN VERSION

The City of Palo Alto intends to incorporate sustainable, green building practices into the design and construction of City buildings, as part of the Council's overall Sustainability Policy. Specifically, City buildings shall be designed and constructed according to the following criteria:

1. New Construction – All new City buildings over 5,000 square feet shall be designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver or equivalent rating system certification, except as provided in #3 below.
2. Renovations, Additions and Other Buildings – All renovations of or additions to existing City facilities shall be designed to use environmentally sound, green building techniques and materials. LEED or equivalent checklists shall be used as guidelines to identify and enhance green building measures. Substantial renovations or additions of 5,000 square feet or greater shall be evaluated by a designated green building professional to determine the costs and benefits of adding or enhancing green building features. Such facilities shall generally be designed to achieve LEED or LEED Existing Building (LEED-EB) or equivalent rating certification, except as provided in #3 below.
3. Exceptions – Exceptions for new buildings and for substantial renovations and additions may be approved where the City Council determines that LEED or equivalent certification would be impractical or unreasonably costly and that all reasonable green building measures are otherwise incorporated into the project design. Examples of projects that may be considered for exceptions include, but are not limited to: a) buildings requiring compliance with historic preservation criteria, b) additions where compliance with the remainder of the facility or site is impractical, c) projects requiring joint funding with other jurisdictions, and d) buildings that are primarily intended for storage or equipment purposes rather than human occupancy.
4. Certification – For projects requiring compliance with LEED (or equivalent) criteria, the City Council may, in lieu of LEED certification by the U.S. Green Building Council, require independent verification of LEED compliance by a LEED-accredited professional, where it is determined that the cost of certification is excessive and the funds could be better used to enhance the green building features of the project.
5. Site Improvement Projects – Careful planning and consideration shall be given to improvements to sites containing City buildings, parks, and/or open spaces. Projects should emphasize the preservation of native plant and animal species, incorporate drainage and runoff control measures into landscape features, discourage impervious landscaping and construction, provide protection of creek and riparian environments and water quality, and promote the use of drought-resistant landscaping.
6. Maintenance of Existing City Buildings and Facilities – Life cycle cost analysis shall be undertaken for building system or component replacement projects where appropriate in the judgment of the Public Works Director or his designee in an effort to specify the most energy, water and maintenance efficient systems in relation to initial cost.

7. Reuse and Demolition – Existing City facilities and materials shall be reused where possible to reduce the generation of solid waste and expenditure of energy, water and other resources to create new facilities, where consistent with City objectives for providing desirable facilities and services for residents and businesses. On projects where demolition is required, in order to maximize the amount of waste materials diverted from landfills, deconstruction techniques shall be employed whenever practical, and all salvageable items shall be recovered and put to appropriate use.

8. Demonstration and Education – To the extent practical, City facilities should demonstrate leadership and educate the public about sustainability and green building practices and features, through the use of interpretive signs and exhibits at the facility, and by providing information on the City's website.