



Living Building Pilot Program

Overview

The **Living Building Pilot Program** is intended to provide flexibility in the application of development standards in the Seattle Land Use code to facilitate the development of buildings attempting to meet the **Living Building Challenge**.

The **Living Building Challenge** is a green building certification created by the International Living Building Institute to recognize buildings meeting the highest level of sustainability.

Living Buildings are required to be self-sufficient for energy and water needs and meet advanced standards for elements such as material use and quality of the indoor environment. More information on the challenge is available at www.ilbi.org.

In order to meet these standards, projects may seek to utilize design approaches such as natural daylighting, natural ventilation, solar energy or water collections systems, or other features that may be inadvertently discouraged or prohibited by existing Land Use code development standards. In order to provide flexibility for these projects, the pilot program would allow enrolled projects to request departures from an expanded range of standards through the design review process if they would better meet the goals of the **Living Building Challenge** and would not conflict with Design Guidelines.

Enrollment

In order to participate in the **Living Building Pilot Program**, proposed projects must be eligible for design review and may not be located in the shoreline jurisdiction. Interested applicants must submit a plan demonstrating how their proposal would meet each of the prerequisites of the **Living Building Challenge**. Enrollment applications will be limited to

12 qualifying projects before January 20, 2013. For more information on how to apply, please contact Jess Harris, DPD Green Permitting Lead, at (206) 684-7744 or Jess.Harris@seattle.gov.

Review Process

Consideration of departure requests will occur through the existing design review process. In addition to departures already allowed through design review, applicants may request departures from the following standards:

- use provisions (i.e. permitted, prohibited or conditional use), but only for accessory uses that would directly address a prerequisite of the **Living Building Challenge**;
- residential density limits;
- downtown view corridor requirements;
- floor area ratios, up to 15% above the otherwise applicable limit;
- maximum size of use;
- structure height (up to 10 feet generally plus additional height for rooftop features) above limit;
- parking requirements;
- solid-waste containers storage;
- downtown open space;
- downtown parking access; and
- street, alley and easement requirements in Chapter 23.53.

The design review board will review each request to determine whether “the departure would result in a development that better meets the goals of the **Living Building Challenge** and would not conflict with adopted design guidelines” and provide a recommendation to the Director of DPD who will make the decision. This program provides flexibility under the Land Use Code only.

If the project requires code alterations or variances from another code, such as the building or energy code, these requests will be handled separately through the Innovation Advisory Committee (IAC) or through existing alternative compliance pathways. Information on the IAC is available at: www.seattle.gov/dpd/Permits/GreenPermitting/InnovationAdvisoryCommittee.

Because of the breadth of departures and the technical aspects that we anticipate, applicants may be required to meet with a technical advisory group prior to the Design Review meetings. The purpose of this group would be to provide a technical resource to the Design Review Boards and DPD staff.

Additional information on the Design Review Process can be found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program.

Height Measurement

Projects enrolled in the program may choose to use the Building Code height measurement technique instead of the Land Use Code technique at their discretion.

Project Facilitation

Enrolled projects will receive permit facilitation, including a single point of contact, through DPD's existing Priority Green system. More information on this program is available at www.seattle.gov/dpd/prioritygreen.

Minimum Requirements

All participating projects that receive departures must either meet all the **Living Building Challenge** pre-requisites or 60% of the pre-requisites and all of the following:

- energy usage must be 25% or less of average usage for a comparable building not in Program (includes all electricity, heating, and cooling requirements less energy generated on site);
- water usage must be 25% or less of average water usage for a comparable building not in the Program; and
- 50% of stormwater must be captured and used on site.
- Projects failing to meet these standards may be subject to monetary penalties up to 5% of construction value, based on extent of compliance.

Contact Information

Additional information about the program and other green permitting resources is available at www.seattle.gov/dpd/Permits/GreenPermitting. Applicants interested in the program should also contact Jess Harris, DPD Green Permitting Lead, at (206) 684-7744 or Jess.Harris@seattle.gov.

