

## Building Sustainability Principles: Action Checklist

The built environment has an enormous impact on our health, environment, and economy. By adopting practices that are environmentally responsible throughout a building's life-span, we can increase both environmental and economic performance. Sustainable construction can be integrated at any stage, from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction.

**Consider Green Building Standards:** Local governments should first focus on greening all existing municipal facilities, then assess the need for community-wide green building standards. Further, governments should consider mandated efficiency upgrades to existing buildings undergoing addition or renovation.

	Implement measures in municipal buildings such as lighting upgrades, improved insulation, and better HVAC systems to reduce energy costs, reduce GHG emissions, increase buildings' asset value, and encourage development of energy efficiency service markets.
	Adopt minimum green building standards for all new construction and major renovation projects overseen by designated local agencies.
	Inventory existing policies and programs, looking for those that support, link to, reward or directly overlap with components of green building.
	Analyze current and projected building types to ensure that a potential green building program is relevant to the types of buildings and construction activity typical to the city.
	Prepare a stakeholder outreach plan to gain feedback and buy-in along each phase of the program's development.
	Develop an implementation plan that involves gaining approval from the city council, phasing the program components, training and hiring staff, preparing outreach and education materials, offering workshops and other green building events for the community at large, providing a source of funding for marketing and incentives and preparing for future revisions and improvements.

**Utility Rate Structures:** Where municipalities control or influence utilities (electricity, water, gas, etc) they should link rate structures to efficiency. This will incentivize more effective tracking and reporting, leading to improved maintenance programs, and reduced energy and water usage.

	<p>Establish a working group of interested stakeholders to consider design issues and develop recommendations for favorable rates. Key stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PUCs (public utility commissioners)</li> <li>• Electric utilities and competitive electric service providers.</li> <li>• Developers of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and renewable energy systems, and trade associations that represent these interests.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) or Independent System Operators (ISOs).</li> <li>• State Energy Offices, Energy R&amp;D Agencies, and Economic Development Authorities.</li> <li>• Current renewable energy and CHP users.</li> </ul>
	Open a generic PUC docket to explore actual costs and system benefits of onsite clean energy supply and rate reasonableness, if this cannot be addressed under an existing open docket.
	Ensure that PUC staff has current and accurate information regarding the rate issues for CHP and renewables and their potential benefits for the generation system.
	Identify if existing or pending renewable portfolio standards or other policies which might be significant drivers to new onsite clean distributed generation (DG), generate a need for rate evaluations.
<b>Building Performance Disclosure:</b> Local governments should require building performance disclosure as part of real estate transactions, starting with commercial and then moving to residential buildings.	
	Determine what level of performance verification is needed. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Star Portfolio Manager for commercial buildings</li> <li>• Home Energy Rating System (HERS) for new homes</li> <li>• Local database for existing residential energy use</li> </ul>

SOURCES:

Global Green USA. 2008. Developing Green Building Programs: A Step-by-Step Guide for Local Governments. Retrieved April 27, 2010 from, <http://www.globalgreen.org/docs/publication-71-1.pdf>

Seattle Green Building Task Force and Cascadia Consulting Group, Inc. 2008. Disclose Building Energy Performance (Checklist). Retrieved April 27, 2010 from, [http://www.seattle.gov/environment/documents/GBTF\\_BldgEnergy\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/environment/documents/GBTF_BldgEnergy_Checklist.pdf)