

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Pittsburgh, showing a multi-lane highway with traffic, residential neighborhoods with houses and trees, and a bridge in the distance. The city skyline is visible in the background under a clear sky.

ECODISTRICTS TOOLKIT



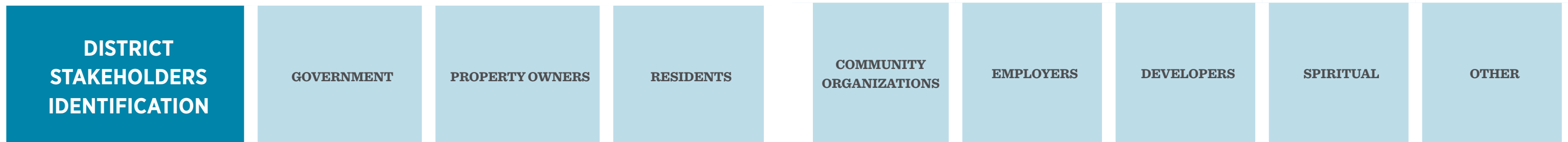
EcoDistricts

Governance Models

If an existing organization is not appropriate, what options are available? There are many legal entities that can be used to organize the stakeholders of an EcoDistrict. Each district's choice will be based on its goals and unique situation. The table below provides a list of entity types and some benefits and challenges associated with each.

POTENTIAL GOVERNING STRUCTURE	PRO	CON
CERTIFIED B CORPORATION	Required to meet comprehensive social and environmental performance standards Discounted tools and services from other B Corps Membership in a socially responsible business community	Cost associated with set up and maintenance Relatively new model
CORPORATION	Provides formal entity Depending on the type of corporation, can provide shares to owners Traditional entity for obtaining financing and ownership of infrastructure	Controlled by a majority shareholder Tax consequences for owners Inflexible ownership structure Very formal corporate maintenance obligations Outside professional help likely needed More expensive to maintain and set up Typically motivated by profit
NON PROFIT CORPORATION	Able to raise money Must have public benefit mission Can have broad membership	Very complicated IRS reporting requirements Complicated maintenance obligations Limited by public benefit rules
COOPERATIVE CORPORATION	Owned by the membership Gives members power to use co-op services, which could be green related, such as buying solar panels for a reduced price	Costs associated with set up and maintenance Democratic control by membership Return surplus revenues Exist solely to serve the membership

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PROJECT-SPECIFIC ORGANIZING ENTITY	Clearly defined roles in response to specific project Duration of organization limited to achieving project goal	May not be fully representative May not be fully recognized by the community May not have the authority to grow the project to meet a broader opportunity identified during the process Cost benefit of forming a new entity for one specific project may not be worth it
EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION	Already in existence No fees to set up Recognition by City and/or State Active membership	May not be flexible May be limited by existing mission May not provide for expanded membership May not allow for large-scale projects due to f
EXISTING HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION	Already in existence No fees to set up Active membership Likely to have some funds	Funds likely to be limited by the association's bylaws Membership may need a majority vote to embark on projects, and it may be difficult to get enough votes Typically controlled by a leadership board Usually concerned about actions within their own boundaries, which are often small
LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	Simple to set up Simple to maintain Flexibility in membership and mission Could accommodate a large-scale project Traditional entity for obtaining financing and ownership of infrastructure	Financial ramifications for members Requires accounting expertise for tax reporting Controlled by a manager or member with ultimate majority controls Profit-motivated
BUILDING OWNERS ASSOCIATION	Like an HOA but allows for participation from multiple buildings and properties Model currently being pursued by Living City Block	Lack of a legal framework and existing examples Inability of building owners to take out additional debt Existing building relationships (ownership structures, financial structures, etc)



Performance Areas



EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

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

OBJECTIVES

- | Ensure neighborhood investments provide direct community benefit through job creation and investment opportunities
- | Provide quality and consistent local job opportunities through EcoDistrict projects
- | Mitigate the forced displacement of existing residents and businesses
- | Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement in all EcoDistrict activities and decision making



HEALTH + WELL BEING

Promote human health and community well being

OBJECTIVES

- | Provide access to safe and functional local recreation and natural areas
- | Provide access to healthy, local and affordable food
- | Ensure safe and connected streets
- | Expand economic opportunities to support a socially and economically diverse population
- | Improve indoor and outdoor air quality

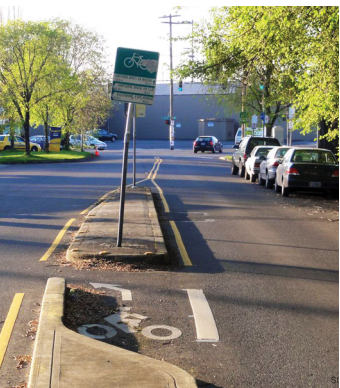


COMMUNITY IDENTITY

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

OBJECTIVES

- | Create beautiful, accessible and safe places that promote interaction and access
- | Foster social networks that are inclusive, flexible and cohesive
- | Develop local governance with the leadership and capacity to act on behalf of the neighborhood



ACCESS + MOBILITY

Provide access to clean and affordable transportation options.

OBJECTIVES

- | Provide accessible services through mixed-uses and improved street access
- | Prioritize active transportation
- | Reduce vehicle miles traveled
- | Use low and zero emission vehicles



ENERGY

Achieve net zero energy usage annually

OBJECTIVES

- | Conserve energy use by minimizing demand and maximizing conservation
- | Optimize infrastructure performance at all scales
- | Use renewable energy



WATER

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

OBJECTIVES

- | Reduce water consumption through conservation
- | Reuse and recycle water resources wherever possible, using potable water only for potable needs
- | Manage stormwater and building water discharge within the district



HABITAT + ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION

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

OBJECTIVES

- | Protect and enhance local watersheds
- | Prioritize native and structurally diverse vegetation
- | Create habitat connectivity within and beyond the district
- | Avoid human-made hazards to wildlife and promote nature-friendly urban design



MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Zero waste and optimized materials management.

OBJECTIVES

- | Eliminate practices that produce waste wherever possible
- | Minimize use of virgin materials and minimize toxic chemicals in new products
- | Optimize material reuse and salvage and encourage use of regionally manufactured products or parts
- | Where opportunities for waste prevention are limited, maximize use of products made with recycled content
- | Capture greatest residual value of organic wastes (including food) through energy recovery and/or composting

Project Palette

PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGY	BUILDINGS + INFRASTRUCTURE (HARDWARE)	PEOPLE + BEHAVIOR (SOFTWARE)
EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT	access	affordable housing multi-modal transit options information centers (library, schools, etc) 20-minute neighborhoods access to parks and open space	green business start-up loans EcoDistrict jobs center enhance local job demand through project agreements community benefit agreements
	represent		sustainability management association
HEALTH + WELL BEING	access	parks and open space healthy food sources	job opportunities training and learning opportunities
	feel	safe streets and pedestrian zones	air quality improvement challenge trash clean ups
COMMUNITY IDENTITY	identify	signature landmark, park or building district brand improvements foster local businesses and products green infrastructure	district brand campaign district safety campaign create "third places"
	interact	parks and open space pedestrian encounter zone urban agriculture create "third places"	public events regular community connections
	lead		community events neighborhood governance collaborative decision making strong neighborhood networks
ACCESS + MOBILITY	shift	bicycle facilities bicycle parking pedestrian facilities (side/cross walks) transit facilities (bus, lightrail, streetcar) 20-minute neighborhoods	bike challenge non-SOV district dashboard education campaign
	share	car share facilities bike share facilities pedestrian-oriented development	car share program bike share program district dashboard education campaign
	manage	transportation demand management (parking) transportation demand management (zone pricing)	district dashboard

PERFORMANCE AREA	STRATEGY	BUILDINGS + INFRASTRUCTURE (HARDWARE)	PEOPLE + BEHAVIOR (SOFTWARE)
ENERGY	reduce	new construction performance standard energy conservation retrofits (building) energy conservation retrofits smart grid	energy conservation challenge district dashboard education campaign
	produce	district energy district renewables property renewables	renewables challenge district dashboard education campaign
	offset		green energy offsets education campaign carbon credits
WATER	reduce	new construction performance standard water conservation retrofits (building) water conservation retrofits (right of way) stormwater retrofits (building) greenstreet retrofits (right of way)	water conservation challenge stormwater challenge district dashboard education campaign
	reuse	property rainwater harvesting district rainwater harvesting property wastewater reuse district wastewater reuse	water reuse challenge district dashboard education campaign
	reconnect	stormwater retrofits (building) greenstreet retrofits (right of way) district stormwater	stormwater challenge district dashboard education campaign
	offset		water credits education campaign
HABITAT + ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION	enhance	tree canopy/vegetation enhancement green infrastructure urban agriculture	tree planting challenge district dashboard education campaign
	connect	tree canopy/vegetation enhancement green infrastructure	tree planting challenge district dashboard education campaign
	restore	protect existing natural areas restore existing natural areas	district dashboard education campaign
MATERIALS MANAGEMENT	reduce		district dashboard education campaign
	reuse	materials exchange center	
	recycle	waste to energy facility district recycling district composting	

