

Throughout 2022 and 2023 DPD met with small groups of stakeholders through one-on-one meetings and small group discussions to further collect input on how the existing Sustainable Development Policy could be enhanced. DPD also began to engage with other City Departments, agencies, and other organizations and interest groups focused on topics including bird friendly design, energy efficiency, sustainable design, sustainable construction, workforce development, public health, environmental justice and more. Participants included design professionals, civic organizations, community groups, advocacy groups, and a small group of development professionals.

The following is a list of comments collected from these meetings with DPD staff. Comments ranged from broad policy and directional recommendations to technical recommendations specific to existing SDP strategies to recommendations for new or modified strategies to increase impact on various issues.

Summary of SDP Feedback from Small Group Discussions

Energy

- Electrification could be a meaningful strategy, however, generators are still only fossil fuel based by code. So full electrification may not be possible.
- Maintain flexibility for both certification types and menu strategies.
- Coordination with new codes and regulations that are constantly changing.
- Conflicts with codes need to be identified and considered. Policy should not recommend action that is in conflict with code requirements.
- Strategies should exceed code requirements to push for high energy efficiency and equipment such as EVSE charging infrastructure, bike parking etc.
- Establish required strategies to spread out which strategies are used. This would allow more impact and coverage of items that are not frequently used.
- Add ComEd energy best practices to the list of strategies.
- ComEd energy best practices is good for boosting the performance of buildings and provides incentives to developers and designers. This is a very attractive program.
- Increase renewable energy requirements to higher percentages.
- Where does geothermal fit into the strategy structure?
- Exceeding the Chicago Energy Transformation Code by 40% is not realistic. This strategy should be removed. It would be very difficult to exceed the code by 25%.
- Remove designed to earn EnergyStar.
- Energy Star should be reconsidered. While it contains many useful items meeting minimum (75 SEDI) certification score may not be better than current CETC.
- EnergyStar strategy should require certification and not just be designed to meet criteria.
- Points available for various building certification programs should be standardized across the board. Some certification programs are undervalued.

Bird Protection

- Requirements for bird-friendly design should be made part of this policy.

- Bird safe glass or other physical structures should be required as part of Bird Protection strategies.
- Bird friendly design can provide co-benefits related to energy efficiency and for other related sustainable impacts.
- Wildlife strategies should be expanded to provide habitat for wildlife above and beyond birds.
- Costs of bird safe glass are quite high.
- Bird safe glass can impact the amount of natural light in buildings, which can impact occupancy and marketability.

Building Certifications

- More points should be awarded for Phius Certification due to the rigorous energy efficiency requirements and impacts.
- Encourage higher building certification levels, Ex. Remove LEED Silver from list of acceptable programs.
- Many certification programs provide several points towards certification for simply being proximate to transit.
- Projects that are attempting to achieve zero energy should be required to use a building certification program to verify complex pathways to net-zero.
- Point values for building programs should be equalized across the board. Ex. Green Globes and LEED points should be equivalent.
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Transportation

- Eliminate proximity to transit strategy as the Connected Communities Ordinance provides many benefits to projects that are proximate to transit.
- Many more parts of the city are served by transit under the Connected Communities Ordinance and TSL zoning rules.
- Eliminate CTA digital displays as many people obtain transit schedule information from personal mobile devices.
- There may be value in CTA digital displays in different types of uses. For example, large public spaces.
- Align strategies with new/upcoming TDM requirements.
- Align EVSE strategies with new requirements.
- Electric vehicle equipment for industrial projects should not just be focused on automobile parking lots. It should be related to trucks and delivery vans.
- Bicycle parking facilities should be designed to accommodate more types of users and bicycles.
- Make sure bike facilities include racks for people with disabilities and for larger “cargo” or mobility bicycles.
- Bicycle rack materials should be durable adequate space for use of both lower and upper storage racks.
- Amenities such as outlets and spaces to repair bicycles should be included in bike parking facilities.

Low carbon building materials

- Mass timber construction is a good way to reduce carbon footprint of buildings.
- How can mass timber construction fit into the policy strategies?
- Low carbon concrete construction can help with reducing carbon in new construction.

Workforce

- Expand workforce strategy to include applicable high school programs.
- Workforce strategy is basic and focused on target populations.
- Encourage workforce strategies that relate to sustainable technologies being implemented through SDP compliance.

Landscapes

- Add strategies that related to developments along waterways.
- Strategies that include habitat restoration and nature-based solutions to help address stormwater management and urban heat-island impacts
- Include strategies that encourage inclusion of additional menu items from the Chicago River Design Guidelines
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General

- Most participants agreed that there is a need to change how buildings and projects are developed.
- Community engagement needs to be a requirement within the SDP.
- Community benefits agreements that focus on residents health, well-being and quality of life should be a strategy.
- Adding sustainable strategies adds costs above and beyond standard building costs.
- Design process can help to minimize added costs and can identify co-benefits of sustainable items for development teams and end users.
- The current policy is viewed as a “cost of doing business” in Chicago. Modifications that increase cost may have impacts on development.
- Can 6b incentives be used to pay for compliance with the SDP?
- Costs are a key concern but sustainable strategies are necessary to help with addressing climate change.
- Related SDP strategies to CAP reduction targets and strategies.
- Examine a tiered system to set compliance targets. Ex. Higher cost projects have higher requirements.