

## **Attachment A. STAFF REPORT FOR COMMITTEE ON RACIAL EQUITY PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS AND SITES POLICY**

### SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS AND SITES POLICY

**Purpose:** This document provides a summary of the key elements of the proposed policy.

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#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2010 Metro Council adopted the Metro Sustainability Plan for internal and business operations which identifies the strategies and actions needed to achieve Metro's environmental sustainability goals for climate, toxics, waste, water and habitat. One of the high-priority actions identified in the plan was to adopt a Metro-wide green building policy to set standards for new construction, renovation and operation of buildings as well as sustainable site management standards for Metro's developed parks and green spaces. The Metro Council adopted the Green Building Policy in 2011. Sustainable site standards have not been adopted. An update to the Green Building Policy was initiated in 2020 to align with current best practices to advance Metro's adopted climate, sustainability and racial equity goals.

#### **DRAFT POLICY**

The buildings in the Metro portfolio are highly varied and distinct from each other. The draft policy standard includes flexibility and exemptions to account for this variation.

Racial equity outcomes for the policy were based on racial equity goals in Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and departmental equity plans, and informed by application of a racial equity framework to the policy including convening of a Racial Equity Team with staff from across Metro. The proposed racial equity policy outcomes include:

- Metro buildings provide healthy, accessible, welcoming spaces where staff and visitors can thrive.
- Metro's buildings contribute to climate and environmental justice outcomes in the region.
- Metro's capital investments in buildings create opportunities for COBID firms and advance workforce diversity.

The policy incorporates the following requirements in pursuit of racial equity outcomes:

- Prioritize sites that are served by public transit and are accessible by walking and biking.
- Promote environmental justice by preventing and mitigating negative impacts on adjacent communities related to siting and displacement, traffic, noise, and diesel emissions and other pollution from building and site construction.

- Site and design buildings for climate adaptation, resiliency and to minimize urban heat island effect.
- Ensure buildings and parks are welcoming to staff, the public, and all Metro constituents, including strategies like signage in multiple languages.
- Ensure buildings and parks are accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities and include accessibility features for those with mobility, hearing or vision needs.
- Minimize the use of toxic building materials, and require the use of non/low-toxic chemicals for cleaning and maintenance.
- Ensure equity in contracting and advance workforce diversity.
- Respect culturally significant areas and honor the history of the original inhabitants of the land.

#### *New construction and major renovation:*

- Core certification: Requires Core Green Building Certification standard certified by the International Living Future Institute for new construction and major renovations of buildings over 1,000 square feet and \$1M in total project cost. A fall back green building standard if ILFI Core cannot be achieved is the LEED v.4.1 Rating System for Building Design + Construction (LEED BD+C) with some required credits to align with Metro sustainability and equity goals.
- Exclude fossil fuel infrastructure: Exclude the use of fossil fuels and dedicated fossil fuel infrastructure in all new construction and major renovations.
- Performance targets: New construction and major renovations under 1,000 square feet and \$1M do not require certification, however, they are required to meet operational requirements and set performance targets in alignment with Metro's sustainability goals.
- SITES certification: All new construction and major renovation of Metro developed parks and green spaces over 2,000 square feet must meet the SITES Gold certification standard, which is designed to enhance sustainability, implement green infrastructure strategies and improve resilience.
- Additional requirements in policy appendices: All new construction and major renovation shall follow Bird-Friendly Design, Materials Carbon Reduction, and Sustainable Roof requirements.

#### *Existing Sites and Buildings*

- Salmon-Safe certification: The Metro Parks system will earn Salmon-Safe certification to ensure accountability and validation of Metro's responsible stewardship of salmon habitat.
- Additional sustainability requirements: All new construction and major renovation projects, regardless of size or certification standard, are required to meet additional sustainability requirements:
  - Exclude the use of fossil fuels and dedicated fossil fuel infrastructure
  - Include electric vehicle charging infrastructure

- Evaluate highest and best use of rooftop space for onsite solar generation, green roof installation, and/or solar reflectivity
- Reduce diesel emissions
- Incorporate bird-friendly design elements
- Reduce embodied carbon in primary materials by 20%

#### *Operations and maintenance:*

- LEED O+M certification: If an existing Metro building over 1,000 square feet and \$1M in project costs meets eligibility and prioritization criteria determined by Metro, the building shall apply for the LEED Rating System for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance (LEED O+M) certification at the Silver level or higher. Existing LEED certified buildings will incrementally achieve higher certification, such as LEED Gold, Platinum or LEED Zero (carbon, waste, energy, water).
- Sustainable operations: All existing Metro buildings, regardless of their eligibility for LEED O+M certification, shall meet the following sustainable operations requirements:
  - Conduct energy audits and develop energy efficiency plans (10,000 SF or larger)
  - Meet business recycling requirements and separate food waste
  - Complete a sustainable roof assessment upon roof tear off or replacement to evaluate highest and best use of rooftop including solar generation, green roof installation and increasing solar reflectivity
  - Replace lighting fixtures and lamps with high efficiency LED alternatives
  - Select new appliances and equipment with highest Energy Star efficiency rating
  - Purchase EPA Water Sense certified fixtures
  - Develop and adopt operational policies and procedures that reduce use and exposure to environmental toxins
  - Follow sustainability criteria during upgrades such as submetering, and using total cost of ownership and lifecycle analysis upon retrofit or replacement

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The policy implementation plan will include extensive training for staff to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities and where to find resources to help. Implementation will be integrated into the capital improvement process to include the prioritization of capital funds at an agency wide level. All projects will be required to report annually on their progress, certification status, and performance metrics. The information collected from projects and ongoing facility operations will inform evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy and where we may want to prioritize resources and make changes to the policy or implementation.

In addition to an internal implementation plan, Metro plans to pursue the following implementation items based on feedback received from COBID-certified firms on how Metro can support them in participating in Metro projects and complying with the policy:

- Clarify within policy materials how projects can apply for an exemption from Core certification if not feasible for the project. If the exemption is approved, a project can pursue an alternative path of LEED certification with baseline LEED credits required.
- Support COBID firms achieving JUST certification through reimbursement of certification costs.
- Provide a comprehensive and accessible library of resources on policy requirements, resources, and implementation tools.
- Offer trainings and informational sessions on policy requirements.
- Connect COBID firms with professionals and firms following best practice to grow capacity within the industry.
- Provide as much advance notice as possible on upcoming projects.
- Ensure solicitations include an estimated project schedule and cost, so contractors can assess and better meet expectations in the request for proposal.
- Include detailed requirements and scoring metrics in project RFPs and specifications.