



Green Star – Communities

Guide for Local Government

Leading together for healthy, resilient and positive places for people and the natural environment.

Foreword

“Sydney’s central city – sustainable, liveable, and productive, inspired by our communities”

Council’s Vision and Priorities Statement



It is an exciting time in the City of Parramatta where we are experiencing a period of dramatic change and transformation. Our City is rapidly growing, building and evolving. We are on a fast-track to becoming Sydney’s Central City.

The Parramatta Square project is one of the largest urban renewal ventures in Australia. The three hectare, mixed use development will provide the foundation for growth in the city and create a future based on good urban design that is environmentally sustainable, has vibrant, beautiful public spaces and an effective integrated public transport system.

I am proud of the leadership demonstrated by Council for being the first local government entity in Australia to seek ‘Green Star – Communities’ certification as well as the first council to specify Green Star ratings for each building across an entire precinct.

The ‘Green Star – Communities’ rating will give residents, businesses and investors independent proof that Parramatta Square will deliver environmental, economic and social sustainability for decades to come.

I urge local governments of all shapes and sizes across Australia to make the most of the Green Star – Communities Guide for Local Government by encouraging development projects in their Local Government Areas that will deliver more productive, liveable, sustainable and healthy communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Dyer'.

Greg Dyer
Chief Executive Officer
City of Parramatta





Where you live has a huge impact on your quality of life – on how easy or hard it is to get to your job if you have one; how long it takes to get your child to hospital if you need to; how much time spent in your car or on congested roads or on overcrowded public transport takes you away from family and friends.

Almost one in every five people in Australia live in a fast-growing outer suburb. Such rapid population growth creates numerous challenges as infrastructure and essential services are stretched beyond their limits. Increasing disconnection in population growth hotspots and their unrealised potential is an issue of national significance.

We should be building the suburbs of the future but outer growth Councils can't do it in isolation. They need the backing of all levels of government, a national policy focus and a dedicated funding response to treat the cause of their growing pains, rather than the symptoms.

There are many challenges but there are also opportunities and our member Councils – like many others across Australia – are committed to building healthy and resilient communities with strong, innovative local economies. The Green Star – Communities Guide will be a useful tool to help local governments achieve these goals.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Glenn Docherty'.

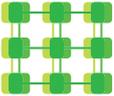
Mayor Glenn Docherty

Chair

National Growth Areas Alliance



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There are over **1460**
Green Star-rated projects
across Australia

Established in 2002, the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) is the nation's authority on sustainable buildings, communities and cities. Our vision is to create healthy, resilient and positive places for people and the natural environment. Our purpose is to lead the sustainable transformation of Australia's built environment. To do this, we:

Rate the sustainability of buildings and communities through Australia's only national, voluntary, holistic rating system: Green Star

Educate industry and government practitioners and decision-makers, and promote green building programs, technologies, design practices and operations

Advocate policies and programs that support our vision and purpose.

The GBCA represents over 675 members from across industry and including 43 local governments, 26 state government departments and land organisations, and 18 universities. With a collective turnover of more than \$40 billion and employing more than 50,000 staff, our industry membership reflects the diversity of Australian business with over 500 small-to-medium enterprises through to 75 companies with annual turnover of more than \$100 million.



Launched by the GBCA in 2003, Green Star is Australia's only national, voluntary and holistic rating system for sustainable buildings and communities. Green Star is an internationally recognised built environment rating system. The Green Star rating system has been developed by Australian industry and locally adapted to suit the Australian market. From individual buildings to neighbourhoods, precincts and entire communities, Green Star is transforming the way our built environment is designed, constructed and operated.

Green Star certified buildings, on average: produce 62% fewer greenhouse gas emissions and use 66% less electricity than the average building; 51% less potable water than minimum industry requirements; and recycle 96% of their construction and demolition waste.



Leading with local government

Local government in Australia is the level of government that the community feels closest to. This is reflected in: the identity forged by local government in the delivery of new infrastructure, services and urban renewal; as first responders and the face of the community in times of crises; and in the diversity and inclusiveness of towns and cities across Australia.

For these reasons, local government is increasingly looked to for leadership and change, however this in itself creates new challenges.

With tighter budgets seeing an increased tendency for federal and state governments to shift costs to local government, it is more important than ever that we work collaboratively to share expertise, build capacity and lead together to deliver great communities across Australia.

The way our cities and communities are planned, designed and built has an enormous impact on our economy, our wellbeing and our environment. As a result, local government plays an integral role in implementing and administering the planning controls, policies and programs that will ensure when it comes to developing our cities and communities we 'get it right' for future generations.

To that end, the success of our communities should be measured first by the outcomes delivered for its residents, and this Green Star – Communities Guide for Local Government (Guide) can help your local government deliver measurable outcomes and positive change for your community.

The GBCA is proud to work closely with local governments around Australia to collaboratively lead the development of healthy, resilient and positive places and communities. In partnership with our 43 leading local government members we are continuing to demonstrate the transformational change that can be delivered through local leadership. From the Northern Beaches Council and Ingleside to City of Sydney; from the City of Parramatta's leadership in Parramatta Square to the City of Melbourne's renewal of the Queen Victoria Markets, local governments across Australia are demonstrating Australian and world leadership with Green Star – Communities. This Guide can help your council continue this success and transform your community.



Using this guide

This Guide is designed to help local governments of all shapes and sizes across Australia plan and deliver more productive, liveable, sustainable and healthy communities.

The challenges now facing local government are increasingly complex and the community is looking to understand how their local elected representatives are leading the development of proactive solutions. Issues associated with affordable housing, the cost of living, climate resilience and adaptation, social inclusion, infrastructure planning, service delivery, energy and resource efficiency are features of council meetings across Australia.

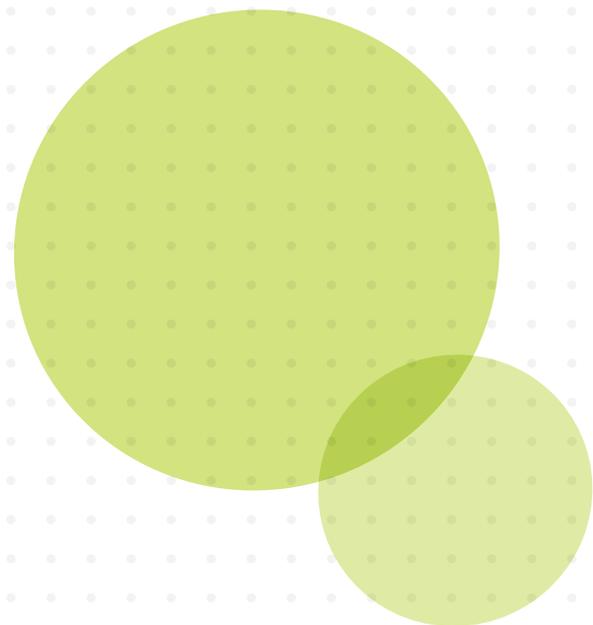
This Guide provides a tool to help understand how local governments can respond to these challenges and communicate the benefits of their actions back to the community.

The Guide helps build knowledge and expertise within local government, provides a reference point for decision making and prioritisation, and assists planning and project management across a range of council activities including:

- **Strategic planning**
- **Master planning**
- **Town planning**
- **Development control**
- **Social planning**
- **Sustainability and environment**
- **Economic development**
- **Asset management**

This Guide explains how councils can use the five principles underpinning the Green Star – Communities rating tool to help tackle their local challenges, deliver and communicate better outcomes for their constituents, and multiply the value of their investments.

Additionally, as local governments build their capability and look for opportunities to deliver more for their communities, this Guide provides a pathway through which local governments can use Green Star – Communities certification to demonstrate best practice, showcase Australian excellence, or even deliver world leadership through their built environments. As illustrated throughout with practical case studies of leadership already taking place around Australia, using this guide your community can be part of this sustainable transformation.



Five principles for success

The GBCA, working closely with private and public stakeholders including government land organisations across the country and local councils, has identified five principles to support the sustainable transformation of the built environment.

These principles are drawn from our Green Star – Communities National Framework, first published in 2010 as part of a national conversation about how we plan design, build, maintain and renew sustainable communities. Alongside the National Urban Design Protocol, **Creating Places for People** (www.urbandesign.org.au), this Guide is aligned to ensure we get the most out of our cities at every stage of their development.

The GBCA's five principles for sustainable communities are:

- 1 Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance**
- 2 Enhance liveability**
- 3 Create opportunities for economic prosperity**
- 4 Foster environmental responsibility**
- 5 Embrace design excellence and innovation**

While these five principles are outcomes focussed, they are not achievable without an integrated approach to their application. Sustainable communities require a collaborative approach to development which recognises the complexity of the development process. All stakeholders need to work together towards a shared outcome, or risk the vision for the sustainable community being lost in the complexity of the process.

In applying these principles we acknowledge that there are numerous existing tools and mechanisms being used in Australia and internationally that help guide the evolution of sustainable communities. These principles provide a broader context for the consideration of these tools and mechanisms in development and application.

To ensure the principles can be applied with integrity, stakeholders are encouraged to:

- Apply all five principles
- Define their community's unique boundaries
- Adapt the principles for context
- Adopt a systems approach
- Acknowledge and apply existing tools, plans, codes and guidelines
- Apply the principles in a transparent and accountable way.

Principle 1: Visionary leadership and strong governance



Sustainable communities and cities are characterised by leadership and strong governance frameworks that are transparent, accountable and adaptable. They enable active partnerships to build capacity and achieve a shared vision and deliver stakeholder benefit. In applying this principle the following should be considered:

Establish coordinated and transparent approaches

- Facilitating coordinated approaches among cross-sectoral stakeholder interests.
- Establishing transparent and accountable decision making processes through inclusion and provision of information.
- Establishing practical standards of responsibility, resource allocation and programming that is accessible to stakeholders.

Build a commitment to implementation

- Developing practically enforceable standards of ownership, accountability and delivery.
- Incorporating performance evaluation, feedback and support mechanisms that provide opportunities for continual improvement.

Engaging with stakeholders

- Building a shared vision with stakeholders across community, industry and government.
- Monitor progress towards this vision by building community capacity, assessing performance and encouraging ownership and leadership in realising that vision.

Fostering sustainable cultures and behaviours

- Raising awareness among stakeholders and providing education and learning opportunities that enable more sustainable practices.
- Encouraging sustainable behaviours and systems for monitoring environmental data, sharing information and allowing for continual improvement mechanisms.

Encouraging and rewarding innovation

- Providing open access information sharing to enable innovation to be enhanced.
- Recognising and rewarding leadership in innovation and excellence.



Case Study: City of Parramatta, Parramatta Square, NSW

Parramatta Square is one of the largest urban renewal projects in Australia. The three hectare mixed-use urban renewal project will provide the foundation for growth in the city and create a future based on good urban design that is environmentally sustainable, has vibrant, beautiful public spaces and an effective public transport system.

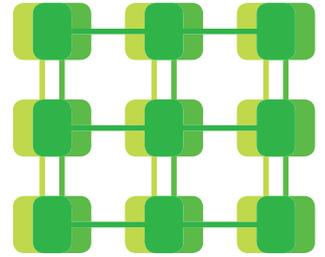
Parramatta Square will incorporate a new civic building with public library, a vertical university campus, as well as commercial, residential and retail developments. A minimum 5 Star Green Star – Design & As Built target has been set for all buildings within the precinct.

City of Parramatta's objectives for Parramatta Square are:

- To showcase design excellence and environmental sustainability
- To provide opportunities for future employment growth
- To provide a gathering space and ceremonial centre for public use as well as civic events and recurrent cultural and community events
- To contribute to the City's identity and its social and cultural life by becoming a showcase for innovative design in the heart of Parramatta CBD.

Targeting a Green Star – Communities rating for the development provides an independent benchmark for residents, businesses and investors to ensure that Parramatta Square delivers economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Principle 2: Liveability



Sustainable communities are liveable. They are diverse, affordable, inclusive and healthy; they enhance social interaction and ownership, are safe and caring and improve people's well-being. In applying this principle the following should be considered:

Providing diverse and affordable living

- Providing a diversity of dwellings, buildings and facilities that reflect the broad socio-economic needs of the community.
- Access to local services such as transport, food, health and conveniences.

Creating healthy, safe and secure communities

- Enabling and promoting healthy and safe communities through partnerships and effective planning, urban design and landscape architecture that support physical activity and social engagement.
- Providing opportunities for and raising the awareness of healthy activities within the community.

Fostering inclusiveness and cohesiveness

- Providing diverse and inclusive environments for all ages, abilities, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds of the community.
- Facilitating community cohesion by developing a shared vision, embracing diversity and tolerance, respecting each other's' rights and responsibilities and reflecting these values in the built environment.
- Engaging stakeholders in the evolution of their communities, from policy to ongoing revitalisation, evaluation and adaptive management.

Building community adaptability

- Building capacity to adapt to changing community and individual needs and expectations whether influenced by the economy, environment, culture or other life circumstances.
- Creating opportunities for a diversity of uses and activities that enable communities to meet future challenges.



Case Study: Renewal SA, Tonsley Innovation District, SA

When Tonsley's masterplan was being developed back in 2012, the South Australian Government set a clear brief for the site. The former manufacturing park was to become a sustainable centre for innovation and productivity, drawing workers, developing high-value industries and contributing to the state's economic success. Fast forward to 2015 and Tonsley Innovation District was Australia's first mixed-use urban redevelopment to be awarded 6 Star Green Star – Communities certification.

To achieve these goals, Tonsley needed to incorporate the right mix of uses, and to facilitate connections between people, businesses and educational institutions. Adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure helped to do this by creating a central hub of activity for the community and plenty of opportunities for social and commercial interaction.

While planning Tonsley, the project team created a Site Wide Built Form Development Manual and site-specific Urban Design Protocol to ensure all buildings adhere to the sustainability and liveability vision for the site – and in doing so has set new benchmarks for sustainable urban renewal in Australia.

The former Mitsubishi Main Assembly Building (MAB) was retained and repurposed, preventing the loss of approximately 90,000 tonnes of carbon emissions in its original construction. Once complete, the MAB will house a range of flexible modular pod tenancies occupied by small to medium businesses from the high-value manufacturing sector while incorporating retail outlets, meeting areas, education spaces and a number of forests and plazas.

Education and research are true cornerstones of the Tonsley Innovation District masterplan, with Flinders University and TAFE SA signing up as anchor partners in the development.

Tonsley's masterplan also incorporates approximately 11 hectares of residential space which will eventually be home to around 1,200 people. Creating homes will ensure the district remains active outside of business hours, and give the opportunity for those who work or study at Tonsley to live close by. The train station is at the doorstep of the residential area, with new electric trains meaning faster, more frequent and cleaner journeys to the city. The result? Fewer transport emissions and a cohesive community identity.

Over the coming years, Tonsley will become firmly established as an economic growth engine for South Australia as the district reaches a critical mass of industry, research, education and commercial activity collocated on the site.

Principle 3: Economic prosperity



Sustainable communities and cities prosper. They encourage opportunities for business diversity, innovation and economic development that support local jobs for people in the region. In applying this principle the following should be considered:

Promoting education and learning

- Providing opportunities for the community to access a variety of education and learning systems.

Enhancing employment opportunities

- Creating diverse employment opportunities that meet the needs of local and regional communities and facilitating access to them.
- Encouraging the production and procurement of local goods and services.

Attracting investment

- Providing key infrastructure that enables community and business connectivity.
- Enabling ongoing sustainable and ethical investment in local business opportunities.
- Establishing a business case, inclusive of externalities, for green infrastructure systems and jobs and providing a commitment to implementation.

Encouraging innovation

- Encouraging business and community innovation through initiatives that recognise and reward local excellence.
- Facilitating new business opportunities to enhance competitiveness and innovation.

Promoting efficiency and effectiveness

- Applying lifecycle impact management approaches to encourage resource efficiency and reduced lifecycle costs.
- Investing in infrastructure that creates greater urban management efficiencies.



Case Study: Landcorp and Lendlease, Alkimos Beach, WA

Alkimos Beach in Perth's northern coastal corridor is set to become the most significant coastal redevelopment north of Perth in over 50 years. The master-planned community is being developed by Landcorp and Lendlease and achieved 6 Star Green Star – Communities certification.

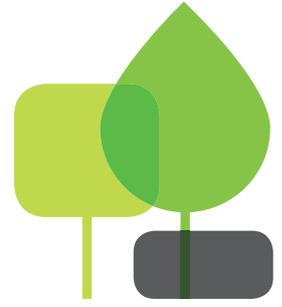
The 224 hectare master-planned community upon completion will deliver more than 2,000 homes and be home to 6,000 residents. The project site will eventually host 3.6 hectares of playing fields, six hectares of conservation reserves and 41 hectares of dune and foreshore reserves.

All homes will be within 800 metres of both the local centre and transport links. Thirty per cent of the site will be reserved for open space; no home will be more than 200 metres from a park, and walking and cycle paths will link the beach, the town centre and the train station. WiFi will be provided in major public spaces to foster economic and social opportunities.

Key sustainability innovations at Alkimos Beach currently include:

- Mandatory solar panels and gas boosted solar hot water systems as well as other energy-efficient appliances, supported by a financial incentive package from the Alkimos Beach development partners that range from \$4,500 to \$6,000 are expected to reduce home energy bills by up to 50%
- Smart water initiatives are planned throughout the site including stormwater retention, bore water irrigation and water efficient appliances in each home
- Fibre-to-the-Premises internet connectivity is being provided throughout the development to encourage working from home
- Australia's first community energy storage trial, that will see more than 100 homes in the Escarpment Village connected virtually to innovative solar energy storage as part of a development-wide initiative to reduce peak electricity demand.

Principle 4: Environmental responsibility



Sustainable communities and cities respect the environmental systems that support them. They protect and restore the natural environmental values of their bio-regions. They are less resource intensive. They promote infrastructure, transport and buildings that reduce their ecological footprint. In applying this principle the following should be considered:

Enhancing our natural environment

- Protecting, valuing, restoring and enhancing our natural and cultural heritage assets, both water and land-based.
- Promoting biodiversity through the provision of habitats, spaces and environments across the community and urban areas.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, contaminants and other pollutants to land, water and atmosphere.
- Minimising the risk from extreme natural events and impacts of climate change.

Reducing ecological footprint

- Promoting environmentally efficient systems for water and wastewater management and reuse; sustainable energy generation and distribution; and waste management and recycling.
- Encouraging greater resource efficiency within a life cycle context.
- Reusing and retrofitting existing sites and buildings.
- Providing sustainable transport opportunities and encouraging their use.
- Promoting food security and sustainable food production.
- Educating communities on their individual and collective impacts by making resource savings and consumption data explicit within the built environment.



Case Study: Stockland, Aura, QLD

Aura on the Sunshine Coast is the largest mixed-use development ever undertaken under single ownership in Australia. Over the next three decades, Aura will grow to a similar size and scale to Maroochydore, Hervey Bay or Gladstone and will be home to around 50,000 people.

At Aura 700 hectares, or nearly one-third of the site, will be rehabilitated and designated for conservation and environmental protection. Aura will also include its own Central Park of more than 120 hectares. Stockland will also build 10 separate sporting grounds, and create parks and playgrounds within easy walking distance of every home.

Stockland will dedicate serviced land for the provision of more than 20 schools and education centres, while also providing land for 25 community facilities. The City Centre will cover 200 hectares and accommodate more than 5,000 dwellings. It will comprise 100,000 square metres of retail and 50,000 square metres of commercial floor space.

Aura will have more cycling pathways than Copenhagen, with its interconnected cycle and pedestrian path network linking residential areas to local employment precincts, schools, the city centre and local neighbourhood retail centres.

Principle 5: Design excellence and innovation



Sustainable communities and cities are places for people. They are desirable, accessible and adaptable. They have their own distinct character and identity and evolve over time. Through design excellence and innovative thinking consideration should be given to:

Adopting effective planning practices

- Establishing an integrated planning framework for delivering a shared design vision in collaboration with all partners.
- Planning for considered density, mixed use, connectivity and the protection of valuable land uses such as agriculture.
- Defining specific design outcomes which are clear and measurable.

Encouraging integrated design

- Understanding the context of a community, precinct or site and its relationship with neighbouring areas as well as the region as a whole in creating a sense of place.
- Responding to land, water and climatic based planning and design constraints and opportunities.
- Creating coherent urban structure and connectivity between places.
- Providing effective connectivity between transport, communication, social and physical infrastructure systems.

Maintaining flexible and adaptable approaches

- Creating opportunities to retrofit and revitalise existing communities, precincts, places and buildings.
- Providing for development and planning flexibility and adaptability that supports continuous improvement of the built environment.
- Adapting effectively to changing climatic and other environmental and physical conditions so that people's comfort, health, safety and well-being are enhanced.



Creating desirable places

- Reinforcing a sense of place, community identity and local character within design.
- Creating a sense of connection with nature.
- Encouraging a high quality, integrated and safe public realm that meets the needs of the local community.
- Providing quality built form and landscapes that are responsive to climate and context.
- Conserving and celebrating cultural heritage and archaeological assets across landscapes, places and sites.
- Creating functional, vibrant, stimulating and memorable places that evolve for people to live, work and play.

Promoting accessibility

- Locating higher densities close to public transport and services to encourage active transport, promote public health and enhance public transport use.
- Encouraging accessibility, diversity and mixed use development to reflect local values and meet both local and metropolitan needs.



Case Study: Land Development Agency and Riverview Developments, Ginninderry, ACT/NSW

A joint venture between the ACT Government and Riverview Developments, Ginninderry is the first community in the ACT and the capital region to achieve a 6 Star Green Star – Communities certification.

Ginninderry is a community with a difference, designed to cater to Canberra's needs as a growing city. It will extend across the ACT / NSW border (subject to rezoning approval) and will eventually have around 11,500 homes, accommodating up to 30,000 people.

Bounded by the Murrumbidgee River and Ginninderra Creek, Ginninderry will be an industry leader in water sensitive urban design. Through a network of bio retention swales, wetlands and basins to capture, cleanse, recycle and infiltrate water created on site, the development aims to not adversely impact those existing waterways.

New technologies are being explored that will help householders reduce the amount of energy they use. Solar panels are being mandated for all homes and demand management systems installed to help educate new residents on how they can more efficiently use power within their homes. Battery storage has also been incorporated within the design of Ginninderry – futureproofing the development for advancements in networked community energy systems.

Integrated design has been paramount in the design of Ginninderry through master planning for 30-40 years of development. This has led to a logical and holistic view for better connectivity, transport, conservation and infrastructure planning.

Community development and cultural planning continue to be a catalyst for the activation of shared spaces within Ginninderry. Through engagement programs such as festivals, markets, community arts, cultural, environmental and sporting activities a sense of ownership is developed and reinforced. Strong connections and a sense of belonging are enhanced by providing the community with hands-on experiences in the planning, design and building of shared spaces.



The benefits of certification

Moving from using these five principles to measuring the immediate and long-term success of what are substantial and long-term investments by governments makes good sense. Rating tools like Green Star provide a vehicle to capture and effectively communicate outcomes from infrastructure investments, urban development and renewal to those communities who most benefit over the life of that development.

A Green Star certification provides independent verification that a building or community project is sustainable. The assurance provided by a Green Star rating builds community confidence, helps establish social licence and supports business case development and investor confidence.

Green Star certification provides a formal process awarding a rating by an independent certified assessor through evidence-based assessment. For government in particular, the value of Green Star-certification is derived from not only the social, economic and environmental outcomes that have been achieved, but also from the third party verification that Green Star provides to validate those outcomes.

Green Star - Communities provides a vision, a set of principles and aspirations to help guide and support the development of sustainable communities. Green Star - Communities has already made a significant impact on Australia's built environment. The rating tool is currently influencing the design and delivery of major developments around the country - from Parramatta Square, which is one of the largest urban renewal projects in Australia to Aura on the Sunshine Coast that will be home to 50,000 people.

Green Star - Communities provides unique advantages in that it has been nationally developed, is industry-led and provides a government-supported rating system for urban renewal and greenfield development. The credits in the rating tool provide guidance and best practice benchmarks that have been developed after extensive collaboration with industry, academia and government. By referencing Green Star - Communities in policies, and encouraging its use for suitable development projects, local government can take advantage of the sustainability benchmarks and common language developed for the rating tool through extensive and ongoing consultation by the GBCA.

Green Star - Communities provides a useful resource as local government works with state, territory, the federal government and developers to make important decisions on how to make our communities and cities better places to live in and do business.

Using Green Star – Communities

Best practice or World leadership: You choose!

Green Star – Communities uses the five principles outlined in this Guide to provide a rating tool that evaluates the sustainability attributes of the planning, design, and construction of large scale development projects, at a precinct, neighbourhood, and/or community scale.

In addition to demonstrating the delivery of outcomes against each of the five principles outlined in this Guide, the Green Star – Communities rating tool helps provide recognition for demonstrated leadership and commitment to sustainability; and achieves real value for money through demonstrated whole-of-life cost savings.

The Green Star – Communities rating tool assists governments, development project teams, contractors and other interested parties aiming to deliver large scale sustainable developments around Australia.

Each of the five principles outlined in this Guide forms a category in Green Star - Communities that groups a number of issues related to that sustainability impact; these are known as Credits (see the full List of Credits on the next page). A Credit addresses an initiative (or set of initiatives) that has the potential to improve a project's sustainability performance. Each of these initiatives is a credit criterion.

Credits are weighted, in relation to each other, by varying the number of points that are available for credit criterion in each credit. Each credit criterion defines a clear outcome or process that the registered project must meet. Where the outcome or process is verified to have been met, the project will be awarded the relevant points.

Once all credits are assessed, the total number of points achieved by the project is calculated and compared against the total points available in the rating tool. The certified rating is awarded based on the number of points achieved.

Organisations seeking certification can choose which rating tool credits they wish to target to achieve best practice in. The more credits a project pursues, the better the sustainability outcomes and the higher the rating score is likely to be. Benchmarks within the rating tool credits are likely to change over time as industry advances and definitions of 'best practice' change.

Every Green Star – Communities certified development looks different. The rating tool doesn't set prescriptive benchmarks around how streets should look or the types of buildings it should contain.

What all Green Star-rated communities have in common is that during the planning, design and construction phases, considerable thought and effort has been given to delivering best practice governance, urban design, liveability, economic opportunities, environmental sustainability and fostering a culture of innovation.

Green Star – Communities certification identifies projects that have demonstrated the achievement of a specific level of sustainability. The rating describes the sustainability attributes of the project, to the industry and the public, in terms that are widely understood and accepted. The Green Star – Communities rating tool only rewards development projects that achieve Australian Best Practice (4 Star Green Star), Australian Excellence (5 Star Green Star), or World Leadership (6 Star Green Star). You choose!

LIST OF CREDITS

INDEX	CREDIT	POINTS AVAILABLE
	GOVERNANCE	
1	Green Star Accredited Professional	1
2	Design Review	8
3	Engagement	6
4	Adaptation and Resilience	4
5	Corporate Responsibility	3
6	Sustainability Awareness	2
7	Community Participation and Governance	2
8	Environmental Management	2
	LIVEABILITY	
9	Healthy and Active Living	5
10	Community Development	4
11	Sustainable Buildings	4
12	Culture, Heritage and Identity	3
13	Walkable Access to Amenities	2
14	Access to Fresh Food	2
15	Safe Places	2
	ECONOMIC PROSPERITY	
16	Community Investment	4
17	Affordability	4
18	Employment and Economic Resilience	2
19	Education and Skills Development	3
20	Return on Investment	2
21	Incentive Programs	2
22	Digital Infrastructure	2
23	Peak Electricity Demand Reduction	2
	ENVIRONMENT	
24	Integrated Water Cycle	7
25	Greenhouse Gas Strategy	6
26	Materials	5
27	Sustainable Transport and Movement	3
28	Sustainable Sites	2
29	Ecological Value	2
30	Waste Management	2
31	Heat Island Effect	1
32	Light Pollution	1
	INNOVATION	
33	Innovation	10

*For more detail on each credit, refer to Appendix A: Green Star – Communities credits

How to achieve certification

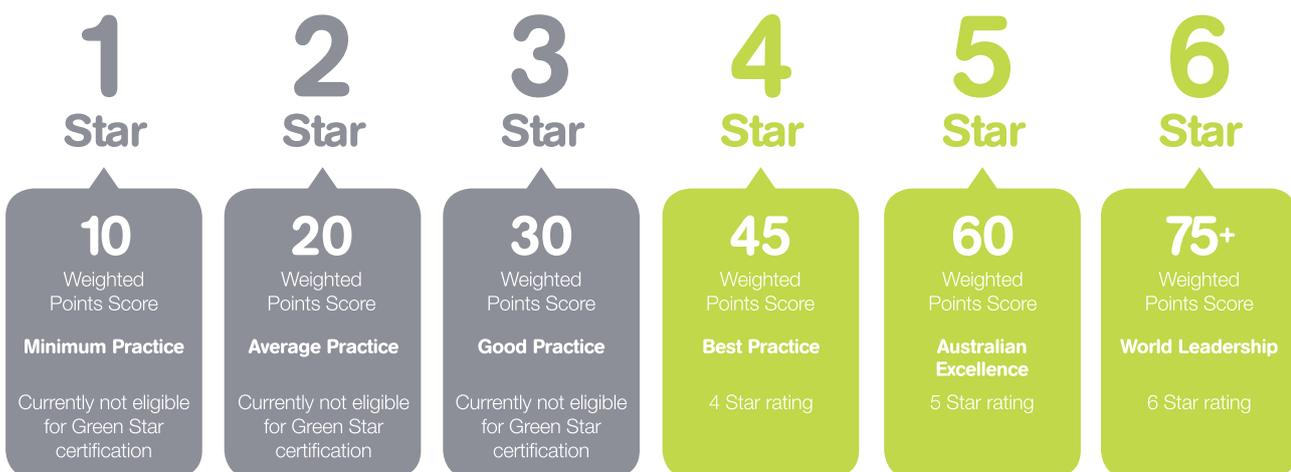
1. Register: Developers (private and public) register development projects under the rating tool and implement various initiatives throughout the planning, design, and construction phases to achieve benchmarks (or rating tool 'credits') against the framework principles - governance, liveability, design, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and innovation.

2. Submit: The team working on the development project must provide documentation to demonstrate how their project meets the credit criteria outlined in the Green Star – Communities rating tool.

3. Assessment: An independent Certified Assessor appointed by the GBCA awards points to the development project based on how successfully it meets the aims of the 33 credits. A total of 110 points are available across the 33 rating tool credits.

To gain a rating, a minimum point score within each rating tool category needs to be achieved to ensure the project has considered all the principles and delivers a balanced outcome.

4. Certify: Once a point score is determined by the independent assessor, a Green Star rating is awarded according to the following rating scale. The Green Star – Communities rating tool only rewards development projects that achieve best practice sustainability (4 Star Green Star) or above.



5. Re-certify: A key feature of the rating tool is that once certification is achieved, development projects must re-certify every five years to demonstrate that commitments made at the planning and design stages are actually delivered.

Relationship with the Green Star building rating tools

While the Green Star – Communities rating tool does not rate buildings, it acknowledges that best practice buildings can contribute to making a community healthier and more sustainable. Through the 'Sustainable Buildings' credit, the Green Star – Communities rating tool encourages and recognises projects that deliver sustainable buildings and energy efficient homes, designed and constructed to meet the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime.

Green Star – Communities and City Deals

As part of the Australian Government’s Smart Cities Plan, the Government is inviting state and territory and local governments to partner with them on City Deals. Through City Deals, governments, industry and communities will develop collective plans for growth, and commit to the actions, investments, reforms and governance needed to implement them.

By bringing together all levels of government, the private sector and the community, City Deals aim to provide a coordinated investment plan for our cities. Cities, or parts of cities in both major urban and regional areas, will be selected through consultation with state and territory governments, prioritising areas where the opportunities are greatest.

The five overarching principles of Green Star – Communities can provide practical planning direction for City Deals in its pursuit of nationally and locally informed objectives such as increased economic growth, job creation, housing affordability and environmental outcomes.

Due to the holistic nature of its credits, the Green Star – Communities rating system provides established metrics to measure and communicate the outcomes sought at a community and project level through City Deals. The table below summarises each of the five principles underpinning Green Star – Communities as they align with the City Deals model:

CATEGORY	METRIC FOR CITY DEALS
Visionary Leadership and Governance	Recognises developers and developments that demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sectoral leadership by establishing and maintaining strong governance practices • engagement, transparency, and community and industry capacity building.
Liveability	Recognises developments that deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe, accessible and culturally-rich communities • healthy and active lifestyles • high level of amenity, activity and inclusiveness.
Economic Prosperity	Recognises developments that promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prosperity and productivity • affordable living and housing • investment in education and skills development • facilitation of community-capacity building • greater productivity via emerging opportunities in the digital economy.
Environmental Responsibility	Recognises developments that promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduced negative impacts on sensitive ecosystems and the natural environment (land, water and atmosphere) • resource management and efficiency by promoting infrastructure, transport, and buildings • reduced ecological footprints.
Design Excellence & Innovation	Recognises developments that encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spread of innovative practices, processes and strategies that promote sustainable communities and cities.

*Adapted from the Commonwealth Governments Smart Cities Plan

Use this guide to develop local policies

The following section outlines some of the ways in which the principles outlined in this Guide and Green Star – Communities can assist your council to deliver best practice developments in your LGA and achieve better economic, social and environmental outcomes for your community.

Developing a sustainability policy

Defining and clearly communicating sustainability goals and outcomes for the built environment is the first important step towards ensuring that these goals are realised. You can use these principles to help you arrange and articulate the goals and priorities within your sustainability policy or strategy. You can also use the Green Star – Communities credits to establish quantitative and/or qualitative targets and measure success.

Incorporating best practice principles into planning

The five principles can be used to guide your strategic and community planning principles, goals and objectives. The rating tool credits can then be used as performance indicators to assist you to measure the progress and success of your planning efforts.

Embracing best practice community engagement

As important facilitators of community and stakeholder engagement, local governments can lead by example by adopting the rating tool approach to community engagement activities. The principles and rating tool also provide a common language for talking with stakeholders about sustainable communities, which can help you to develop a common vision and consensus among local stakeholders about what want from their community.

Planning for economic success

Local governments play a significant role in the creation of viable and sustainable economies within their LGA. You can use the Green Star - Communities rating tool's 'Economic Prosperity' category to inform the development of new (or revise existing) economic policies which foster economic opportunities and ensure your local area remains economically viable.

You can do this by asking developers to perform a complete analysis of the direct and indirect costs and benefits of a proposed development in line with the 'Return on Investment' credit (No. 20) to ensure there will be a return on investment for the developer but also for the community. The 'Return on Investment' credit indicates that performing a holistic analysis ensures that long-term benefits to productivity, health and other social and environmental issues are captured and that economic opportunities are not missed.

Adopting a sustainable and long-term approach to asset management

Local governments can use the rating tool to assess where capital is best invested when it comes to assets like roads, open spaces, public transport, stormwater, potable water and sewerage infrastructure. This can help local governments to invest in solutions that meet the needs of the local population and ensure longer-term issues such as heat island effect and rising energy and water costs are considered.

For example, the 'Heat Island Effect' credit (No. 31) can inform your approach to material selection and specifications across community infrastructure assets, to reduce the long-term risk of heat island effect for your local area.

Embedding sustainable community principles in your supply chain

When calling for tenders for planning, design and construction projects, you can use the rating tool to clearly communicate the governance, social, economic and environmental aspirations of the project. Referring to the rating tool within tender documents will ensure you communicate to industry using their language and that they understand the objectives you are trying to achieve and how their success will be measured.

Demonstrating what best practice is and how it is done

Local governments can register to achieve a Green Star – Communities certification for development projects on land you own or intend to sell. Investing in and delivering demonstration projects is the best way for local governments to lead by example and to build better industry planning and design skills in your local area.

Creating a climate adaptation policy

Adaptation and resilience measures are an increasingly important aspect of local government planning work. The rating tool can help you to plan for and mitigate against the impacts of climate change and natural disasters by providing a framework for effective climate adaptation planning and community resilience reporting.



Remove barriers

Local governments that want to attract best practice development projects in their area should ensure planning controls, policies, standards and guidelines do not prevent or deter best practice from occurring. By using the Green Star – Communities rating tool local governments have access to nationally agreed best practice benchmarks, which can guide and inform the planning process. In some areas, state policies and codes or local government planning controls may be more stringent than the best practice benchmarks within the rating tool. Green Star - Communities is not designed to override or replace more stringent state or local government controls, but where controls are less stringent, the rating tool sets national best practice benchmarks for developers to follow.

Some common barriers to delivering sustainable developments in Australia include:

- Delays in the development approval process
- Subdivision standards that set excessive block lengths, road corridor widths, reduce pedestrian access and specify other site layout provisions that reduce walkability and accessibility
- Car parking requirements based on minimum thresholds rather than maximum thresholds
- Zoning codes that require complete separation of land use types
- Standards that block natural stormwater management and green infrastructure solutions
- Built form design guidelines that are prescriptive rather than performance measure based that can stifle innovation or the delivery of best practice outcomes
- Open space provisions that encourage large single open space sites rather than smaller dispersed parks that improve urban design and landscape quality
- Development controls that restrict the installation of green technologies, such as solar panels or rainwater storage tanks.

Your council can help remove these barriers and pave the way to more sustainable communities:

Complete a planning gap analysis

By using the rating tool to complete a gap analysis of your local planning scheme and controls you can identify:

- Controls that may prevent the delivery of best practice outcomes or act as a disincentive for best practice solutions to be incorporated into new developments
- Areas of control that can be amended to align with current best practice.

Prepare a sustainable community or sustainable neighbourhood code

You may consider preparing a 'sustainability code' that is applicable to key development sites within your LGA as was undertaken by Renewal SA in the development of the Site Wide Built Form Development Manual and Site-specific Urban Design Protocol for Tonsley. Your code could be aligned with the principles in this Guide, or key rating tool credits could be referenced to ensure sustainable outcomes in the area.

Align your development assessment process with Green Star - Communities

To improve efficiency and to facilitate the achievement of Green Star – Communities certifications within your LGA, you may wish to align the documentation requirements of Development Approval with the rating tool.

Build capacity

The momentum for sustainable communities will grow as the knowledge and understanding of what makes a best practice community and how to deliver it expands. Local governments can use the principles in this Guide and the Green Star - Communities rating tool to facilitate this understanding and build local capacity among council staff and across the entire development supply-chain of developers, designers, transport engineers, planners and product suppliers and manufacturers.

Education, training & professional development

Local governments can invest in their own staff by offering training for councillors, managers and officers on sustainable planning, technology and asset management.

The GBCA offers a variety of specialised courses and workshops to support ongoing learning and green professional development for all the Green Star rating tools. The Green Star – Communities Foundation course focusses on the application of the Green Star – Communities rating tool, including the business case for sustainable community and precinct development, the categories and credits within the tool and the certification model. Ask us about in-house foundation courses for your Council or check out the GBCA website for a Foundation course in your state:

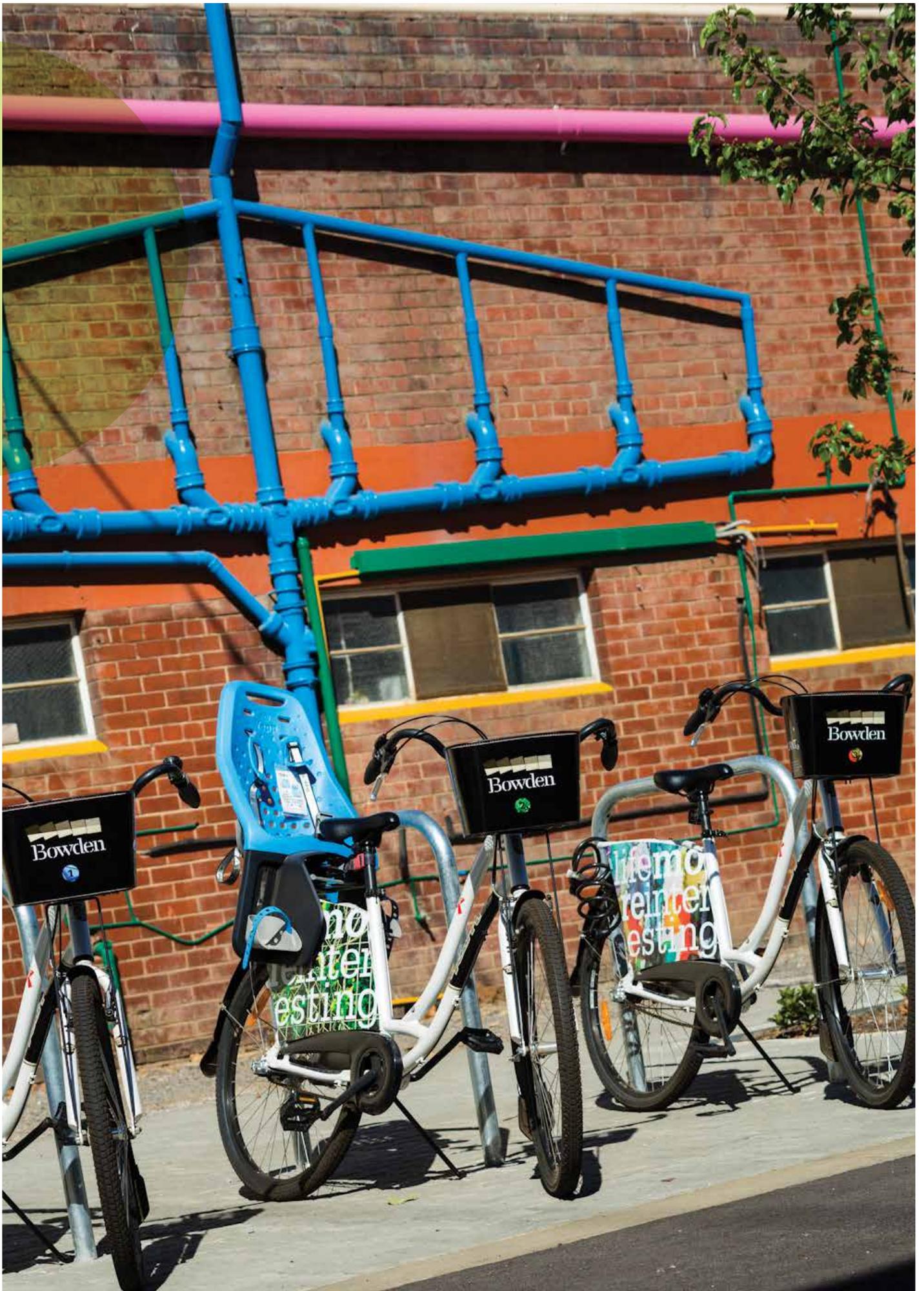
www.gbca.org.au

Offer technical assistance or capacity building programs

To facilitate sustainable community-scale developments in your LGA, you can offer programs that build local capacity and hone the skills of industry professionals such as town planners, urban designers, architects and builders.

To ensure more sustainable outcomes are delivered it is important that local governments work in partnership with developers, industry and the community. A partnership approach will facilitate improved project outcomes.





Consider incentives

The provision of incentives (financial, procedural or regulatory) to developers and builders that commit to best practice can be an important mechanism to encourage more sustainable development.

In Australia, some local governments are already offering incentives for best practice building design. For example, City of Gold Coast offers plot ratio bonuses for building proposals that show cutting edge or innovative ecologically sustainable design.

For councils thinking about offering incentives to encourage better community-scale outcomes, the principles in this guide and the Green Star - Communities rating tool can provide examples of desirable benchmarks that developers should meet and a method of measuring the results. Examples of incentives that your council might consider include:

Planning bonuses and concessions

You may choose to offer bonus floor space or height allowances for developers that commit to delivering initiatives that are aligned with the principles or rating tool. You can also offer car parking concessions (most relevant in major cities and areas well serviced by public transport), and approve smaller lot sizes and more flexible land use zoning to support affordable housing and mixed-use developments.

Grants and financial incentives

You can offer financial incentives for development projects that align with the principles or commit to certification under the rating tool. Some examples include grants or rebates for developers, waiving development application fees and reductions in council rates and utility charges. Councils can also offer cost offsets to developers who commit to delivering developments that will reduce long-term costs to government (energy, water, transport or community infrastructure).

Fast-tracked approvals

It may be possible for local councils to streamline the development assessment process for developers who commit to delivering a Green Star – Communities certified project.

Marketing and public relations

Your council might wish to offer marketing or promotional support, joint events and other opportunities to community-scale development projects that deliver best practice community outcomes.

Technical support

Provide technical assistance to development teams to help them understand and meet your planning requirements and those of the rating tool.

Next steps

To prepare for the future and 'get it right' with our communities, industry and government at all levels must work together to design, deliver and manage best practice developments. Ensure your council is part of the journey towards a more liveable, prosperous and sustainable Australia by:

Contacting us

Give the GBCA team a call on (02) 8239 6200 or email info@gbca.org.au to begin the conversation about ways to deliver better development in your LGA.

Learning more

Review the principles and case studies outlined in this guide, and download the **Green Star - Communities Submission Guideline** (free for GBCA members) and ensure other staff within your council are aware of these resources.

Registering projects

Identify council projects that you can register for a Green Star - Communities rating, and get in touch with us to begin the registration process.

Engaging local industry

Talk to local developers about the five principles, the Green Star – Communities rating tool, and ask them how you can support them to deliver Green Star – Communities certified outcomes.





Appendix A: Green Star – Communities Credits

CREDIT NAME	CREDIT NO.	AIM OF CREDIT
Governance		
Accredited Professional	Gov - 1	To recognise projects that engage a Green Star Accredited Professional to support the Green Star certification process.
Design Review	Gov - 2	To encourage and recognise projects that undertake a design review process designed to facilitate sustainable urbanism.
Engagement	Gov - 3	To encourage and recognise projects that develop and implement a comprehensive, project specific stakeholder engagement strategy early in the planning process.
Adaptation and Resilience	Gov - 4	To encourage and recognise projects that are resilient to the impacts of a changing climate and natural disasters.
Corporate Responsibility	Gov - 5	To encourage and recognise projects with a project applicant that has corporate responsibility as a core value.
Sustainability Awareness	Gov - 6	To encourage and recognise those projects that enhance knowledge and understanding of its sustainability attributes.
Community Participation and Governance	Gov - 7	To encourage and recognise projects that establish mechanisms for community participation in management arrangements for facilities and programs.
Environmental Management	Gov - 8	To encourage and recognise the adoption of formal environmental management practices.
Liveability		
Healthy and Active Living	Liv - 9	To encourage and recognise projects that promote healthy and active living.
Community Development	Liv - 10	To encourage and recognise projects that engage in and facilitate the development of the project's community.
Sustainable Buildings	Liv - 11	To encourage and recognise projects that deliver sustainable buildings and energy efficient homes, designed and constructed to meet the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime.
Culture, Heritage and Identity	Liv - 12	To encourage and recognise projects that celebrate and incorporate the heritage, culture and historical context of the project site, supporting communities and places with the development of a sense of place and identity.
Walkable Access to Amenities	Liv - 13	To encourage and recognise projects that have walkable access to a diverse number of amenities that reflect the predicted demographic of the project's community.
Access to Fresh Food	Liv - 14	To encourage and recognise projects where occupants have access to fresh food within walking distance of where they live or work.
Safe Places	Liv - 15	To recognise projects in which the activity of planning and detailed design for land use, development and redevelopment takes into consideration designing out crime principles.
Economic Prosperity		
Community Investment	Econ - 16	To encourage and recognise those projects that make optional investments in infrastructure for the benefit of the community.
Affordability	Econ - 17	To encourage and recognise projects that deliver affordability strategies for or as part of housing and/or business premises.

This matrix summarises the 33 Green Star – Communities rating tool credits including Innovation. More detailed information about Green Star – Communities rating tool credits and benchmarks is available in the Green Star – Communities Submission Guidelines which are available at www.gbca.org.au or by contacting the GBCA team.

Employment and Economic Resilience	Econ - 18	To encourage and recognise projects with local and diverse employment opportunities.
Education and Skills Development	Econ - 19	To encourage and recognise projects that have access to further education and/or provide a skills and industry capacity development opportunities.
Return on Investment	Econ - 20	To encourage and recognise holistic methods to assess the return on investment in response to the sustainability goals for the project.
Incentive Programs	Econ - 21	To recognise and encourage projects that provide incentives to encourage occupants through a change in behaviour to adopt sustainable practices to reduce the cost of living and working.
Digital Infrastructure	Econ - 22	To encourage and recognise projects that use digital infrastructure to create greater efficiencies in the connection of individuals with other people, goods, services, and information.
Peak Electricity Demand Reduction	Econ - 23	To encourage and recognise projects that reduce peak demand load on the electricity network infrastructure.
Environment		
Integrated Water Cycle	Env - 24	To encourage and recognise best practice sustainable urban water management.
GreenHouse Gas Strategy	Env - 25	To encourage and recognise projects that include a greenhouse gas strategy that reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to energy use on the project site.
Materials	Env - 26	To reward the reduction of the environmental impacts of construction materials for the site wide works over their life cycle.
Sustainable Transport and Movement	Env - 27	To encourage and recognise integrated responses to transport and movement that encourage a people-focused hierarchy.
Sustainable Sites	Env - 28	To encourage projects that avoid or minimise impacts on environmentally sensitive sites while recognising projects that reuse previously developed land and reclaim contaminated land using best practice remediation.
Ecological Value	Env - 29	To encourage and recognise projects that enhance the ecological value or biodiversity of the project site.
Waste Management	Env - 30	To encourage and recognise projects that reduce the environmental impact of waste.
Heat Island Effect	Env - 31	To encourage and recognise projects that implement measures to reduce heat island effect.
Light Pollution	Env - 32	To encourage and recognise projects that minimise the adverse impact of light emissions.
Innovation		To encourage and recognise projects that adopt innovation in the planning, design and delivery of communities.
TOTAL	33 credits	

*This table is based on the credits within Green Star – Communities v1.1.

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The GBCA also wishes to acknowledge the support and leadership shown by our local government members:

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