



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Seattle Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

Date: June 25, 2014

To: Councilmember Mike O'Brien, Chair
Planning Land Use and Sustainability (PLUS) Committee

From: Aly Pennucci, DPD, Senior Planner
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Subject: Proposed legislation to revise the Living Building and Seattle Deep Green Pilot program

Overview

On June 6, 2013, the City Council passed Resolution 31400 directing DPD to:

- 1) Establish a technical advisory group (TAG) to advise the City on sustainable building practices by August 30, 2013;
- 2) Develop recommendations to revise the Living Building Program by December 31, 2013 (the proposed legislation accompanying this report is intended to implement this request); and
- 3) Develop recommendations to revise the Seattle Deep Green Program by December 31, 2014.

Resolution 31400 was adopted due to concerns about allowable departures, including those concerning floor area ratios and structure height, and the level of staff and consultant review and consultation for permitting these buildings. DPD is working with the TAG (established in August 2013) through December 2014 to develop further recommendations to revise or replace the Seattle Deep Green pilot program, including reviewing departures available in that pilot and the review process.

Proposed Amendments

In response to Resolution 31400, the DPD is proposing amendments to the existing Living Building and Seattle Deep Green Pilot Program. In summary, the amendments would:

- Eliminate the existing Seattle Deep Green option to provide time to fully evaluate and develop a new pilot program for Deep Green;
- Revise the minimum standards of the program related to energy use to align with the new Seattle Energy Code;
- Require an independent report to verify compliance;



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- Modify or remove some available departures; and
- Increase the maximum penalty for projects failing to demonstrate full compliance.

At this time, DPD is proposing amendments to focus the pilot program on the Living Building option for the remainder of the life of the pilot, which is set to expire in December 2015.

Background

The Living Building and Seattle Deep Green Pilot Program was adopted by the City Council in December 2009, and amended in 2012, to facilitate the development of buildings that would either meet the Living Building Challenge or alternative minimum standards (Deep Green). The program was developed to provide flexibility for projects seeking Living Building Challenge certification.

The Living Building Challenge is a green building rating system created by the International Living Future Institute to recognize buildings meeting the highest level of sustainability. Version 2.1 of the Living Building Challenge requires buildings to meet 20 imperatives (i.e., requirements or prerequisites) within seven performance areas or petals: site, water, energy, health, materials, equity, and beauty. In general, the imperatives require buildings to be built on non-environmentally sensitive sites, use recycled materials, generate as much or more electricity as they use through sustainable sources, capture as much rainwater as they use, treat wastewater on site, and meet a number of standards for other elements.