



## Frequently Asked Questions

### TARGET CITIES PROGRAM

#### WHAT IS TARGET CITIES?

Target Cities is a two-year immersion program to guide and support North American projects in their development of catalytic, district-scale sustainability strategies. The Program encompasses peer learning and training, technical assistance and strategic support.

The program is based around the EcoDistricts Protocol, to embed a collaborative approach to stakeholder engagement, integrated district assessment and goal setting and the prioritization of fundable strategies.

Target Cities combines:

- Training and peer learning to deepen knowledge and accelerate information sharing among urban development leaders;
- Targeted technical assistance to help teams implement district-scale sustainability projects; and
- Application of the EcoDistricts Protocol to guide project governance, assessment, and development.

The support provided by EcoDistricts and its technical partners includes:

- In-depth technical assistance focused on project implementation;
- Site visits and consultant workshops;
- In-person peer-to-peer gatherings with other participating cities; and
- Access to tools and resources, including the use of the EcoDistricts Protocol and supporting toolkit to guide governance, assessment, and project development.

#### WHO ARE THE PARTICIPATING TARGET CITIES PROJECTS?

- Atlanta – AUC Vine City Ecodistrict, a community situated within the Proctor Creek Catchment, which includes the world's largest consortium of African American private institutions that are seeking to restore ecological health and social opportunity for the area.
- Boston—Talbot Norfolk Triangle Eco-Innovation District, a community-driven effort to secure greater equity and prosperity throughout the 42-acre neighborhood, including energy efficient housing retrofits, community-owned renewable energy systems, and transit-oriented development.

- Cambridge—Kendall Square, a 260-acre, high-density commercial innovation and transportation hub committed to district scale solutions for meeting expected growth in transit demand while improving energy efficiency through shared energy systems.
- Denver—Sun Valley, an effort driven by the Denver Housing Authority to revitalize Colorado’s poorest neighborhood and reconnect residents to the larger city.
- Los Angeles—Little Tokyo, a culturally rich 20-acre neighborhood, seeking to accelerate investments in transit-oriented development, green infrastructure and community-driven projects that promote identity and prosperity.
- Ottawa, Ontario—The Isles, a 37-acre historically rich brownfield site on the Ottawa River that will be developed into a vibrant mixed use walkable village, integrate sustainable infrastructure into the historic fabric of the site and strengthen the connection between the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau.
- Washington—Downtown Business Improvement District, a 138-block area comprising 90 million square feet of real estate with ambitious energy efficiency and green infrastructure goals to help develop Downtown Washington, D.C. into the world’s most sustainable financial district.
- Washington—SW Ecodistrict, a long-range plan to turn an isolated neighborhood defined by massive federal office buildings into a lively, ecologically progressive neighborhood.
- Washington—St. Elizabeth’s/Congress Heights, a mixed-use campus and low income neighborhood of more than 350 acres, with an opportunity to leverage federal investment dollars in a manner that creates economic opportunity for area residents.

## HOW WERE THE NINE PROJECTS CHOSEN?

EcoDistricts spent more than six months identifying and assessing potential projects following a public call for expression of interest. A range of criteria was used in the selection process, such as geographic location, project type, type of project leader (Public/Private/Community Organization), and key social, economic and environmental opportunities for the project.

## WHO IS PAYING FOR THE PROGRAM?

Target Cities is a matching program that requires each project to contribute a participation fee, with EcoDistricts then matching that fee. Several foundations that have kindly contributed to the EcoDistricts match, including Kresge, Surdna and Summit. The participation fee contributed by each project has been sourced from multiple supporters, including foundations, municipal government, private sector, and community organizations.

## WHY DID ECODISTRICTS LAUNCH TARGET CITIES?

Part of the EcoDistricts Mission is to “Provide support and leadership for urban change makers and innovators”, and we believe Target Cities is a perfect program to support this. Target Cities also represents an opportunity to build a pipeline of innovative projects that share a common approach and metrics to create the lessons and leaders that will allow us to scale and replicate these nine pilot

projects. The program also gives us access to a diverse set of urban regeneration projects that will support the development of the EcoDistricts Protocol.

## WHAT DO THE PARTICIPATING PROJECTS NEED TO DO?

EcoDistricts will work with the project teams over two years to help them embed the four-step methodology and eight Performance Areas articulated in the EcoDistricts Protocol. Each project team will dedicate time in working with EcoDistricts, through a series of comprehensive workshops, to ensure their planning and development processes seek the outcomes articulated in the Protocol. Each project will seek to deploy a range of integrated strategies across green building, smart infrastructure, and community action and engagement.

## WHAT IS URBAN REGENERATION, AND WHY THIS FOCUS?

Urban regeneration is a process that provides opportunities to improve the environmental, social, and economic health of communities. It involves land use planning, community engagement, urban design, real estate development, infrastructure investment, and provision of social services, to name a few. EcoDistricts believes that the regeneration of our districts and neighborhoods provides a unique opportunity to build sustainability cities of the future, which are just, sustainable, and resilient.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF YOUR IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS?

EcoDistricts has assembled a range of Implementation Partners and Collaborators to assist in making the Target Cities program successful. Our Implementation Partners are directly investing in the projects, whether through the provision of funding, allocation of in-kind staff time, leveraging finance opportunities, or direct investment in projects. Our Collaborators are a group of national community-based, research, professional, and non-profit organizations and intermediaries that will be engaged where project opportunities emerge in their respective areas.

## CAN OTHER PROJECTS PARTICIPATE IN TARGET CITIES?

EcoDistricts may onboard future projects into the Target Cities Program. If organizations are interested in discussing such opportunities, enquiries should be directed to Adam Beck, Vice President of Programs and EcoDistricts on [adam@ecodistricts.org](mailto:adam@ecodistricts.org).

## WHAT IS THE ECODISTRICTS PROTOCOL?

The EcoDistricts Protocol is set to become a recognized global standard for district and neighborhood-scale sustainable development.

The EcoDistricts Protocol contains a four-step methodology to help organizations to plan, fund and deliver projects, built around an interrelated set of environmental, economic, and social performance areas: Equity, Health and Wellbeing, Energy, Water, Identity, Access and Mobility, Habitat and Ecosystem Function, and Materials Management.

The four-step methodology involves:

1. District Organization – a critical first step, that involves building a collaborative governance model among the key stakeholders who will help deliver projects
2. District Assessment – identifying opportunities within the district to deliver projects that meet a shared vision and an ambitious set of goals
3. District Projects – establishing a pipeline of fundable and implementable projects that are both short term and catalytic in nature, as well as long term impact making
4. District Management – establishing a monitoring, reporting and governance platform that allows the community to continually improve and prosper over time

An Executive Summary of the Protocol is available on the EcoDistricts website. Version 1 of the EcoDistricts Protocol, including supporting guidance documents, will be available in Fall 2014.

## HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHER RATING SYSTEMS?

A number of tools and frameworks provided inspiration in the development of the EcoDistricts Protocol back in 2008, and continue to do so. We believe that the global marketplace for rating tools is rich and diverse, and they play a critical role in transforming our practices.

From the view of EcoDistricts, the Protocol will be complimentary, and not competitive. Our focus on process and performance management (our four step methodology) provides the ideal support to those specifying sustainability outcomes via the benchmarks contained within rating tools.

To ensure a high level of complementarity, EcoDistricts will be inviting organizations responsible for the diversity of rating tools, frameworks and systems to contribute and provide feedback on the development of the Protocol.

## CAN I USE THE PROTOCOL NOW?

Yes. An Executive Summary of the Protocol exists, and can be downloaded from our website. Organizations interested in using the Protocol Executive Summary are encouraged to do so, and should contact us if they are interested in hosting a strategy session, or attend a training course on its use.