

## **Detailed Step-by-Step Process for Green Building Construction**

The proposed volunteer Green Building construction program allows Rancho Palos Verdes residents who wish to construct “green buildings” to work with a recognized organization in order to receive “green building” certification. This approach would allow green building “experts” to work with interested applicants to achieve their green building objectives. After researching the various programs, Staff concluded that the optimal, most holistic and most achievable approach was to implement the *Build It Green* suite of products and services for single-family residential and multi-family residential projects, and *LEED* suite of products for commercial, institutional and/or mixed-use projects. These sets of guidelines provide City residents and property owners with recognized, certified, and consistent guidelines and a rating system which property owners can utilize for achieving green construction on their properties.

Although the volunteer program is designed to the *Build It Green* guidelines and certification checklist, the *Build It Green* Guidelines were created to be compatible with other third-party rating programs. As a result, a builder employing the recommended strategies in the *Build It Green* Guidelines could also choose to have projects rated under the *California Green Builder* program, or a national system, such as through *Energy Star* or *LEED for Homes*, with prior approval by the Director.

The specific steps for the volunteer residential program are summarized below (a similar process would be followed for commercial, institutional and/or mixed use projects through the proposed *LEED* guidelines for non-residential projects):

- Step 1: Staff provides a residential property owner/applicant with the adopted *Build It Green* Guidelines and Checklist as well as a directory of southern California-based Certified Green Building professionals who understand how to achieve a certifiable green home.
- Step 2: The residential property owner/applicant then contacts and retains a Certified Green Building Professional to work with the owner through the design stages of their construction process.
- Step 3: The Green Building Professional (or property owner) submits plans to the Planning Department that include the checklist printed on the plans indicating what measures are proposed to be incorporated into the new residence or remodeled home and what point value the home can attain. Additionally, the applicant would provide a letter of intent to construct a “green building.”
- Step 4: Planning Staff determines that the submitted project meets the minimum point value set by *Build It Green* (currently 50 points for new construction). Once the property owner submits a letter of intent and the project meets the minimum point value, the assigned Staff member would make the project a

priority over other non-green applications submitted in the same time period.

- Step 5: Following all code-required reviews and analyses for the project application, if entitlements are granted through the Planning Department, the applicant would then prepare structural plans for submittal into Building and Safety Plan Check. At the same time, the applicant or Certified Green Building Professional, working on the applicant's behalf, would retain the services of a certified Green Point Rater and submit a preliminary application to *Build It Green* for future Green Point Rating and certification by a third-party rater.
- Step 6: The applicant would then submit the Planning approved plans into Building and Safety Plan Check. The plans would be required to include the *Build It Green* Checklist and green measures.
- Step 7: The Building Official determines that the submitted project meets the minimum point value set by Build It Green for the respective project type (i.e. new residence, remodeled residence or multi-family residence). If the project meets the minimum point value, the applicant will receive an expedited plan-check process, or will move to the "front-of-the-line."
- Step 8: Once building permits are issued, the construction process begins with inspections by the City's Building Inspectors. At the same time, the Green Point Rater will conduct rough inspections, final inspection and performance testing and collect documentation throughout the construction process.
- Step 9: Once the project is complete and constructed, the Green Point Rater will compile documentation, calculate final scores and submit final results to the builder and to *Build It Green*.
- Step 10: The Green Point Rater obtains the completed certificates from *Build It Green* stating that the residence has been constructed or remodeled as a certified "green building."
- Step 11: The property owner provides a copy of the certification to the Director and requests a fee rebate.
- Step 12: The Director verifies the certification and issues a rebate in the amount of 50% of the total Planning and Building and Safety application fees (not including any penalties that may have been assessed or any fees paid to outside consultants who have reviewed the project, such as geologists) under the City's Green Building Program.

These steps are incorporated into Section 17.83.030 and 17.83.040 of the Development Code, as described in Ordinance No. 481.

Incentives for participation:

In order to promote participation in the City's volunteer Green Building Program the City Council establishrf the following two incentives that could be provided to property owners and/or applicants who pursue the proposed program.

1. Expedited Plan Review: Typically, when an application is submitted into Planning review and/or Building and Safety Plan Check, the application is reviewed in the order that the application is received, after other preceding applications. If a property owner opts to pursue construction of a project under the *Build It Green* rating program, said application receive priority review and be reviewed ahead of all other “non-green” applications.
2. Potential Rebate of City's Processing Fees: Property owners who choose to pursue construction of a “green building” will be given a partial fee rebate upon the submittal of proof that a green building was actually constructed. Specifically, upon submittal of a request for a rebate and proof of the green building construction, the City would issue a rebate to the property owner in the amount of 50% of all Planning and Building Division application fees that were processed (not including any applicable penalty fees or any fees paid to outside consultants who have reviewed the project, such as geologists).

These incentives are incorporated into Section 17.83.020 of the Development Code, as described in Ordinance No. 481.