Neighborhood Certification

Sustainable Neighborhood Network

Sustainable Neighborhoods Program

Sustainable
Neighborhood
Network

CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW

In order to receive certification as a "Participating Neighborhood" through the Sustainable Neighborhoods Program, a neighborhood must earn a minimum of 60 credits. To receive certification as an "Outstanding Neighborhood," a neighborhood must earn a minimum of 100 credits in the first year and 70 credits each subsequent year.

The foundation of the certification program is a series of neighborhood workshops that support the Sustainable Neighborhoods Goal Areas (land, air, water, energy, people). The neighborhood's first workshop is hosted by the city and will provide an overview of the program and assist the neighborhood in prioritizing topics of interest for future workshops. The remaining workshops are organized by the neighborhood with City staff available as a resource during the planning process.

Credit Requirements for Certification

Certification Level	Credits Required
Participating Neighborhood	60
Outstanding Neighborhood	100

EARNING CREDITS

Credits are awarded for attendance at neighborhood workshops and for participation in projects and initiatives. A neighborhood may select topics from the list of suggested project areas provided in the Sustainable Neighborhoods Goals & Target Areas brochure or develop its own topics that support the goal and target areas.

Neighborhoods seeking certification must earn credits within one year of the date of the first neighborhood workshop. In order to receive credits, the neighborhood must submit the appropriate project **Proposal Form** and project **Credit Form** through the Sustainable Neighborhood Network website. Proposal forms should be submitted prior to the workshop, project, or initiative to ensure credit eligibility. Credit forms should be submitted after completing the workshop, project or initiative.

Submit **Proposal Form** → City/county Work Group Approval → Workshop/Project/Initiative → Submit **Credit Form** → Credits Awarded

EARNING CREDITS: WORKSHOPS

Workshops must be open to all interested neighborhood residents with the goal of increasing awareness and understanding of the workshop topic. Workshops should utilize expert speakers, local organizations, and resources that will help attendees turn resident awareness into action.

Credits are awarded for the percentage of neighborhood residents in attendance:

Neighborhood with 3,000+ residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Attending	Credits Earned
0.1 – 0.99%	4
1% - 1.99%	6
2% - 2.99%	8
3% +	10

Neighborhood with 1,500—3,000 residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Attending	Credits Earned
0.1 – 1.99%	4
2% - 3.99%	6
4% - 5.99%	8
6% +	10

Neighborhood with fewer than 1,500 residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Attending	Credits Earned
0.1 – 4.99%	4
5% - 9.99%	6
10% - 14.99%	8
15% +	10

EARNING CREDITS: SPECIAL EVENTS

A special event is a neighborhood wide activity in which neighborhood sustainability is enhanced through resident action and participation. Examples of special events include food drives, recycling days, neighborhood cleanups, or a pertinent city/county-sponsored event.

Credits for special events are awarded based on the percentage of participating neighborhood residents.

Neighborhood with 3,000+ residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Attending	Credits Earned
0.1 – 1.24%	6
1.25% - 2.49%	8
2.5% - 3.74%	10
3.75% +	12

Neighborhood with 1,500—3,000 residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Participating	Credits Earned
0.1 – 2.49%	6
2.5% - 2.99%	8
3% - 4.49%	10
5% +	12

Neighborhood with fewer than 1,500 residents

% of Neighborhood Residents Participating	Credits Earned
0.1 – 9.99%	6
10% - 19.99%	8
20% - 29.99%	10
30% +	12

EXAMPLE: **Workshop** - If a neighborhood with 550 residents holds an xeriscaping workshop and 30 people attend, the neighborhood earns four credits.

Workshop: Xeriscaping			
Action	Scoring Scale (**% of Pop**)	# of Participants	Credits
Residents attending workshop	0.1% - 4.99%	1-50	4
	5% - 9.99%	51-105	6
	10% - 14.99%	**106-160**	**8**
	15% +	161+	10
		Credits Earned	*4*

EARNING CREDITS: NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE

A neighborhood resource provides residents with information they can use to make more sustainable decisions. Examples of neighborhood resources include alternative transportation maps, a local sustainable business and product directory, or a neighborhood ride-share board.

Credits are awarded for the **creation and maintenance** of the neighborhood resource. The number of credits earned is based on the amount of time required to create or maintain the neighborhood resource during a period of **one month**.

Creation/Maintenance of Resource:

Each hour of work earns one credit up to a maximum of eight credits each month. *For major neighborhood resource projects that would require more than eight hours, consider classifying the project as an implementation.*

Earning Credits: Neighborhood inventory

A neighborhood inventory provides information or data that helps establish an understanding of the level of sustainability in the neighborhood. A neighborhood inventory should be used to track goals and changes over time. Examples of neighborhood inventories include calculating the neighborhood's energy footprint or monitoring the number of households participating in curbside recycling pickup.

Credits are awarded for the initial completion of the inventory and for updating the inventory over time. The number of credits earned is based on the amount of time required to complete or update the neighborhood inventory. Additional points will be awarded for using the neighborhood inventory to track progress toward an implementation goal.

Initial Completion & Maintenance of Inventory:

Before beginning data collection, work with city/county staff to make sure that the data is consistent with program metrics. Each hour of work earns one credit up to a maximum of eight credits during the period of **one month**. The data that is collected will need to be reported and should be repeatable.

Goal Tracking:

Component	Criteria	Credits
Goal Tracking	The inventory is used to establish and track neighborhood goals	5

Earning Credits: Implementation

Implementation occurs when an individual or household takes the time to make a change that advances sustainability. Examples of implementation include changing from standard to energy-efficient light bulbs, xeriscaping a portion of a yard, committing to taking alternative transportation one day a week, or getting a household energy audit.
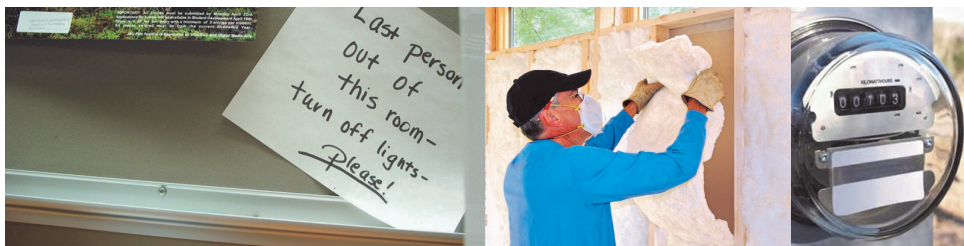

Goal Setting

In order to earn credit for implementation, the neighborhood must establish measurable implementation goals. Using the project **Proposal Form**, the neighborhood should begin by establishing an initial (short-term) goal and an advanced (long-term) goal. Additional incremental goals may also be set. Goals should be measurable and easily tracked.

Examples of measurable goals:

- Number of households that will complete a particular implementation (e.g., 10 households will get energy audits)
- Percent change in behavior that affects a resource (e.g., a 5 percent reduction in the neighborhood's vehicle trips per day)
- Benchmark of a successful completion of a community project (e.g., building a community amenity such as a community garden)
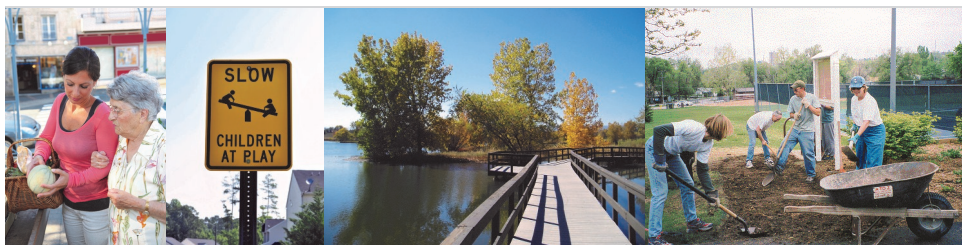
EXAMPLE - A neighborhood of 200 households is working on an implementation project to encourage homeowners to conduct energy audits of their homes.

Step #1 - Goal Setting - The neighborhood establishes an **Initial Goal** of 10 houses and a **Long-term Goal** of 50 homes receiving energy audits. The neighborhood adds two **Incremental Goals** to help monitor progress, stay motivated, and earn additional credits.

Action	Goal Level	Target Attainment Date	Goal
Residential home energy audits	Initial	September 2013	10 homes
	Incremental	March 2014	20 homes
	Incremental	August 2014	30 homes
	Long-term	2015	50 homes

Credits are awarded as follows:

Goal	Credits
Initial Goal	10
Incremental Goals	10
Advanced Goal	**30**

MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

A neighborhood can maintain certification in the program after the first year by continuing to earn credits. A "Participating Neighborhood" must earn at least 40 credits per year to maintain certification, and an "Outstanding Neighborhood" must earn a minimum of 70 credits per year.

ACCUMULATING CREDITS

Credits are cumulative. Once a neighborhood reaches the required number of credits for its target certification and maintenance requirement in a given year, remaining credits may be saved and applied to future year's required credits.

Example: Neighborhood Certified as "Outstanding"

	Year	1	2	3
A	Beginning Credits	0	40	10
B	Credits Earned	140	40	60
C	Total Credits (A+B)	**140**	**80**	**70**
D	Credits Required	100 (1st year certification)	70 (Maintenance)	70 (Maintenance)
E	Credits Carried Over (C-D)	**40**	**10**	**0**

Example: Neighborhood Certified as "Participating"

	Year	1	2	3
A	Beginning Credits	0	5	10
B	Credits Earned	65	45	35
C	Total Credits (A+B)	**65**	**50**	**45**
D	Credits Required	60 (1st year certification)	40 (Maintenance)	40 (Maintenance)
E	Credits Carried Over (C-D)	**5**	**10**	**5**

UPGRADING

To upgrade from a "Participating Neighborhood" to an "Outstanding Neighborhood," the neighborhood must earn at least a total of 100 credits in a single year. In other words, a "Participating Neighborhood" must make up the difference in credits that an "Outstanding Neighborhood" would have earned in addition to the outstanding maintenance credits the following year.

Example: Neighborhood that Upgraded From Participating to Outstanding

	Year	1	2	3
A	Beginning Credits	0	5	5
B	Credits Earned	65	100	70
C	Total Credits (A+B)	**65**	**105**	**75**
D	Credits Required	60 (Participating)	100 (Outstanding)	70 (Maintenance)
E	Credits Carried Over (C-D)	**5**	**5**	**5**
F	Classification	**Participating**	**Outstanding**	**Outstanding**

Credit & Workshop Requirements

Certification Level	Credits Required	Maintenance Required
Participating Neighborhood	60	40
Outstanding Neighborhood	100	70

Sustainable Neighborhood Network

The Sustainable Neighborhoods Program and Sustainable Neighborhood Network were developed by the City of Lakewood, Colorado as a neighborhood-level implementation program for community sustainability. For additional information, please visit www.SustainableNeighborhoodNetwork.org

Sustainable Neighborhood Network

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