



Greenbelt Alliance Compact Development Guidelines

Individual Infill Projects

The following are guidelines for evaluating standard infill development projects. The project should have at least 20 units; depending on our review capacity, smaller projects may be considered. Greenbelt Alliance may also review smaller projects if they have an exemplary design, an unusually high level of affordability, or other significant benefit. For neighborhood-scale projects and plans, please see our Neighborhood-Scale Infill Guidelines.

Each evaluation will consider the context of the project (location, demographics, public funding, publicly owned land, planning and legal context, etc.). The guidelines may be applied and weighted differently depending on the context. The guidelines will be used as a lens through which reviewers will look at proposals, rather than as a checklist of criteria for projects to meet. Final endorsement is at the discretion of Greenbelt Alliance. The project's neighborhood and regional impact will be evaluated, both positive and negative.

Residential & Mixed-Use Projects

1. **Location:** The project must be within an existing urbanized area, and not within the regional greenbelt or any other important natural resource area.
2. **Compactness:** Projects within a ½ mile of a transit station should have an overall density of at least 20 units per acre and be at the upper quartile of the allowable density range. Projects at transit stations should be striving for densities greater than 20 units per acre. Projects not within ½ mile of a major transit station and that meet other guidelines for endorsement **must** have an overall density of at least 15 dwelling units per acre and be significantly higher (at least double) the average local density and still in character with the surrounding neighborhood. Density is defined as the number of dwelling units divided by the total land area devoted to residential uses, including associated parking and private driveways, private yards, ancillary buildings, and non-public parks and play structures associated with residential uses.
3. **Affordability:** Housing and mixed-use proposals must make an effort to address affordable housing needs of moderate to low and/or very low-income households as identified in the jurisdiction's Housing Element. The plan or project must meet the local inclusionary housing requirement, at a minimum. Around the Bay Area, inclusionary housing ordinances typically require between 10 and 20 % of units to be sold or rented at below-market rates. We expect projects to exceed local affordability requirements if they are ineffective or insufficient (in comparison to neighboring jurisdictions) in promoting the amount or type of units needed. This includes, but is not limited to, making a fixed

percentage of the units affordable to moderate-, low-, and very low-income households or dedicating land or other resources to affordable housing within the plan or project area. The amount of affordable housing expected will vary, depending on the context. Higher percentages, lower income targets, long-term affordability, and mixed-income development are encouraged. Affordable units should include some 3-bedroom or larger units to accommodate families. The following are suggested minimums of below-market-rate units (based on Area Median Income, or AMI) that a project or plan should provide:

- 10% for Moderate Income and 10% for Low Income, or
- 10% for Low Income and 5% for Very Low Income, or
- 10% for Very Low Income

(Moderate Income = affordable to households earning 81-120% of AMI. Low Income = affordable to households earning 51-80% of AMI. Very Low Income = affordable to households earning less than 51% of AMI).

4. **Pedestrian-Oriented Design and Transportation Choices:** The project's design should integrate with existing street patterns, walkways, and bicycle paths, preferably in a grid pattern, and provide easy connection to services and public transportation. The project should be pedestrian-oriented rather than auto-oriented and should include elements such as bike paths and facilities, pedestrian amenities, street furniture, buildings fronted to the sidewalks with little or no setbacks, and pedestrian mitigations for large, busy roads. The project should incorporate a mix of uses beyond housing, including but not limited to retail, office, light industrial, services, public parks and other recreational spaces. The project's design should mix these uses throughout the area as appropriate, rather than creating segregated uses. Retail uses within the project should be neighborhood-serving and support a pedestrian environment and transit activity.

Projects should provide or be adjacent to a range of transportation modes, including transit, shuttle, carshare, carpool, biking, and walking. The project must be within 1/2 mile (10 min. walk) from major transit service (bus, rail or ferry), a job center (minimum 5,000 jobs), commercial center (minimum 500,000 square feet), or an urban downtown area. Major transit service is defined as a rail stop (existing or planned with significant funding established), ferry stop, or a bus stop served by 6 or more buses per hour during the peak commute period. The project should ensure the majority of people using the project have easy access to transit and should encourage transit use.

5. **Parking:** The developer and/or jurisdiction should seek ways to minimize the site area devoted to parking, such as tandem, shared or stacked parking. The project should reduce the visual and safety impacts of surface parking by screening and/or locating it away from pedestrian areas. The number of parking spaces should not exceed minimums set by the jurisdiction's zoning code. We encourage "unbundling" parking costs from the cost of renting or purchasing a home. We support developers in seeking reduced parking requirements for transit-oriented developments.
6. **Community Input:** The developer or jurisdiction should involve local stakeholders in the planning and design process, through creative approaches, including direct outreach to residents and business owners. The developer or jurisdiction should make efforts to address neighborhood concerns about the project, contributing amenities and services that meet the needs of local residents when feasible. Municipalities and developers should consider

holding specific public meetings in the community, during evening or weekend hours and providing childcare and translation as necessary.

7. **Environmental Considerations:** In addition to issues addressed in the EIR or other environmental review, Greenbelt Alliance will consider a project's provision of parks/open space, preservation of heritage trees, creek restoration and/or daylighting, and protection and/or mitigation of important habitat that would be directly or indirectly affected by the project.
8. **City Policies:** Greenbelt Alliance encourages the project application to share any significant City Policy, General Plan designation, City Code, or political pressures that prevented or inhibited the developer from submitting a project that better aligns with Greenbelt Alliance guidelines. The applicant should explain how and why a particular policy was limiting, and how the project would have been different had these policies or pressures not existed. The applicant should list significant directions given by City officials that prevented the project from better aligning with these guidelines.
9. **Green Building:** The built environment is a leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Developers seeking Greenbelt Alliance endorsement may greatly increase their chances of securing endorsement by pursuing green building technologies. By employing green building practices, developers can: improve public perception of a development; take full advantage of city incentives such as priority permitting; generate cost savings in construction and maintenance; and market a project with increasing success post-construction. Developers can also enjoy the obvious benefit of reducing the carbon footprint of new development. Greenbelt Alliance encourages developers to seek LEED certification through the U.S. Green Building Council, www.usgbc.org, and to fulfill Build it Green's Multifamily Green Building Guidelines, available at www.multifamilygreen.org.
10. **Bayside Land:** Projects and plans that redevelop bayside land should balance the need for housing and jobs with public open space access to the Bay and protection of environmentally sensitive lands around the waterfront. Developments on these lands should be careful not to negatively impact the Bay and should integrate existing and new uses, through design, transit and walkability, extending or complementing the Bay Trail whenever possible.

Commercial Projects (Non-Residential)

Greenbelt Alliance will also consider non-residential projects that demonstrate efficient use of land, innovative design, pedestrian orientation, integration with public transit, and those that support downtown revitalization or make appropriate re-use of a brownfield (contaminated) site.