Site development - open space

SS5.2 | Possible point

Glossary

Intent

To promote biodiversity by providing a high ratio of open space to development footprint.

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Provide a high ratio of open space to development footprint to promote biodiversity.

Conserve existing natural areas and restore damaged areas to provide habitat and promote biodiversity.

Provide a high ratio of open space to development footprint to promote biodiversity.

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Conserve existing natural areas and restore damaged areas to provide habitat and promote biodiversity.

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To create exterior open space that encourages interaction with the environment, social interaction, passive recreation, and physical activities.

Requirements

Case 1. Sites with local zoning open space requirements

Reduce the development footprint[1] and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary such that the amount of open space exceeds local zoning requirements by 25%.

Case 2. Sites with no local zoning requirements (e.g. some university campuses, military bases)

Provide vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal in area to the building footprint.

Case 3. Sites with zoning ordinances but no open space requirements

Provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project's site area.

All cases

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, pedestrian-oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.

Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space and the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

Credit substitution available

You may use the LEED v4 version of this credit on v2009 projects. For more information check out this article.

Case 1. Sites with local zoning open space requirements

Reduce the development footprint[1] and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary such that the amount of open space exceeds local zoning requirements by 25%.

Case 2. Sites with no local zoning requirements (e.g. some university campuses, military bases)

Provide vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal in area to the building footprint.

Case 3. Sites with zoning ordinances but no open space requirements (e.g., zero lot line)

Provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project's site area.

All cases

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, pedestrian-oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.

Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space and the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

For projects that are part of a multitenant retail complex[2]

A multitenant complex is a master-planned development of stores, restaurants, and other businesses; retailers may share one or more services and/or common areas.

Open space can be either adjacent to the building or at another location in the complex. It must be aggregated and contiguous, not divided and dispersed. The open space may be at another site as long as it is placed in a permanent reserve status. If the open space is not adjacent to the project building, provide documentation showing that the requirements have been met and the land is in a natural state or has been returned to a natural state and conserved for the life of the building.

Case 1

Reduce the development footprint[1] and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary such that the amount of open space exceeds local zoning requirements by 25%.

OR

Case 2

For areas with no local zoning requirements (e.g. some university campuses, military bases), provide a vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal in area to the building footprint.

Case 3

Where a zoning ordinance exists, but there is no requirement for open space (zero), provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project site area.

All cases

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.

For projects in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2: Development Density and Community Connectivity, pedestrian-oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.

Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space and the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

Option 1

Reduce the development footprint (defined as the total area of the building footprint, hardscape, access roads and parking) and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary to exceed the local zoning's open space requirement for the site by 25%.

OR

Option 2

For areas with no local zoning requirements (e.g., some university campuses, military bases), provide vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal to the building footprint.

OR

Option 3

Where a zoning ordinance exists, but there is no requirement for open space (zero), provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project's site area.

All options:

- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.
- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, pedestrian oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.
- Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space if the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

Have in place over the performance period, native or adapted vegetation or other ecologically appropriate features:

- SS Credit 4.1: Covering a minimum of 50% of the site area excluding the building footprint. (1 point)
- SS Credit 4.2: Covering a minimum of 75% of the site area excluding the building footprint. (1 point)

Improving/maintaining off-site areas with native or adapted plants or other ecologically appropriate features can count toward earning both SS Credit 4.1 and 4.2. Every 2 square feet off-site will be counted as 1 square foot on-site. Off-site areas must be documented with a contract with the owner of the off-site area that specifies the required improvement and maintenance of the off-site area.

Native/Adapted Plants are those that are indigenous to a locality or cultivars of native plant materials that have adapted to the local climate and are not considered invasive species or noxious weeds. Such plants require only limited irrigation water for sustenance once established, and do not require active maintenance such as mowing. Native/Adapted Plants should provide habitat value and promote biodiversity through avoidance of monoculture plantings.

Other ecologically appropriate features are natural site elements beyond vegetation that maintain or restore the ecological integrity of the site, and may include water bodies, exposed rock, un-vegetated ground, or other features that are part of the historic natural landscape within the region and provide habitat value.

Option 1

Reduce the development footprint (defined as the total area of the building footprint, hardscape, access roads and parking) and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary to exceed the local zoning's open space requirement for the site by 25%.

OR

Option 2

For areas with no local zoning requirements (e.g., some university campuses, military bases), provide vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal to the building footprint.

OR

Option 3

Where a zoning ordinance exists, but there is no requirement for open space (zero), provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project's site area.

All options:

- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.
- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, pedestrian oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.
- Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space if the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

Option 1

Reduce the development footprint (defined as the total area of the building footprint, hardscape, access roads and parking) and/or provide vegetated open space within the project boundary to exceed the local zoning's open space requirement for the site by 25%.

OR

Option 2

For areas with no local zoning requirements (e.g., some university campuses, military bases), provide vegetated open space area adjacent to the building that is equal to the building footprint.

OR

Option 3

Where a zoning ordinance exists, but there is no requirement for open space (zero), provide vegetated open space equal to 20% of the project's site area.

All options:

- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, vegetated roof areas can contribute to credit compliance.
- For projects located in urban areas that earn SS Credit 2, pedestrian oriented hardscape areas can contribute to credit compliance. For such projects, a minimum of 25% of the open space counted must be vegetated.
- Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space if the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

Reduce the development footprint (defined as entire building footprint, access roads and parking) to exceed the local zoning's open space requirement for the site by 25%. For areas with no local zoning requirements (e.g., some university campuses, military bases), designate open space area adjacent to the building that is equal to the development footprint.

Reduce the development footprint (including building, access roads and parking) to exceed the local zoning's open space requirement for the site by 25%.

Provide outdoor space greater than or equal to 30% of the total site area (including building footprint). A minimum of 25% of that outdoor space must be vegetated (turf grass does not count as vegetation) or have overhead vegetated canopy.

The outdoor space must be physically accessible and be one or more of the following:

- a pedestrian-oriented paving or turf area with physical site elements that accommodate outdoor social activities;
- a recreation-oriented paving or turf area with physical site elements that encourage physical activity;
- a garden space with a diversity of vegetation types and species that provide opportunities for year-round visual interest;
- a garden space dedicated to community gardens or urban food production;
- preserved or created habitat that meets the criteria of SS Credit Site Development—Protect or Restore Habitat and also includes elements of human interaction.

For projects that achieve a density of 1.5 floor-area ratio (FAR), and are physically accessible, extensive or intensive vegetated roofs can be used toward the minimum 25% vegetation requirement, and qualifying roof-based physically accessible paving areas can be used toward credit compliance.

Wetlands or naturally designed ponds may count as open space if the side slope gradients average 1:4 (vertical: horizontal) or less and are vegetated.

For projects that are part of a multitenant complex only
Open space can be either adjacent to the building or at another location in the site master plan. The open space may be at another master plan development site as long as it is protected from development. If the open space is not adjacent to the building, provide documentation showing that the requirements have been met and the land is in a natural state or has been returned to a natural state and conserved for the life of the building.