

Greater Triangle Stewardship Development Awards

Technical Criteria for Project Evaluation

Revised Sep. 2, 2015

The Judging Panel evaluates each application's stewardship efforts in the categories of Natural Resources, Water Quality Protections, Wildlife Habitat Protection, Vegetation Protection & Enhancement, Green Building, Integration with the Community, Long-Term Management & Maintenance, and Community Outreach & Education.

The outline below includes a short list of potential discussion points. Each applicant is free to expand on this framework as they see fit to highlight the innovative, precedent-setting stewardship efforts of the development team. ***In each case, the judges are looking for projects which seize opportunities to exceed expectations for environmental and community stewardship.***

1) Natural Resource Assessment

The applicant should consider including information pertaining to:

- i. Site history and previous land uses (e.g., was the land undeveloped, abandoned, or redeveloped?)
- ii. Existing streams, lakes, ponds, buffers, wetlands, soils, vegetation, slopes, floodplain, wildlife habitats, etc
- iii. Project constraints
- iv. Location context
 - i. Is there adjacency/connectivity to natural features or parcels (e.g. linkage to greenway or wildlife corridor)
 - ii. Does the property drain to a drinking water source (Source Water Protection Program)?
 - iii. Is the project in an historic district or near heritage areas?
 - iv. Is the project in an urban area lacking natural resources?

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. Did the developer identify the natural resources located in and around the site?
- ii. Does the site plan or finished project respect the natural elements of the site?
- iii. Does the site plan or finished project protect and enhance the existing natural resources on the site?
- iv. Is there a connection between the natural resources and the developed portions of the site?

2) Water Quality Protection

The applicant might want to discuss:

- i. Impacts to natural areas
- ii. Buffers and development setbacks from sensitive areas
- iii. Pre and post development drainage patterns
- iv. Treatment of stormwater runoff (water quality, runoff volume, and flood control)
- v. Groundwater recharge
- vi. Coordination with local officials – obstacles encountered and solutions reached

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. Does the development use strategies which adequately protect downstream water quality and stream health during and after construction?
- ii. How has runoff from impervious surface been managed (reduced or mitigated)?
- iii. What innovative methods have been used to protect water quality?
- iv. Is the effort to protect water quality and aquatic habitat evident throughout the development or only within defined stormwater management areas?
- v. Was water quality protected in spite of obstacles encountered? (financial, permitting, existing conditions etc)

3) Wildlife Habitat Protection

The applicant should discuss how they have addressed and/or protected:

- i. Native species and wildlife habitats on, adjacent to, and nearby the site
- ii. Diversity of habitat and connectivity within the site
- iii. Local habitat enhancement initiatives

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. How has the project addressed and protected wildlife communities on the site?
- ii. How well has the applicant maintained or enhanced the natural character of the wildlife habitat areas?
- iii. Are the wildlife habitat areas used as a public amenity on site where suitable?
- iv. How well is the project integrated with the natural landscape on and off-site?
- v. Do the natural areas create contiguous green corridors through the project?
- vi. Has the developer incorporated recommendations made in the NCWRC's Wildlife Management Plan?

4) Vegetation Protection & Enhancement

The applicant might discuss on how they have:

- i. Protected conservation areas, including individual trees if applicable
- ii. Used native vegetation in landscaping
- iii. Removed invasive species
- iv. Designed low maintenance landscaping plans
- v. Developed long-term vegetation management plans

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. To what degree are conservation areas well preserved and/or enhanced?
- ii. Has the health of the existing vegetation been adequately addressed during construction?

5) Green Building

The applicant might include information pertaining to:

- i. Green building / sustainability certifications and awards
- ii. Innovative building techniques, technologies, and materials used in the development
- iii. Construction material handling and waste prevention
- iv. Use of locally sourced and locally produced materials
- v. “Green” experience within the project team
- vi. Water conservation and reuse
- vii. Energy efficiency and alternative energy (include information on energy action plans or restriction plans)
- viii. Efforts to improve indoor air quality

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. What efforts were made to minimize waste and reduce pollution during construction (materials, dust, water, etc)?
- ii. How committed is the applicant to ensuring a “green” future for the development?
- iii. How have the “green” aspects of the project been highlighted (on site and in advertising)?
- iv. What percentage of the project's energy needs are generated on-site using renewable resources?
- v. Is the project receiving institutional certification such as LEED?
- vi. What practices and/or technologies is the project using to reduce energy consumption?

- vii. What steps does the project take to reduce water needs? What kinds of water conservation, harvesting, and re-use strategies are employed?

6) Integration with the Community

The applicant could describe how their project:

- i. Integrates with neighboring developments, surrounding land uses, and regional transportation networks
- ii. Provides new services and retail to the community (complementary land uses)
- iii. Provides permanent employment
- iv. Creates a connection to civic space and/or adds public amenities
- v. Will serve as a local attraction
- vi. Maintains scenic views, or provides new scenic outlooks
- vii. Provides affordable housing
- viii. Is designed to promote walking and biking and other alternatives forms of transportation
- ix. Honors, creates, or connects to local cultural resources

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. How well does this project embrace the overall feeling of community?
- ii. What does this project add to the local community?
- iii. How well does this project respect the individuality of the nearby population?
- iv. What features within this community would make neighbors want to come spend time within this development?
- v. If this is a redevelopment, did the applicant preserve valuable community features from the previous development (architecture, public spaces, etc)
- vi. Does the project include a commercial or agricultural component (e.g., food producing or processing) offering useful services, shopping, and permanent non-service, non-retail employment?
- vii. Does the project include an institutional component offering learning and/or cultural opportunities, child care or elder care facilities?
- viii. How does the project connect with and support local and/or regional transit services?
- ix. Does the project integrate new uses or services into previously single-use areas?

7) Long-Term Management & Maintenance

The applicant might discuss their:

- i. Commitment to protection of natural resources and water quality
- ii. Management plan for public spaces, common open spaces, and stormwater BMPs
- iii. Pet waste management strategies
- iv. Conservation plans
- v. Educational efforts

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. Is the applicant committed to long-term maintenance of the natural amenities which make this project attractive?
- ii. How are the homeowners (present or future) directly involved with the long-term sustainability of the site's natural resources and green elements?

8) Community Outreach & Education

The applicant could include information regarding:

- i. Environmental commitments and publicized environmental efforts
- ii. Involvement of community (neighbors) in development process (Were nearby communities surveyed to determine interests, needs, or concerns? What was the public involvement piece, if any?)
- iii. Oversight of builders and third-party project partners to ensure that the project's plan was followed
- iv. Information available to potential buyers about BMP maintenance or energy conservation measures in the home
- v. Evaluation feedback mechanisms before, during, and after development process.

The judges and applicants should keep in mind:

- i. How have the outreach efforts supported the environmental efforts?
- ii. What impact have the educational components of the project had on the residents and neighbors?
- iii. To what degree do the neighboring residents appreciate the environmental awareness of the project?
- iv. Does the development educate its residents and the neighboring community about green building, environmental stewardship, water conservation, or energy efficiency, and if so, are these efforts effective?