*San Diego’s Certification Program for Sustainable, Transit-Oriented Communities*

**About the Circulate Mobility Certification**

The Circulate Mobility Certification provides a review process for development proposals that demonstrate a commitment to creating, preserving and enhancing sustainable communities that provide mobility choices in the San Diego region.

The Circulate Mobility Certification panel, a coalition of members with expertise in the areas of sustainable transit-oriented development, will independently evaluate each project for certification. This holistic approach will provide a project with recognition from the Circulate Mobility Certification, which will encourage and support the approval of projects that display an exemplary model of sustainable, transit-oriented communities.

A Circulate Mobility Certification acknowledges a project which demonstrates a measureable commitment to maximizing the transportation and land use connection. A project will demonstrate a focus on increasing mobility choices, reducing single occupancy vehicular trips, and enhancing overall connectivity in the community.

**Benefits of the Circulate Mobility Certification**

The goal of Circulate San Diego’s endorsement program is to inform regulators, public officials, citizen groups and other agencies of the advantages sustainable transit-oriented communities and smart growth projects bring to the region. A Circulate Mobility Certification will include:

* A formal certification letter from Circulate San Diego that an applicant can provide to local authorities, community groups and elected officials demonstrating independent recognition of the sustainable transit-oriented characteristics and smart growth qualities of the proposed project.
* Permission to use the Circulate Mobility Certification “seal” on websites or any other communications signifying certification.
* Publicity and marketing through press releases, web site summaries, social media and recognition at Circulate San Diego events.
* A pre-determined number of hours from Circulate San Diego staff time to provide testimony at noticed public meetings or hearings, i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, or Community Planning Groups, explaining the certification program and why the proposed project qualified. Direct communications with decision-makers to support certified projects by Circulate San Diego staff will only occur during noticed public meetings. The hours of staff time will depend on the size of the project and the application fee, described below.
  + Testimony will depend on staff availability.
  + Additional support from Circulate San Diego staff can be provided to promote a project that receives the Circulate Mobility Certification, on an hourly basis through a consulting agreement. Such support is only available to projects after they have received certification by the Circulate Mobility Certification independent review panel.

**No Risk Application**

Applicants whose projects are not certified will be notified of this decision in the strictest confidence. This is a no-risk process for the applicant regardless of the panel’s decision.

**Application Process**

Private and public sector residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects (both new construction and rehabilitation) are eligible for consideration. Projects that are, or shortly will be, under review for land-use approval and have not completed the entitlement process or begun construction are eligible to apply. Projects that have already received entitlement or have been constructed may also apply.

All potential applicants should contact Circulate San Diego Policy Counsel Jesse O’Sullivan via email at [josullivan@circulatesd.org](mailto:josullivan@circulatesd.org) or by telephone at 619.544.9255 ext 301, prior to submitting an application. An application fee will be assessed for each project application. Application fees are non-refundable.

Project materials such as visuals, drawings, plans, specifications, digital graphics and other items will be required, and the applicant will have an opportunity to present the project to the Circulate Mobility Certification panel. Projects will then be evaluated by the panel, consisting of professionals with expertise in smart growth planning and sustainable transit-oriented development disciplines.

Projects will be assessed an application fee based on their size. For mixed-use projects, they will pay the larger of the fees for which they qualify.

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| **Residential Project Size** | **Non-Residential Project Size** | **Staff Hours for Testimony** | **Application Fee** |
| 1-30 Units | N/A | 0 | Eligible for free Mini-Mobility certification |
| 1-60 Units | 50,000 sq ft or smaller | 5 Hours | $2,500 |
| 61-500 Units | 50,001 - 200,000 sq ft | 10 Hours | $5,000 |
| 500+ Units | Greater than 200,000 sq ft | 15 Hours | $7,500 |

Note that the payment of an application fee for the Mobility Certification for a project located in the City of San Diego may require the applicant to file as an “Expenditure Lobbyist.” Details on those disclosure requirements are available on the [City of San Diego’s Ethics Commission website](https://www.sandiego.gov/ethics/documents/lobbyists).

**Material Submission**

In order for the Circulate Mobility Certification panel to efficiently and fairly review a project, the following material should be submitted with the application:

1. **Cover letter** (optional) explaining how the project meets the goals of the certification program and enhances the community, including reference to any potential bonus criteria.
2. **Project data sheet** with site location map, size of site, total units, units per acre or FAR, land use designation, zoning for site, density limit for site, project description (specifications on residential sq. ft., commercial sq. ft., etc.)
3. **Project site plan and elevation map** showing building locations, parking, walkways, landscaping, and open space amenities
4. **Vicinity map** showing proximity to transit options, access routes to transit stops, location of nearest employment center(s), proximity to shopping and services to meet daily needs, proximity to open space and/or recreational space
5. **Transportation schedule** of accessible transit options
6. **Transportation Demand Management (TDM)** plan or strategies (shared parking, carpool and/or vanpool program, etc.)
7. **Parking Study** or at a minimum the parking requirement for the area and planned parking space additions
8. **Visual simulations,** conceptual drawings, or renderings showing structures, facilities, walkways, bicycle paths, site lighting, landscaping, etc., including exterior elevations from the street
9. **Completed Circulate Mobility Certification application**

**Application Scoring**

The certification process reviews the merit of the project based on seven criteria. Each criteria includes a stated intent as well as four yes or no questions that evaluate if the project meets the stated intent.

To earn the Circulate Mobility Certification, a project must achieve both of the following:

(1) Be scored by the panel as meeting the stated intent of at least six out of seven Qualitative Questions.

* To meet the stated intent of a Qualitative Question, a project must achieve at least half of the Sub-Criteria associated with that question.

(2) Receive at least 18 points, based on the Sub-Criteria, and the receipt of Bonus Points.

* Satisfying any of the Sub-Criteria for the “High Performing Transit” Qualitative Question is worth two points each.
* Satisfying any of the Sub-Criteria of the other Qualitative Questions is worth one point.
* Up to four Bonus Points may be awarded by the review committee for exemplary projects with characteristic not otherwise considered by the Sub-Criteria.

**Application Form**

*Instructions: Please complete this form in its entirety and e-mail this document along with the additional requested materials to* [*josullivan@circulatesd.org*](mailto:josullivan@circulatesd.org)*.*

Project Name and developer: **Click here to enter text.**

Project Address: **Click here to enter text.**

Applicant’s Contact Name: **Click here to enter text.**

Applicant’s Contact Email: **Click here to enter text.**

Applicant’s Contact Phone: **Click here to enter text.**

Project Size – Number of Residential Units: **Click here to enter text.**

Project Size – Square Feet of Non-Residential Space: **Click here to enter text.**

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the certification of development projects. Please attach documentation and explain in the provided text boxes below how the project meets the intent of the criteria, specifically addressing the corresponding sub-questions:

***Qualitative Question 1 – Access to High Performing Transit:*** ***Does the project provide safe and comfortable access to high performing transit?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth two points each.)*

1.1) Are there existing or planned and funded transit routes accessible within a half-mile radius of the proposed project with stops providing at least 15 minute headways during peak hours?

1.2) Are any of the transit stops accessible within a half-mile radius of the proposed project high performing? High performing transit stops are either rail stops or the intersection of two bus stops with at least 15 minute headways during peak hours.

1.3) Does the project encourage the use of transit by providing safe routes to transit with bike and pedestrian friendly infrastructure?

1.4) Do nearby stations allow connectivity to major employment centers?

*Explain how your project meets the High Performing Transit criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 2 – Location Efficiency: Does the project maximize the use of alternative modes of transportation through location efficiency?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)*

2.1) Is the project located near established or planned transportation options?

2.2) Does the project minimize, avoid, or provide alternatives to constructing new vehicle capacity increasing street infrastructure?

2.3) Does the project take advantage of infill locations?

2.4) Does the project minimize or avoid impacts to protected habitat or open space parcels?

*Explain how your project meets the intent of the Location Efficiency criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 3 - Community Character: Does the project contribute to a vibrant, healthy community character?*** (Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)

3.1) Is the building(s) pattern, scale, and massing appropriate to its surrounding community patterns, either currently or in consideration of projected growth?

3.2) Does the project provide convenient access to arts, culture, recreation, and/or civic engagement opportunities, as well as authentic experiences that are long-term and sustainable?

3.3) Does the project have potential to support local, small businesses within or near the development?

3.4) Does the aesthetic quality of the project fit into the neighborhood context?

*Explain how your project meets the Community Character criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 4 – Density and Smart Growth Techniques: Does the project utilize density and smart growth techniques?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)*

4.1) Does the site implement density and smart growth techniques that can support a mix of uses in the neighborhood?

4.2) Does the project maximize or take advantage of the density?

4.3) Does the project add the absolute minimum additional parking spaces? (Projects may receive this point if they provide parking equal to or less than a local jurisdiction’s parking minimums, but more than is required by use of a state density bonus.)

4.4) Does the project utilize other identifiable smart growth techniques?

*Explain how your project meets the Density and Smart Growth Techniques criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 5 – Mixed Use Opportunities: Does the project reduce the need for additional car trips by providing mixed use opportunities within the development or community?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)*

5.1) Does the project allow for the adequate and appropriate incorporation of housing, retail, commercial, or community services within the development?

5.2) Does the project provide live-work opportunities either in the development or in proximity to workplaces within walking or biking distance?

5.3) Does the development adequately incorporate onsite or adjacent open spaces, plaza, parks, or playgrounds?

5.4) Does the development provide a mix of housing options or exist within walking or biking distance to a mix of housing options? (This may include a range of affordability or unit size.)

*Explain how your project meets the Mixed Use Opportunities criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 6 – Building Design: Does the project support positive interaction between the building and the street through human-scaled building design?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)*

6.1) Are there aspects of the project’s design that incorporate human-scaled architecture through pedestrian-friendly design features?

6.2) Does the design provide for continuous engagement between the building and pedestrians on the street (“eyes on the street”), or include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles like natural surveillance and access control strategies?

6.3) Does the design encourage interaction between the building interior and the sidewalk?

6.4) Is pedestrian access to the project convenient and free of barriers that would discourage pedestrian access?

*Explain how your project meets the Building Design criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Qualitative Question 7 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: Does the project provide safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure?*** *(Satisfying the Sub-Criteria for this question is worth one point each.)*

7.1) Does the project provide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure separated from vehicular traffic within the development and connecting to the outside community?

7.2) Does the project accommodate bicycle and pedestrian connections and safety outside the development site?

7.3) Does the project incorporate adequate and secure bicycle storage that is convenient, safe, and attractive for users?

7.4) Are onsite driveways designed to prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist safety and convenience?

*Explain how your project meets the Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure criteria:*

**Click here to enter text.**

***Bonus Points:***

There are a wide variety of concepts and designs that support sustainable projects and encourage the use of transit and non-car modes. The Circulate Mobility Certification Committee is aware that the topics listed above do not cover them all. The Bonus Points section provides an opportunity to receive recognition for other elements that have been incorporated into the project to create sustainable communities, support transit, and reduce VMT.   
  
Up to four Bonus Points can be awarded, to meet the 18 minimum points in the application. Bonus Points can be awarded at the discretion of the review committee for features including but not limited to:

* Providing affordable housing or a range of housing options,
* Implementing traffic reduction strategies or alternative methods for reducing VMTs,
* Incorporating opportunities for active transportation,
* Incorporating convenient neighborhood and community services,
* Creating pedestrian-friendly gathering spaces,
* Plans for accommodating future transit service, or
* Design

*Indicate if the project includes any features that the panel should consider for awarding Bonus Points:*

**Click here to enter text.**