



The SITES Silver certified Cultural Arts Corridor: Lower Ramble in Fayetteville, AK. Photo credit: City of Fayetteville.

THE SITES RATING SYSTEM

The Sustainable SITES Initiative (SITES) program offers a rating system that guides, evaluates and certifies sustainability and resilience in the design, development and management of landscapes and other outdoor spaces. Owned and administered by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI), SITES supports landscape architects, planners, developers and others in implementing nature-based solutions. This means that SITES projects prioritize biodiversity, boost resilience and mitigate climate change while conserving resources, improving public health and providing economic benefits.

SITES certification applies globally to a wide variety of project types and sizes and for sites with or without buildings—ranging from parks to corporate campuses, urban development projects to universities, and more. By protecting and restoring ecosystem services, SITES provides essential benefits to the environment, property owners, and local and regional communities and economies.

In fact, municipalities and cities searching for a clear, replicable and verifiable approach to sustainable land development are increasingly incorporating SITES certification into their regulatory toolbox.

COMPLEMENTING LEED CERTIFICATION

Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) is also the certifying body for the Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, which established the first baseline for green building standards. SITES complements the LEED rating system, which is also used in many municipal regulatory standards, along with LEED for Cities and Communities rating systems.

SITES-CERTIFIED PROJECTS

- Promote ecologically resilient communities that better withstand and recover from floods, droughts, wildfires and other catastrophic events
- Boost biodiversity by protecting and restoring ecosystems, emphasizing native planting, and managing invasive species
- Reduce water and energy demand by requiring less maintenance
- Manage stormwater runoff using green infrastructure strategies, which also reduce urban heat island effects
- Help sequester carbon and improve air quality through nature-based solutions that combat climate change
- Enable wildlife habitat, conserve natural resources and offset development impacts
- Foster human health and well-being by connecting people to nature, to their communities and to each other

MORE TO EXPLORE



Why SITES? The case for ecosystem services

Incorporating SITES into sustainable landscape regulations



Case study: Nature as infrastructure in Austin, TX



*The SITES Gold certified Kingsbury Commons in Austin, TX.
Photo credit: Casey Dunn.*