



Chicago Sustainable Development Policy

Policy Overview | Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus – Environment Committee | September 2026

Green Roofs

City Hall example



Image © DPD, 2019



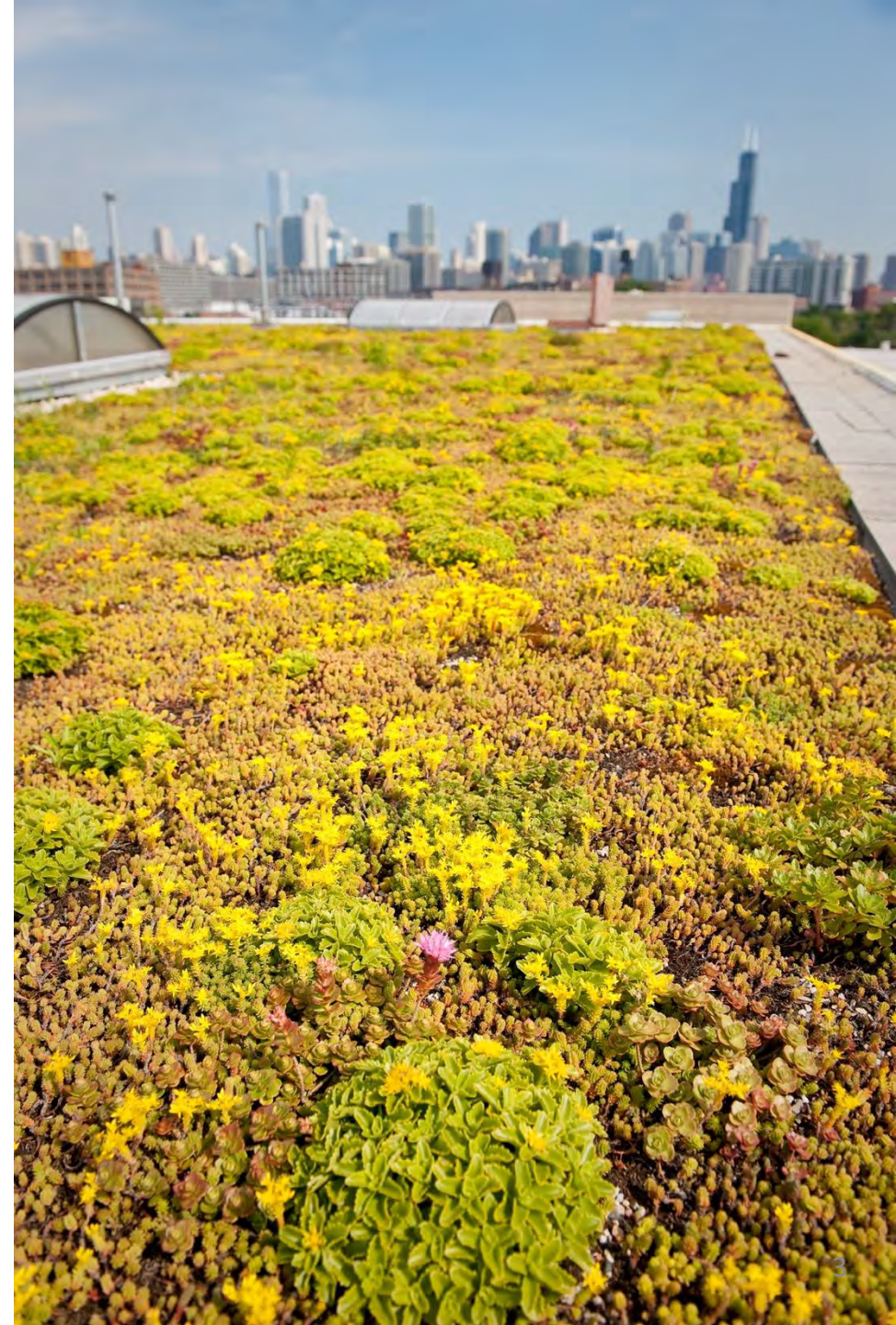
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What is the Chicago Sustainable Development Policy (SDP)?

A **departmental policy** that encourages innovation in **sustainable development** through a **point-based menu** of strategies for new construction and rehabilitation projects.

Applicable to projects receiving certain types of **public funding or zoning approvals**.

Implemented via the Chicago Zoning Ordinance for Planned Development and Air Quality Ordinance projects, and via **redevelopment agreements** for projects receiving City financial assistance.



Chicago Sustainable Development Policy

Evolution of the Policy



2004

Implemented as a green roof policy



2007

Updated to include building certification (LEED) and energy efficiency, shading, and stormwater management

Choose one		Choose one						
2.5 Exceed Energy Code (40%)	2.6 Onsite Renewable Energy (3%)	2.7 Onsite Renewable Energy (5%)	3.1 Exceed Stormwater Ordinance by 25%	3.2 Exceed Stormwater Ordinance by 50%	3.3 100% Stormwater Infiltration	3.4 Sump Pump Capture & Reuse	3.5 100-year detention for lot-to-lot buildings	3.6 100-year Detention for Bypass
50	10	20	10	20	40	5	5	5

2017

Updated with a point-based menu of strategies that provide for flexibility and innovation in compliance

Strategy No.	Strategy Name	Points	Available in Compliance Pathway #1:	Available in Compliance Pathway #2: Third-Party Certification
			Menu	Certification
A. Bird Protection				
A.1	Bird Protection (Basic)	20	Y	Y
A.2	Bird Protection (Enhanced)	30	Y	Y
B. Energy				
B.1	Exceed Energy Transformation Code (5%)	20	Y	N
B.2	Exceed Energy Transformation Code (10%)	30	Y	N
B.3	Rooftop Solar-Ready Construction*	5	Y	Y
B.4	On-Site Renewable Energy Provision of 5-10%*	10	Y	Y
B.5	On-site Renewable Energy Provision of 10-20%*	20	Y	Y
B.6	On-site Renewable Energy Provision of > 20%*	30	Y	Y
B.7	Building Electrification	30	Y	N
B.8	Maximum 40% Glass Facade	10	Y	N
B.9	Meet ComEd New Construction Best Practices	20	Y	N
C. Landscape and Green Infrastructure				
C.1	Green Roof (>50%)	10	Y	Y
C.2	Green Roof (100%)	20	Y	Y
C.3	Productive Landscapes	5	Y	Y
C.4	Native Landscapes	5	Y	Y
C.5	Tree Health	5	Y	Y

2024

Current version fully implemented in January 2025

Required Points

Projects earn points by selecting from a menu of strategies and/or third-party building certification programs. The minimum number of points required to comply with the SDP vary by project type.

New Construction	Substantial Renovations and Additions	Moderate Renovations	Projects without a Principal Building
100 pts	50 pts	25 pts	25 pts
New construction or additions that exceed 50% of an existing building's gross square footage.	New or upgraded building systems and exterior repairs or smaller additions.	Partial or minor upgrades to building systems and minor repairs to the exterior envelope.	Construction or modification of outdoor facilities such as parks, sports fields, landscaped areas and parking lots.

Compliance Pathways

To achieve compliance, applicants must choose a Compliance Pathway

Compliance Pathway 1

Menu of Strategies



Bird Protection



Energy



Landscape and Green Infrastructure



Public Health and Community Benefits



Stormwater



Transportation



Waste



Water

Compliance Pathway 2

Third-party Building Certification + Limited Menu









Bird Protection



Energy



Landscape and Green Infrastructure



Public Health and Community Benefits



Stormwater



Transportation

Menu of Strategies

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B.4	On-Site Renewable Energy Provision of 5-10%*	10	Y	Y
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C. Landscape and Green Infrastructure				
C.1	Green Roof (>50%)	10	Y	Y
C.2	Green Roof (100%)	20	Y	Y
C.3	Productive Landscapes	5	Y	Y
C.4	Native Landscapes	5	Y	Y
C.5	Tree Health	5	Y	Y
C.6	Industrial Landscaped Buffer*	10	Y	Y
C.7	Non-toxic Pavement Sealants	5	Y	Y
C.8	Naturalize River Edge	10	Y	Y
C.9	Exceed River Setback for Naturalized Spaces	5	Y	Y
C.10	Aquatic River Habitat	10	Y	Y

* Recommended strategy for Air Quality Ordinance and industrial use category projects

Strategy No.	Strategy Name	Points	Available in Compliance Pathway #1: Menu	Available in Compliance Pathway #2: Third-Party Certification
D. Public Health and Community Benefits				
D.1	WELL Building Standard	50	Y	Y
D.2	Fitwel Certification	30	Y	Y
D.3	100% on-site ARO	10 to 15	Y	Y
D.4	Air Quality Monitoring*	10	Y	Y
D.5	Indoor Air Quality	5	Y	Y
D.6	Cleaner Industrial Operations Equipment*	5	Y	Y
D.7	Cleaner Construction Equipment	5	Y	Y
D.8	Community Resiliency Asset	10 to 15	Y	Y
D.9	Workforce Development*	10	Y	Y
D.10	Exceed Requirements for Accessible Dwelling Units	5	Y	Y
E. Stormwater				
E.1	Sump Pump Capture and Reuse	5	Y	Y
E.2	Exceed Stormwater Ordinance by 25%*	10	Y	Y
E.3	Exceed Stormwater Ordinance by 50%*	20	Y	Y
E.4	100% Stormwater Infiltration	40	Y	Y
E.5	100-year Detention for Lot-to-Lot buildings	25	Y	Y
E.6	100-year Detention for Bypass	5	Y	Y
F. Transportation				
F.1	Divvy Bikeshare Sponsorship	5	Y	N
F.2	Residential Bike Parking Facilities	5	Y	N
F.3	Non-Residential Bike Parking Facilities	5	Y	N
F.4	EV Charging Stations 30%	5	Y	N
F.5	EV Charging Stations Fast Charger	10	Y	N
F.6	EV Charger Readiness (Basic)	5	Y	N
F.7	EV Charger Readiness (Enhanced)	10	Y	N
F.8	Commercial EV Fleet Readiness*	10	Y	Y
F.9	CTA Digital Display	5	Y	Y
G. Waste				
G.1	80% Waste Diversion	5	Y	N
G.2	80% Waste Diversion + 10% reuse	10	Y	N
H. Water				
H.1	Indoor Water Use Reduction (25%)	5	Y	N
H.2	Indoor Water Use Reduction (40%)	10	Y	N
Sustainability Excellence & Innovation				
-	Sustainability Excellence and Innovation	5 to 20	Y	Y

Project Example

NM Bronzeville Outpatient Center

“The NM Bronzeville project includes a vegetated roof that supports water conservation and urban heat mitigation goals. The green roof is planted with native and naturalized species selected for drought tolerance and urban conditions, allowing the system to function without permanent irrigation once established.

In addition, the vegetated roof reduces heat island effects by replacing conventional roofing with planted surfaces that lower roof surface temperatures, reduce heat gain, and improve overall thermal performance of the building and surrounding site.”

Paul Bryant, LLC



Image © Paul Bryant, LLC

Project Example

NM Bronzeville Outpatient Center

The green roof was part of the LEED Silver compliance path, which was a subset of the project's SDP compliance.

- Approx. 19,000 sq ft
- Includes native plant species which support local and migratory wildlife
- Facility opened in September 2025

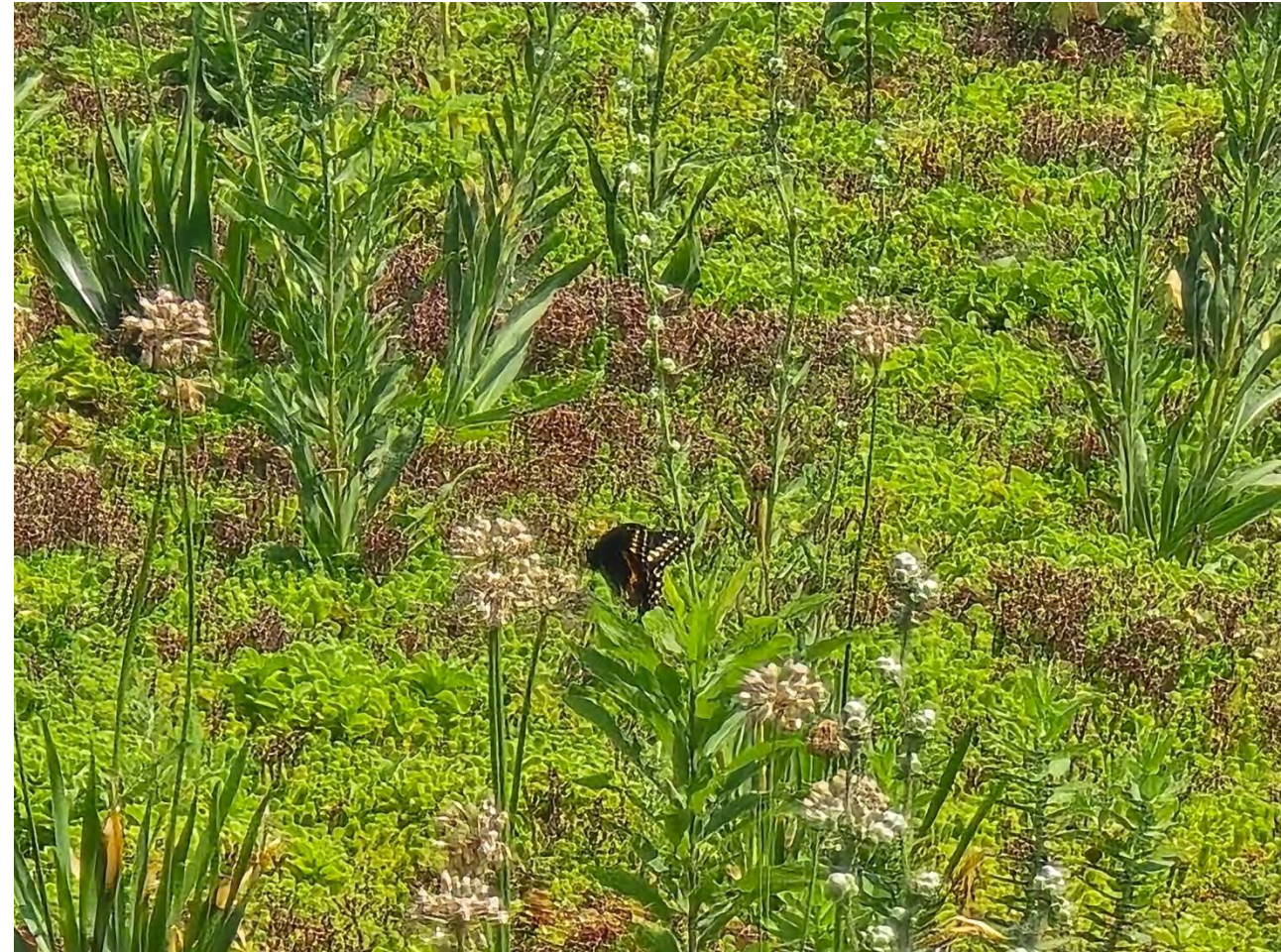


Image © Paul Bryant, LLC

Project Example

Planned Development Project

Complied with City of Chicago
Sustainable Development Policy:

- Provided green roof on 25% -50% of net roof area



Image © Andrew Billing, Mackie Consultants, LLC, consultant to City of Chicago
Department of Buildings

SDP Project Statistics

Green Roofs

2024 SDP

12 out of 48 projects presented at Chicago Plan Commission have selected a green roof strategy

25%

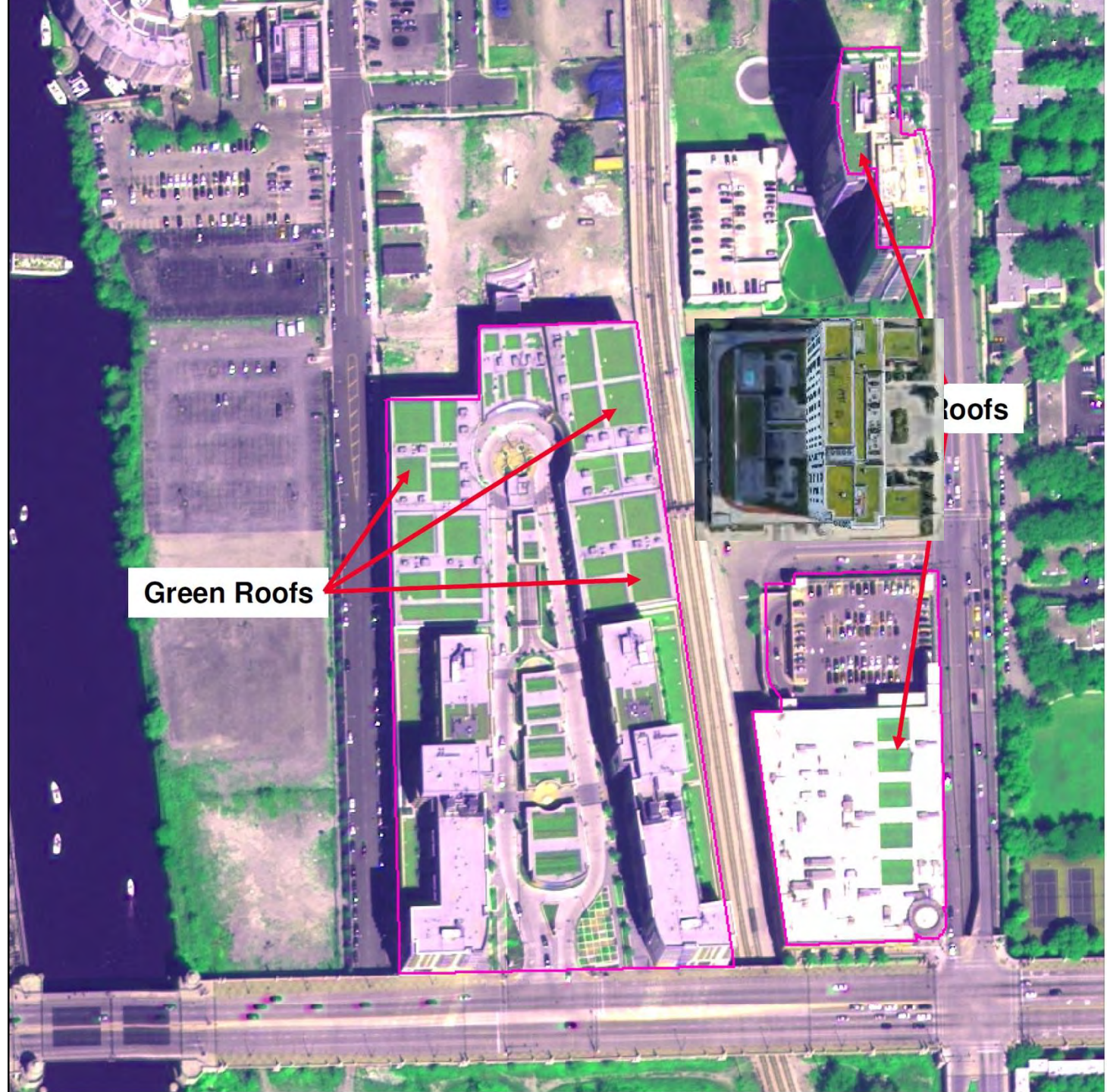
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Chicago Sustainable Development Policy

Impact – Green Roofs

Chicago's **Sustainable Development Policy** combined with the **Stormwater Management Ordinance** have had a direct impact on the number of Green Roofs constructed in the City.

- 2013 Study identified
 - 500+ vegetated roofs
 - Totaling over 5M square feet
- More recent estimate (Dept. Of Buildings)
 - 600+ vegetated roofs
 - Totaling over 6.5M square feet



SDP Project Statistics

Top 10 Strategies*

Native Landscapes

Bird Protection

CTA Digital Display

Indoor Water Use Reduction (25%)

100% On-site ARO

Tree Health

80% Waste Diversion

Exceed Energy Transformation Code (5%)

EV Charger Readiness

Exceed Stormwater Ordinance (25%)

* current as of June 2026

Native Landscapes



Bird Protection



Source: Andrew Billing – Mackie Consulting

Exceeding Stormwater Ordinance

Emerging Technologies

Sustainability Excellence and Innovation

Added Sustainability Excellence and Innovation option to allow for implementation of new technologies not specifically addressed by the policy.

Proposals subject to review by DPD and other applicable departments to determine eligibility and point value (5 to 20 points).

Mass timber construction



Living Walls



Thank you!

