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Bainbridge Island creates
green building incentives
by Charles Redell -
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The new logo of the
International Living Building
Institute.

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND,
WASH.

Cities up and down the West Coast are beginning to adopt various green building certification requirements and incentives. In late November, the city of [Bainbridge Island, Wash.](#), became the first in the nation to provide development incentives for projects aiming to achieve the [Living Building Challenge](#).

The [Housing Design Demonstration Projects](#) program allows for “some flexibility in development” for developments that meet minimum standards for housing diversity and innovative site design, according to the city.

Developers in the Puget Sound bedroom community, which is connected to downtown Seattle by a 30-minute ferry trip, can “earn” site development, parking and other incentives by incorporating specified green building, innovative site design and affordable housing elements in new residential projects. Developments that meet higher standards for green building, such as achieving certification to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or Built Green Washington standards, including homes smaller than 1,600 square feet, using Low Impact Design elements and incorporating affordable housing will be eligible for a density bonus. Developments that attain the Living Building Challenge or set aside at least 50 percent of units as affordable housing will be eligible for an increased density bonus.

Also in November, the city of [San Mateo, Calif., passed an ordinance](#) (PDF) requiring new commercial construction of more than 3,000 square feet and new homes or homes undergoing a 50 percent remodel to meet LEED or GreenPoint Rated certification as of Jan. 1. Buildings that achieve more than 75 points from GreenPoint Rated or Silver or higher certification from LEED receive expedited permitting and inspections as well.

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