



Innovation & Process

Recognize important local government practices and processes that guide the implementation of sustainability and accelerate community-scale achievement across STAR Goal Areas

Introduction

The Innovation & Process (IP) category is an avenue for discovering emerging and cutting-edge practices that communities are implementing to improve local sustainability. IP also rewards communities for putting into place best practices and processes to underpin and support continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes. There are 4 sections in this category: Best Practices & Processes; Exemplary Performance; Local Innovation; and Good Governance.

Section	Title and Purpose	Available Points
IP-1	Best Practices & Processes: <i>Recognize important local government practices and processes that underpin the implementation of sustainability measures and accelerate community-scale achievement across STAR Goal Areas</i>	10
IP-2	Exemplary Performance: <i>Reward performance in Community Level Outcome measures or Local Action measures that significantly exceeds the evaluation criteria established by the existing STAR Community Rating System</i>	10
IP-3	Local Innovation: <i>Encourage and reward creative, effective approaches to enhancing a community's environmental, social, and/or economic sustainability not reflected in existing STAR Objectives or evaluation measures</i>	20
IP-4	Good Governance: <i>Recognize the achievement of demonstrated outcomes and good practices in governance that elevate achievement and success rates across multiple goals and objectives</i>	10
Total Points Available:		50



INNOVATION & PROCESS

IP- I: Best Practices & Processes

10 available points

PURPOSE

Recognize important local government practices and processes that underpin the implementation of sustainability measures and accelerate community-scale achievement across STAR Goal Areas

Description

Local governments continually make decisions, expenditures, and investments that affect community sustainability. The strength of local decision-making is informed by community input, public planning efforts, regulations, and internal coordination across government departments and agencies. Effective practices and processes are therefore critical to ensure that local decisions lead to sustainable outcomes and do not unfairly burden particular constituencies.

IP-I: Best Practices & Processes credits applicants that demonstrate leadership in effectively and innovatively engage the public, plan for their community's future, leverage public resources, establish rules and regulations that advance sustainability and equity, and institutionalize transparency and sustainability.

There are 4 categories of best practices and processes for which credit is available:

- (1) Comprehensive Planning;
- (2) Public Engagement Techniques;
- (3) Innovative Codes & Ordinances; and
- (4) Sustainability Education.

Applicants may pursue credit in up to 2 of the 4 categories in order to receive the maximum 10 points (5 points each). No partial credit is available within each category. If there is another specific best practice or process that the applicant believes is worthy of points, consider applying for credit under IP-3: Local Innovation.

For each best practice and process category, the applicant should:

- explain how the community is meeting each of the required best practices;
- explain how implementation applies across all Goal Areas of the STAR framework; and
- link to or upload additional submittal requirements.

Submissions will be evaluated as to whether the local efforts achieve the criteria described, incorporate innovative strategies, advance equity in decision-making, and positively impact STAR Objectives.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

(I) Comprehensive Planning

Option A: Within the past 5 years, adopt a systems-based comprehensive plan that establishes a clear vision for the future, concretely addresses subjects in all STAR Goal Areas, identifies performance measures and specific actions that will enable the community to achieve its goals, provides a clear process for implementation, and includes annual reporting on progress



--OR--

Option B: Achieve official Sustaining Places Designation for the community's comprehensive plan from the American Planning Association (APA)

(2) Public Engagement Techniques

Part 1: Demonstrate both high-tech and high-touch on-going engagement techniques that empower the public in shaping the future of the community

--AND--

Part 2: Demonstrate that public engagement techniques include practices that intentionally and directly engage all residents, including traditionally unrepresented or underrepresented groups, through inclusive, context-sensitive, and transparent decision-making processes

(3) Innovative Codes & Ordinances

Part 1: Adopt innovative sets of codes or ordinances that comprehensively advance sustainable practices and raise environmental standards

--AND--

Part 2: Demonstrate how the sets of codes or ordinances are being legally enforced in the community

(4) Sustainability Education

Option A: Describe cohesive programs, services, or annual events that educate residents about wide-ranging sustainability issues in the community

--OR--

Option B: Implement a local sustainability literacy program within the local public school system



INNOVATION & PROCESS

IP-2: Exemplary Performance

10 available points

PURPOSE

Reward performance in Community Level Outcome or Local Action measures that significantly exceed the evaluation criteria or scope established by the existing STAR Community Rating System

Description

IP-2: Exemplary Performance recognizes communities that are demonstrating performance levels that exceed the leadership standards of STAR's existing outcome and action measures.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

To demonstrate exemplary performance in a STAR outcome measure, applicants must show that the community's performance in 1 or more outcomes goes significantly above and beyond STAR's standards for credit. Determination of significance will vary by outcome.

For credit, the applicant must receive full credit for the submitted measure in the original objective, including measures with multiple parts. Up to 50% of the points available in the existing outcome measure will be awarded for exemplary performance.

For verification, applicants must provide analysis supporting their claim of exemplary performance and a requested number of points. The number of points requested should consider the extent to which the applicant exceeds the threshold.

To demonstrate exemplary performance in an action measure, the applicant must show that the action meets the criteria of an existing action measure in the Technical Guide and that the intent of the submitted action is substantially more involved or comprehensive than described for that measure. Regional priorities that include substantial efforts may be included.

Local actions submitted for IP-2: Exemplary Performance may not be submitted for any of the other Innovation & Process sections. Communities that demonstrate exemplary performance in an action measure will be assigned 1 point per preparatory action and 2 points per implementation action.

Applicants may submit up to 4 outcome and/or action measures for IP-2: Exemplary Performance credit; however, note that there are only a total of 10 points available.



INNOVATION & PROCESS

IP-3: Local Innovation

20 available points

PURPOSE

Encourage and reward creative, effective approaches to enhancing a community's environmental, social, and/or economic sustainability not reflected in existing STAR Objectives or evaluation measures

Description

IP-3: Local Innovation provides a mechanism to recognize communities that approach sustainability in creative, effective ways. While the STAR Community Rating System was designed to be comprehensive, sustainability is a continuously evolving discipline. Local Innovation points can be achieved by proposing new evaluation measures (outcomes or actions) and even new STAR Objectives.

EVALUATION MEASURES

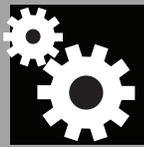
Evaluation measures that have a history of success within a community that are not present within the existing Rating System may be submitted for additional credit under IP-3: Local Innovation. Similarly, if a community has identified an objective-level sustainability issue and developed a comprehensive strategy for addressing it, STAR welcomes proposals for consideration. Proposals for new objectives must include substantive outcomes and actions that have been achieved within the community.

Applicant can submit a combination of up to 6 examples of local innovation for credit; however, a maximum of 20 total points is available. The number of points eligible are based on the type of measure and/or action type. Applicants must explain why the requested level of points is justified given the existing point structure in STAR.

Maximum point values are as follows:

- New Objective = 15 points
- New Outcome = 10 points
- New Action
 - Education and Outreach = 2 points
 - Plan Development = 2 points
 - Policy and Code Adjustment = 3 points
 - Partnerships and Collaborations = 1 point
 - Practice Improvements = 1 point
 - Inventory, Assessment, or Survey = 1 point
 - Enforcement and Incentives = 4 points
 - Programs and Services = 4 points
 - Facility and Infrastructure Improvements = 6 points

Measures submitted for IP-3 cannot receive duplicated credit for a measure already described in the STAR framework, including a different section of the Innovation & Process area. For example, a community has several violence suppression program. Each program meets the intent of HS-7: Safe Communities. This alone would not be eligible for credit under IP-3.



INNOVATION & PROCESS

IP-4: Good Governance

10 available points

PURPOSE

Recognize the achievement of demonstrated outcomes and good practices in governance that elevate achievement and success rates across multiple STAR goals and objectives

Description

IP-4: Good Governance rewards applicants that demonstrate achievement in outcomes or practices that support underlying performance across the STAR framework.

There are 3 good governance categories for which credit is available:

- (1) Quality of Municipal Bond Rating;
- (2) Transparency and Open Data; and
- (3) Designated Sustainability Director or Office of Sustainability.

Applicants may pursue credit in up to 2 of the 3 good governance categories to receive the maximum 10 points (5 points each). Partial credit is not available within the categories. If applicant has more than 2, apply for credit in the third under IP-3: Local Innovation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

(1) Quality of Municipal Bond Rating

Achieve a Best Quality or High Quality bond rating with 1 or more of the 3 major rating agencies

(2) Transparency and Open Data

Option A: Demonstrate that data made available to the public meet the Open Data Policy Guidelines, as described by the Sunlight Foundation

--OR--

Option B: Adopt the What Works Cities Standard and describe efforts within the 4 components: Commit, Measure, Take Stock, and Act

(3) Designated Sustainability Director or Office of Sustainability

Demonstrate that the local government has designated and funded at least 1.0 FTE employee directly responsible for coordinating on sustainability issues across departments or that an Office of Sustainability has been established with a clear direction to act on the local government's behalf