The Circulate “Project” Mobility Certification Application and Instructions



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

About the Circulate Mobility Certification

The [Circulate Mobility Certification](http://www.circulatesd.org/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 measurable 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 can be provided 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 public meetings or hearings, i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, or

Community Planning Groups, explaining the certification program and why the proposed project qualified. 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 Director of Development and Partnerships, Jeremy Bloom via email at jbloom@circulatesd.org, 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 | Circulate Staff Hours for Testimony | Application Review Fee |
| 1-30 Units or 100% Affordable at any size | N/A | 0 | Eligible for free Mini-Mobility certification |
| 31-60 Units | 50,000 sq. ft. or smaller | 5 Hours | $3,500  |
| 61-500 Units | 50,001 to 200,000 sq. ft. | 10 Hours | $7,500  |
| 501 - 2,000 Units | 200,000 to 500,000 sq. ft. | 15 Hours | $10,000  |
| 2,001+ Units | Greater than 500,000 sq. ft.ft. | 20 Hours | $15,000  |

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 Instructions**

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* *jbloom@circulatesd.org**.*

Project Name and developer: **Exemplary Hotel Smart Growth Project**

Project Address: **700 N University, San Diego, CA 92108.**

Applicant’s Contact Name: **Monica Ortega, Associated Development, Inc.**

Applicant’s Contact Email**:** **mortega@AssociatedInc.com**

Applicant’s Contact Phone: **(619) 555-1234.**

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:

1. ***Location Efficiency: To maximize the use of alternative modes of transportation through location efficiency.***
	1. Is the project located near established or planned transportation options?
	2. Does the project minimize, avoid, or provide alternatives to constructing new vehicle capacity increasing street infrastructure?
	3. Does the project take advantage of infill locations?
	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:*

1.1.) The project is located within a three-minute walk of well-established transportation options including Fashion Valley Transit Center which is a hub for routes 6, 20, 25, 41, 88, 120, 928 and MTS Bus Route 88 on Hotel Circle North. The project implements a key missing link for pedestrian and bicycle access through the project site by enhancing and constructing the San Diego River Path. The project also provides Class II bike facilities on Hotel Circle North and Fashion Valley Road. The project is centrally located with nearby access to multiple local roadways, including Friars Road arterial; Interstate 8 and State Route 163 freeways.

The project also provides space for potential future transportation planning options including a SANDAG Class IV, separated bikeway on Camino de la Reina/Hotel Circle North with a Class I bike lane through the project. The constructed and future bicycle connections implemented

by this project will link the Exemplary Hotel and transit-oriented neighborhood to the San Diego River, Mission Valley, and Uptown.

* 1. **The project does not increase street infrastructure and results in zero new vehicles miles traveled. The development program was specifically calibrated to enhance use of existing transportation services and not increase street infrastructure.**
	2. **The project fully takes advantage of a key infill development opportunity. The entire hotel and transit-oriented neighborhood will repurpose previously developed concrete areas. Furthermore, the project strengthens the mixed-use nature of the site by adding multi-family housing to the existing/improved restaurant, convention and hotel uses on-site, as well as the retail options at the near-by Fashion Valley Mall and recreation opportunities of the Exemplary Public Park and San Diego River. The project is also transit-oriented with immediate adjacency and pedestrian and bike connections to the FV Transit Center (light rail and eight bus lines).**
	3. **The project IMPROVES conditions for protected habitat by implementing approximately**

11.54 acres of enhanced and restored San Diego River as dictated by the SD River Master Plan. This will include removal of approximately 2.7 acres of concrete parking lots and impervious surface and 1.0 acre of non-native, invasive species. The result is a restoration of approximately 7.83 acres of San Diego River habitat with native species. Included in the 11.54 acres is the creation of an on-site 3.71 acre public park which will serve as a community amenity for Mission Valley and the broader community.

1. ***Access to High Performing Transit: To provide safe and comfortable access to high performing transit.***
	1. Does the project encourage the use of transit by providing safe routes to transit with bike and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure?
	2. Are there existing or planned transit routes or lines within a half mile radius of the proposed project with transit stations or stops providing at least 15 minute headways?
	3. Do nearby stations allow connectivity to a multitude of destinations?
	4. Do the transit options connect to major employment centers?

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

* 1. **The project encourages use of transit by improving existing connections and creating new connections to the Fashion Valley Transit Center and bus stop at Hotel Circle North. The project implements the following:**
		+ **New multi-modal connections through the project site from the Union Tribune to Fashion Valley Road, Fashion Valley Mall to Hotel Circle North. These connections link the surrounding employment centers, transit centers, and destinations with the Project.**
		+ **6-foot pedestrian bridge transformed to a 10-foot multi-modal bridge;**
		+ **Approximately 1,200 linear feet of new 14-foot-wide San Diego River multi-use Path**
	2. **There are eight existing MTS bus routes and one light rail station within a half mile radius of the proposed project. The Fashion Valley Transit Center is within a 3 minute walk, providing connections to the Green Line Trolley, and seven (7) local and regional bus lines, most of which provide 15 minute or less headways. There is an additional local bus line along Hotel Circle North which is also within a 3 minute walk of the proposed project.**
	3. **In the westbound direction, the Green Line Trolley is two stops away from the Old Town Transit Center (7 min. trip), and another four stops to Santa Fe Depot in Downtown (16 min. trip), with more regional rail and local/regional bus connections Trolley connections. Destinations along this route include: Old Town; a pedestrian connection to the consolidated rental car facility for direct bus connectivity to the SD Airport passenger terminals; Little Italy; County of San Diego Administration Center; Waterfront Park; the harbor; San Diego Convention Center, and Petco Park. In the eastbound direction, the Green Line Trolley connects to the Orange Line at 3 consecutive stops between La Mesa and El Cajon, as well as: multiple shopping centers with comfortable pedestrian connections (i.e., Hazard Center, Mission Center, Fenton Parkway, Grossmont Center, Santee Trolley Square); San Diego State University; major healthcare facilities (i.e., Alvarado Hospital, Grossmont Hospital); and major entertainment venues (ie., Qualcomm Stadium, Viejas Arena).**
	4. **Multiple, major employment centers may be reached directly by the Green Line Trolley, including (as noted above): SDSU, two major healthcare facilities, multiple shopping centers; Mission Valley Shopping Center, Fashion Valley Shopping Center, shuttle to the San Diego Airport, multiple entertainment venues, and Downtown San Diego. More connections to job centers are available with direct service from Fashion Valley Transit Center, including: University of California San Diego; VA Medical Center, La Jolla; Westfield University Town Center; Downtown San Diego; and more San Diego communities; Hotel itself is an employment center**
1. ***Community Character: To contribute to a vibrant, healthy community character.***
	1. Is the building(s) pattern, scale, and massing appropriate to its surrounding community patterns, either currently or in consideration of projected growth?
	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. Does the project have potential to support local, small businesses within or near the development?
	4. Does the aesthetic quality of the project fit into the neighborhood context?

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

* 1. **The pattern, scale, and massing of the proposed project relates to the human scale and focuses on ensuring an attractive walkable and bikeable environment for residents and the broader community. The proposed residential area matches the scale of the proposed Union- Tribune development project and reflects the objectives that the community identified as part of the Mission Valley Community Plan Update process.**

Building heights are within the range of the existing hotel tower and nearby buildings. The existing Royal Palm Tower is 89.3 feet tall, and the Regency Tower is 82.5 feet tall. All proposed residential buildings are designed as 85 feet tall. Renovated hotel and new buildings have been designed with sensitivity to adjacent properties and preserving views from the freeway to Mission Valley. All buildings are designed to reflect to create an entry from streets and pedestrian paths and make buildings relatable to pedestrians, bicyclist, and transit users.

* 1. **The proposed project re-orients its front door to and embraces the San Diego River. The new on-site 3.71 acre park creates usable open space in a park-deficient community, offers a gateway signage and interpretive education program and signage elements, and reflects the cultural and historic development of Mission Valley as identified by the community through the park design process.**
	2. **The project provides opportunities for more residents to locate immediately adjacent to one of the San Diego region’s major retail centers, Fashion Valley Mall. Additionally, the Exemplary Hotel supports small businesses through locally-serving amenities.**
	3. **The aesthetic quality of the project greatly enhances the neighborhood character and transforms the existing hotel context to a walkable, bikeable, transit-accessible, mixed-use neighborhood. The project revitalizes the original character of Exemplary Hotel, one of the first hotels in Mission Valley, promotes an updated design aesthetic that celebrates its heritage while adding modern flair and character, and incorporates residential buildings to create a real neighborhood.**
1. ***Density and Smart Growth Techniques: To utilize density and smart growth techniques.***
	1. Does the site implement density and smart growth techniques that can support a mix of uses in the neighborhood?
	2. Does the project maximize or take advantage of the allowed density?
	3. Does the project add the absolute minimum additional parking spaces?
	4. Does the project utilize other smart growth techniques?

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

* 1. **The site implements compact development that strengthens the mixed-use character of the existing context (transit, retail, office, hotel) by adding multi-family, infill residential without increasing vehicle trips. The project will provide 840 dwelling units within a three minute walk of transit, on-site public park, and employment centers.**
	2. **The project provides the maximum allowable density given site constraints and design requirements per the Mission Valley Community Plan.**
	3. **The project provides the minimum amount of additional parking spaces. The existing site includes a total of 1,383 spaces. The total proposed parking is 2,031 spaces (856 spaces for the hotel and 1,175 spaces for the residential). The parking supply incurs a surplus of 65 spaces for the hotel and 112 spaces for residential. Tandem, valet parking for the hotel is utilized while on-street parking is maximized within the project boundaries. Additionally, parking reductions for mixed use development and adjacency to transit have been maximized per the City of San Diego regulations.**
	4. **The project utilizes other smart growth techniques in terms of building design and transportation demand management (TDM). The TDM strategies include:**
		+ **Provision of carpool/vanpool parking spaces in preferentially located areas (closest to building entrances)**
		+ **Provision of a charging station(s) for electric vehicles**
		+ **Provide up to 50% transit subsidy for 25% of the hotel employees for a period of three**
1. **years**
	* + **Ridesharing promotional materials, including the iCommute program.**
		+ **Promotional materials for “Guaranteed Ride Home” programs (provided by iCommute)**
		+ **Bicycle route and parking including maps and bicycle safety information**
		+ **Materials publicizing internet and telephone numbers for referrals on transportation information, materials provided by MTS and other publicly supported transportation organizations**
		+ **A listing of facilities at the site for carpoolers / vanpoolers, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians, including information on the availability of preferential carpool / vanpool parking spaces and the methods for obtaining these spaces.**
		+ **Bicycle storage for hotel employees. For hotel guests, free bikes will also be available for use**
		+ **Flexible work schedules to stagger arrivals and departures of hotel employees**
		+ **Continue to provide shuttle services to and from the San Diego International Airport for hotel guests.**
2. ***Mixed Use Opportunities: To reduce the need for additional car trips by providing mixed use opportunities within the development or community.***
	1. Does the project allow for the adequate and appropriate incorporation of housing, retail, commercial, or community services within the development?
	2. Does the project provide live-work opportunities either in the development or in proximity to workplaces within walking or biking distance?
	3. Does the development adequately incorporate onsite or adjacent open spaces, plaza, parks, or playgrounds?
	4. Does the development provide a mix of housing options or exist within walking or biking distance to a mix of housing options?

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

* 1. **The project fills a gap in the mixed-use context with new housing that has not existed in this location.**
	2. **Workplaces are available on site (hotel, restaurant, convention center), immediately adjacent and within Mission Valley (retail, office), and through transit connections (universities, healthcare, Downtown)**
	3. **The project creates a new park in a park-deficient community. Largely, the park will be passive in nature, focused on the river experience and natural habitats. A natural-material play area will be incorporated on the northwest corner of the property (Fashion Valley Road and Riverwalk Dr.). Urban plaza on the north east corner of the property that will act as a visual terminus for Fashion Valley Mall and as a stopping point along the River trail;**

Convenient access will be available to EXEMPLARY residents, FV Mall patrons, and users of the river trail.

* 1. **The project provides new stock of a mix of 840 multi-family units to include one, two- three, bedroom and even some walk-up/townhouse style homes.**
1. ***Building Design: To support positive interaction between the building and the street through human-scaled building design.***
	1. Are there aspects of the project’s design that incorporates human-scaled architecture through pedestrian-friendly design features?
	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?
	3. Does the design encourage interaction between the building interior and the sidewalk?
	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:*

* 1. **The project strives to create an environment scaled for the everyday user. Mixed-use buildings and residential buildings with active ground-floor design, transparency, and visibility to the street are important aspects of the building design. These design features encourage an attractive, comfortable pedestrian experience throughout the project area. The Ground floor design is oriented to sidewalks and walkways to encourage neighbor to neighbor interaction**
	2. **The project is committed to providing active ground floors as well as transparency at the ground level and above in order to maintain appropriate “eyes on the street,” a key CPTED principle. Balconies on upper floors allow added interaction and “eyes on the street” from above. The many accessible pedestrian routes throughout EXEMPLARY have high levels of visibility and are well connected to each other, as well as the buildings themselves.**
	3. **The design of the project encourages interaction between the building interior and the sidewalk wherever possible by providing many access points and opportunities to transition between buildings and the outdoor realm. Rather than placing the back of a unit towards the sidewalk, units are designed to be accessed from the public sidewalks as well as pedestrian paths throughout the project**
	4. **The project has many pedestrian access points, and provides a distinct connection point to the Fashion Valley Mall, as well as the San Diego River Path (which will run through the project). The project is barrier free and pedestrian access is encouraged. The public park and hotel pathways are designed to meet ADA requirements to increase universal access and connectivity from Hotel Circle North/Camino de la Reina to Fashion Valley Road**
1. ***Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: To provide safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.***
	1. Does the project provide bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure separated from vehicular traffic within the development and connecting to the outside community?
	2. Does the project accommodate bicycle and pedestrian connections and safety outside of the development site?
	3. Does the project incorporate adequate and secure bicycle storage that is convenient, safe and attractive for users?
	4. Are onsite driveways designed to prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist safety and convenience?

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

* 1. **The project provides bicycle and pedestrian paths separated from vehicular traffic within the development. The project specifically provides a greenways system throughout and provides a Class 1 bicycle facility through the site from Hotel Circle North to the San Diego River Path. The project improves the multi-use (ped. and bike) San Diego River Trail on both the north and south sides, including extension of the trail on the south side. Additionally, the project site’s pedestrian network will create stronger external and internal connections for residents and visitors, with the landscape design endeavoring to serve as an extension of the river’s natural environment. The existing pedestrian bridge over the river will be improved and enhanced to provide a comfortable and enjoyable connection between the project site, the new park, the river, the transit center, and the mall for both pedestrians and**
	2. **The project provides enhanced sidewalks along all public street frontage on Fashion Valley Road and Hotel Circle North. The project also provides Class II facilities on each of these roadways. The project also preserves space for a Class I facility based on SANDAG and the City of San Diego’s future planning.**
	3. **The project provides bicycle storage for hotel employees and bicycle racks throughout the neighborhood for the residential community. Residential bicycle parking is provided in private garages. The park areas will also provide shared bicycle parking adjacent to the San**

Diego River Path on the north and south sides. Free bikes will also be available for hotel guest use.

1. ***Bonus Points***
2. There are a wide variety of concepts and designs that support sustainable projects and encourage the use of transit and the MOVE Alliance 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 15 minimum points in the application. Bonus Points can be awarded 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.

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

Bonus 1

The project includes a range of housing options through a range of size options from studio to three bedroom condos, apartments, and townhome style units.

Bonus 2

The project does not generate any new net trips and potentially reduces VMTs by providing less parking than the existing use (down from 1,383 hotel spaces to 856 hotel spaces) and encouraging alternative modes of access for guests and employees. See 4.4 for expanded discussion on TDM strategies.

Bonus 3

The project meets its community park requirements on site and provides a 3.71 acre public park within a 3 minute walk of every residential unit. The project also encourages active transportation through its pedestrian connections and the larger connections that it is making by implementing regional bicycle planning and facilities.

Bonus 4

In addition to the new public park, the project places smaller greenways throughout the project that connect the hotel and residential neighborhood. This includes creating pedestrian-friendly gathering spaces that connect to on-site food and beverage amenities that are accessible from the San Diego River Path.