Seattle Green Factor
Improving livability and ecological function through landscaping standards

Dave LaClergue, Urban Designer
Seattle Department of Planning and Development
Overview

• Where did SGF come from?
• How does it work?
• Trends in built projects
• Resources
Precedent programs

• Berlin: Biotope Area Factor 1997. Applied to specific neighborhoods throughout the city.


• Seattle started with Berlin model, modified to reflect Seattle context.
How does the Green Factor work?

• Code requirement based on in weighted menu, sets minimum score

• Includes green roofs and walls, bioretention, and permeable paving

• Compliance required for permit approval, can “double-count” toward other requirements
Score sheet

- Applicant enters number and/or square footage of landscape features

- Score sheet multiplies each feature by a factor (from 0.1 to 1.0)

- Total divided by parcel size, translates to % or Green Factor score

- Favors layered plantings, right-of-way improvements, and “bonuses”
Where does Green Factor apply?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Minimum score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial &amp; Neighborhood Commercial</td>
<td>0.30 (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Commercial (in Urban Villages)</td>
<td>0.30 (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midrise and Highrise Residential</td>
<td>0.50 (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowrise Multifamily Residential</td>
<td>0.60 (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Downtown</td>
<td>0.30 (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union</td>
<td>0.30 (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Same scoresheet used in all zones where GF is required
## Qualifications to submit plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project size</th>
<th>Minimum designer qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10 housing units</td>
<td>Certified landscape designer, certified professional horticulturalist, licensed landscape architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20 new parking spaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;12K sq ft nonresidential development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;500 sq ft container plantings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects exceeding the thresholds above</td>
<td>Licensed landscape architect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Diagram of a building plan](image-url)
Trends in built Green Factor projects

- Higher quality, better-integrated landscape design
- Increased use of permeable paving, green roofs, and green walls
- More landscaping provided in/adjacent to rights-of-way
- Landscaping incorporated with on-structure amenity areas
tinyurl.com/greenfactor

- Score sheet & worksheet
- Plant and tree lists
- Landscaping Director’s Rule
- Landscape management plan template
- Case studies (landscape plans, photos, scoresheets)
- Rainwater harvesting calculator
- Research, explanatory reports, presentations