

American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to help Culver City

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For immediate release:



SDAT Team to arrive in early May

In November 2006, the City Council moved to proceed with the development of a Sustainable Community Plan. At that time, the Council also moved to submit a grant application to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Center for Communities by Design.

By early January, Culver City learned that it was one of eight communities nationwide to receive technical assistance under the Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program. So what does the SDAT grant consist of?

The SDAT community assistance program provides communities with six components:

- Preliminary/scoping visit
- Three-day visit from a multidisciplinary team
- A report highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the community with regards to sustainability, along with the opportunities and obstacles to change
- Consultations after the three-day visit
- One-day follow-up evaluation visit a year after the SDAT report is delivered

Once staff was notified that the City had been selected to participate, staff stepped into high gear to make preparations for the preliminary visit. As part of the application to the SDAT process, Culver City was asked to consider its assets and weaknesses and identify critical issues in which the City would like expert assistance.

SDAT representatives arrived in late February of this year and completed a reconnaissance mission in Culver City. Grace Perdomo and Ann Livingston, the AIA leads for the SDAT team, took a tour, met with local AIA members, met at a public meeting with the SDAT Steering Committee (which consists of eight City Commissioners and Sustainable Subcommittee members, Steve Rose and Carol Gross, and sat with Culver City's Interdepartmental Sustainable Green Team to discuss the project.

The SDAT multi-disciplinary team is scheduled to arrive May 6, 2007 when they will begin a three-day charrette hosted at the Veterans Memorial Building. The SDAT Team will tour the city, meet with local leaders and citizens, provide multiple opportunities to listen to the needs of the community facilitate roundtable discussions, and host public meetings.

At the conclusion of the visit, the SDAT Team will provide an assessment of the community's assets and challenges, offering preliminary recommendations and strategies for moving forward towards a more sustainable future via a community-wide public presentation. This is followed by a more formal written report to the community.

"Many communities want to become more sustainable but are immobilized by conflicting agendas, politics, personalities, or an overabundance of information," says Peter Arsenault, AIA, a national board member and SDAT volunteer. "Many communities don't really know what assets they have or have not yet examined their own policies in terms of how they affect their future." Still others, he notes, know the issues and even have a view toward their goals, but need help mapping out a plan to get there.

The community is invited to attend public meetings at the Veteran's Memorial Auditorium May 7 and 9 from 7:00 - 8:30pm..

For more information please contact Catherine Vargas, Environmental Coordinator (310) 253-6411.

To learn more about the AIA Center for Communities by Design or the SDAT program visit:

http://www.aia.org/liv_sdat

About the AIA Center for Communities by Design

The Center for Communities by Design is the clearinghouse for the American Institute of Architects' many activities—from promoting [sustainable design](#) to leading design based technical assistance projects in communities—that influence the quality of life in our nation's communities. The center is a nonpartisan forum that provides information, develops policy, creates partnerships, and assists in advocacy efforts to facilitate discussions of community design and inform choices for neighborhoods, cities, regions, and the nation.

About The American Institute of Architects

For 150 years, members of The American Institute of Architects have worked with each other and their communities to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings and cityscapes. AIA members have access to the right people, knowledge, and tools to create better design, and through such resources and access, they help clients and communities make their visions real. www.aia.org