The Sustainable Sites Initiative?

The most comprehensive system for developing sustainable landscapes, the SITES v2 Rating System, has been released by the Sustainable Sites Initiative(tm) for use by landscape architects, designers, engineers, architects, developers, policymakers and others who work in land design and development.

The SITES v2 Rating System and an accompanying Reference Guide provide a set of best practices, performance benchmarks and tools for creating and evaluating sustainable landscapes. Successful projects are recognized with certification.

Developed over seven years with input from hundreds of organizations and thousands of professionals, SITES v2 incorporates lessons learned from 100-plus pilot projects that field-tested the 2009 rating system.

SITES v2 resulted from the continued collaboration among the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the United States Botanic Garden, the American Society of Landscape Architects and a large group of technical volunteers.

The rating system uses progressive industry standards for landscape design incorporating recommendations from technical experts in the fields of soil science, botany and horticulture, hydrology, materials, and human health and well-being. Landscapes are considered sustainable if they reduce water demand, filter and reduce stormwater runoff, provide wildlife habitat, reduce energy consumption, improve air quality, improve human health, and increase outdoor recreation opportunities.

Negotiations are underway with the Green Building Certification Institute to provide project certification to the requirements and a related professional credentialing program for SITES v2.

Download the SITES v2 Rating System and related scorecard

USBG's Bartholdi Park will be a SITES v2 Project

Bartholdi Park's accessibility and irrigation have to be improved and so has been redesigned as a Sustainable Sites Initiative using SITES v2. It will continue to include a demonstration gardens for homeowners using SITES guidelines. Each demonstration will be a synergistic solution for dynamic and holistic systems that can be interpreted for the home gardener, helping improve garden design and maintenance practices nationwide.