

Santa Monica Mass Timber Accelerator Application Guide

Santa Monica has a reputation for being a leader in sustainability and innovation. The Mass Timber Accelerator is an opportunity to continue this tradition by bringing together City staff and the local building design, development, and construction community to explore opportunities for wood construction.

The Accelerator program goals are to:

- Identify the potential for cost savings and shorter construction timelines with the use of MT/CLT construction
- Raise public awareness of the embodied carbon reduction potential, economic benefits, and aesthetic beauty of MT/CLT construction
- Connect design teams and City actors interested in advancing use of MT/CLT
- Introduce more practitioners to the details and feasibility of MT/CLT construction
- Identify development opportunities resulting in new building and infrastructure projects in Santa Monica constructed with mass timber
- Assess workforce capacity and identify the potential for job creation through the expansion of MT/CLT construction

Program Description

The Santa Monica Mass Timber Accelerator program will competitively select up to five private development projects for funding and technical assistance. With technical support from WoodWorks, the selected development teams will explore the benefits and assess the feasibility of incorporating mass timber structural building materials and practices into their building projects.

The Accelerator is designed to provide selected teams with technical assistance and spaces for collaboration between other selected teams and City stakeholders to fully explore the benefits of mass timber and the best practices to realizing those benefits. Selected teams will participate in several milestone events over the course of the accelerator where they will provide project updates and discuss challenges and opportunities for using mass timber.

Selected applicants will receive a grant and technical assistance to support their work in the accelerator program. Grants awarded to selected teams will range from \$20,000 - \$50,000 or more. Grant recipients will be required to provide deliverables in line with the

amount of the grant. Example deliverables are listed below. An updated of deliverables will be identified in partnership with selected teams.

Example Grant Tiers and Accelerator Deliverables

Modest Support Level (\$20k)

- Quarterly narrative report that describes challenges and lessons learned in using and designing mass timber and the decision-making process when choosing the mass timber fabricator and installer including any estimates
- Project renderings
- Projected construction schedule with mass timber compared to equivalent steel or concrete building.
- Communications support, such as providing quotes for a press release
- Access to project during and after construction
- Attendance and participation in milestone events
- Written final report including analysis listed above, lessons learned, and plans or obstacles for moving forward with a mass timber design.

Moderate Support Level (\$33k)

- *All items above*
- Detailed drawings where mass timber was used
- Phone interviews with funders to support a case study (to be produced by the funders)

Advanced Support Level (\$50k+)

- *All items above*
- Whole Building LCA including DD-level designs of a functionally equivalent steel or concrete building
- Acoustics, fire, and vibration studies
- High-quality photos of the completed project (if/when completed)

Program Events and Schedule

Selected teams will participate in the following Mass Timber Accelerator activities.

Accelerator Kickoff Event

All project teams will participate in the initial kickoff event with WoodWorks advisors, City of Santa Monica staff, and program partners. The kickoff event will be an opportunity to introduce the program and selected teams, program partners, technical assistance providers, and set the framework for communication and key goals for the program.

Mid-Program Review

All project teams will participate in the Mid-Program Review where teams will present on project progress and discuss challenges and opportunities that they encountered while designing their building. Attendees will include WoodWorks staff, City of Santa Monica Staff, programs partners, and invited guests.

Final Review Event

All project teams will present their final mass timber project designs and applicable program deliverables, and share lessons learned through the accelerator program. Attendees will include WoodWorks staff, City of Santa Monica Staff, program partners, and invited guests.

Anticipated Program Timeline

- October 2025: Program Launch, Application Opens
- February 27, 2026: Application Closes
- March 2026: Participating Team Selection Made & Deliverables Finalized
- March/April 2026: Accelerator Kick Off Event
 - The date for this event will be determined by the participating teams and the City.
- Summer 2026: Mid-Program Review
 - The date for this event will be determined by the participating teams and the City depending on project status and team needs.
- Winter 2026/2027: Final Review
 - The date for this event will be determined by the participating teams and the City depending on project status and team needs.

Program Application Requirements

Applications must be for a single project located in the City of Santa Monica. Projects may consist of more than one building but should identify a prototypical building as the focus of the Accelerator program. Project teams may submit more than one project, but each project must be submitted as an individual application. It is anticipated that individual professionals and firms may participate on more than one project team.

Applications are to be submitted to the City of Santa Monica as a single, PDF-formatted document. Application focus and brevity will enable the Selection Committee to best understand and appreciate the merits of each proposal. Please provide all the following information in your application:

- Applicant Contact
 - Provide the personal name, phone number, email address, firm name, and firm address for the principal team contact. *All application and selection process communications will be with the Applicant Contact.*
- Project Name and Location
 - Projects must be located within the City of Santa Monica
- Project Planning and Permitting Status
- Team Description
 - Provide the firm name and lead representative for the primary project team disciplines including developer, architect, engineering, code, sustainability, cost estimating, and construction.
- Team Experience
 - Provide a brief description of the project team expertise and experience. There is no expectation of prior experience or expertise with mass timber construction.
- Project Description
 - Building typology and uses
 - Building characteristics including area (sf) and height (stories and feet)
 - Project planning and permitting status
 - Development illustrations including site plans, building plans, and elevations
 - Sustainability goals including LEED, carbon neutrality, and resiliency (if applicable)

- Mass Timber Statement of Interest
 - Provide a brief explanation of the project team's reasons for applying to the Accelerator program and for building with mass timber.

Selection Criteria

To assess and accelerate practice and market adoption, Accelerator grants will be awarded on a competitive basis with a goal of selecting new development projects representing a range of building uses, affordability, scales, and heights and based on the potential for successful integration of low-carbon mass timber building materials and practices into the proposed project.

Location

- Projects must be located within the City of Santa Monica to be eligible for selection.

Planning and Permitting Status

- Applicant projects should be in the early stages of planning and permitting with the capacity and sufficient project planning and design time to actively participate in the Accelerator program, fulfill Accelerator program requirements including fully assessing mass timber building solutions, and the potential to implement mass timber building practices.

Priority Building Uses, Typologies, and Heights

- Residential – large multifamily affordable and market rate housing
- Residential – medium multifamily affordable and market rate housing
- Six to seven stories (no podium / non-high rise building code)
- Eight stories plus
- Commercial – large office
- Institutional – large academic learning and residential/dorm
- Science / Technology (including labs)

Sustainability and Resiliency

- The Office of Sustainability & the Environment has identified low carbon mass timber construction as a critical emerging practice for reducing building construction material carbon emissions. Applicant projects should have an overarching commitment and approach to sustainable development and to reducing carbon emissions.

Implementation of Mass Timber Practices

- Applicant projects should have strong potential for implementing mass timber construction practices.

Application Submission

Applications are to be submitted by email with the subject line “**Mass Timber Accelerator**” to:

Peter Roquemore, Sustainability Analyst at: peter.roquemore@santamonica.gov

Application and Program Questions

Please submit any questions in writing by email to:

Peter Roquemore, Sustainability Analyst at: peter.roquemore@santamonica.gov