

# Guide to Certification: Homes

[Download pdf](#)

[Overview](#)

[Register](#)

[Verify](#)

[Review](#)

[Certify](#)

[Fees](#)

[Resources & Tools](#)

## Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification!

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your project. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED for Homes applies to single family homes, low-rise multi-family (one to three stories), or mid-rise multi-family (four to six stories); includes Homes and Multifamily Lowrise and Multifamily Midrise. [Learn more.](#)

LEED for Homes certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by selecting your team, completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Verify** your project milestones and achievements through the on-site verification process.
3. **Review.** Submit the necessary information, calculations and documentation to your Green Rater. Your LEED application is then reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

[Access resources](#) to get started on your project, or if you need assistance at any time, please [call or email us](#).

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## Register

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project has the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED.

Building projects pursuing LEED 2008 certification must:

- Be defined as a dwelling unit by all applicable codes - so every participating building must have a cooking area and a bathroom
- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Be a complete, permanent building:
  - A building cannot be partially certified. Single units in multi-family buildings cannot participate in LEED for Homes unless the entire building is registered to participate. Stacked attached homes, such as condominium flats, are considered to be multi-family buildings.
  - Every unit within a multi-family building must earn the same certification level (e.g. Silver, Gold).
  - Single-family side-by-side attached homes, such as row houses, are considered to be separate buildings

- Work with a credentialed LEED for Homes Green Rater

Building projects pursuing LEED v4 certification must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

For more information, LEED 2008 projects should read the [Scope and Eligibility Guidelines LEED for Homes - 2008 Version](#). LEED v4 projects should visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements and the Supplemental Guidance to the Minimum Program Requirements.

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system for your project using our Rating System Selection Guidance for [LEED 2009](#) or [LEED v4](#).

Now, onward to registration: visit [LEED Online](#), the online portal through which you will submit your application for certification, as well as access a variety of tools and resources, complete the registration information related to your project, submit payment and sign the certification agreement (the project owner must do this last one). Once you've finished, your project application will be accessible in [LEED Online](#).

From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

## Verification team roles

LEED for Homes requires on-site verification and performance testing - your Verification Team will provide these services for your project. Verification Team members are a great resource for you: they have worked on hundreds, if not thousands, of LEED for Homes projects, and can walk you and your team through the best way to incorporate the rating system requirements into your project's planning, design and construction. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **LEED for Homes Provider organization:** Your [LEED for Homes Provider Organization](#) will oversee the certification process. Provider organizations work with a network of Green Raters (below) and provide quality assurance of their verification services.
- **LEED for Homes Green Rater:** [Green Raters](#) provide the required on-site verification for LEED for Homes projects and complete the LEED for Homes Workbook (view a [sample](#)), the comprehensive tool that documents fulfillment of [LEED Credit Library](#) and prerequisites.
- **Energy rater:** The LEED for Homes rating system requires that the project is performance tested by a qualified energy rater. The Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) administers credentials and oversees the largest body of energy raters, called Home Energy Raters (HERS Raters). In many cases, your Green Rater may also be a qualified energy rater, or HERS Rater, and can provide you with both the required on-site verification and performance testing services. Your Provider and/or Green Rater can help you select a qualified energy rater.



You can begin by contacting either the Green Rater or the Provider directly; they work closely together. To find a LEED for Homes Provider Organization, visit the [Provider Directory](#). Another good way to find a Provider is through a Green Rater. With a growing network of Green Raters (see our [directory](#)), you'll be sure to find a Green Rater in your area who works with one of our Provider organizations. While it is not uncommon for the Provider to be located in a different city than the project, the Green Rater will be visiting your project site for a minimum of two visits - often more. It is most common and convenient to have a local Green Rater. If you register your project in [LEED Online](#) without a Verification Team identified, we will contact you to assist. It's very important to engage with your Verification Team as early in the process as possible and before construction begins.

Click [here](#) to view a detailed Verification Team Scope of Services. This document details the mandatory services that will be provided by your verification team.

### **Project Team Roles**

In addition to your LEED for Homes Verification team, you will also select project team members to work with you throughout the project process:

- **Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property associated with your project, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.
  - **Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).
    - **Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED submission is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time

## Important considerations

### Deadline for registration

We encourage you to complete the registration steps as early in the design process as possible, before you begin construction. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### Single buildings vs. multiple buildings:

A project is defined as a single building. For example, a development consisting of six single-family homes would be six projects, and a project consisting of three large multifamily buildings with 50 residential units each would be considered three projects. If you are working on multiple buildings at once, such as a group of multifamily buildings or a production home development, we offer **bulk registration** and **batch certification** to help streamline verification requirements and reduce cost.

### Identify your building type(s):

- **Single family attached:** Townhouse-style single family homes. Adjoining units are separated by vertical dividing walls.
- **Single family detached:** Stand-alone single family structures.
- **Multifamily lowrise:** Multifamily housing (apartments, condominiums, etc.) consisting of units that are separated by horizontal dividing walls so the units are stacked up to three conditioned stories above grade.
- **Multifamily midrise:** Multifamily housing (apartments, condominiums, etc.) consisting of units that are separated by horizontal dividing walls so that the units are stacked four or more stories (LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise, LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010). *Note: Buildings with four to five stories can use LEED Homes Multifamily Lowrise if they have 80 percent in-unit space OR, if they are required to use ENERGY STAR for Homes by a funding or incentive program.*

### Bulk registration:

Bulk registration allows you to register a group of buildings in a single registration, given that all buildings

in the bulk registration are:

- Under the responsibility of one builder/developer
- Located in a single country
- Pursuing certification under the same rating system (LEED for Homes v2008, LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010, LEED v4 BD+C:Homes or LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise)

#### **Batch Certification:**

Within a bulk registration group, you may submit multiple projects as a batch certification, given that all buildings in the batch certification:

- Meet bulk registration requirements
  - Are part of a single metropolitan area and within the same country. For metropolitan areas in the U.S. or Canada that cross state or province lines, a batch may consist of buildings in up to two states or provinces
  - Have the same project team and verification team
  - Are located in the same climate zone
  - Earn the same certification level
  - Utilize the “worst-case” set of LEED for Homes credits: this means if some units earn more credits than others, the batch is reviewed at the lower level of credits achieved.
  - *For LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010 only:* Have the same designer, builder, and subcontractors
  - *For LEED v4 BD+C: Homes and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise only:* Have the same designer and builder
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## **Verify**

Off to a good start? Great. In order to verify that your project is on track and properly achieving certain milestones and steps in the LEED for Homes certification process, you’ll need to participate in on-site verification throughout the design and construction process. On-site verification involves working with your Verification Team to arrange site visits and provide supplemental documentation when requested.

### **Preliminary Rating**

Integrative Project Planning Prerequisite 1.1 within the LEED for Homes rating system requires you to conduct a preliminary meeting with the Verification Team and key members of your project team early in the design process. As part of the meeting, you will create an action plan that identifies the following:

- The targeted LEED certification level
- The LEED for Homes credits that you have selected to pursue in order to meet the targeted award level
- The individuals accountable for meeting the LEED for Homes requirements for each selected prerequisite and credit

Communication with your Verification Team during construction is critical to ensure the Green Rater and energy rater visit the site at key milestones – your project team is responsible for scheduling these visits. Verification Teams follow the LEED for Homes Verification and Submittal Guidelines in order to adequately verify all prerequisites and pursued credits – you may wish to peruse these guidelines for reference.

### **Mid-construction verification visit**

LEED for Homes requires a mid-construction verification site visit, sometimes called the “pre-drywall” visit. During this visit, the Green Rater and energy rater will verify certain building systems that are only visible while the building walls remain open, such as efficient framing measures and installed ventilation ducting. Please note that this verification visit is mandatory for certification, and provides the Green Rater an opportunity to observe your project’s compliance with credit requirements that are fulfilled over time, such as construction waste management.

## **Final construction verification visit**

Once construction is complete, including landscape, the Green Rater and energy rater return for the second mandatory site visit. During this visit, the Green Rater verifies that you have met all remaining prerequisite and credit requirements, and the energy rater conducts the required performance testing.

## **Supplemental documentation**

Many prerequisite and credit requirements cannot be adequately verified through site visits alone. For those reasons, the Verification Team will ask to see appropriate documentation, such as project plans, material specifications, etc. Make sure to keep key documents on-hand and well organized!

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## **Review**

**Once your Verification Team has verified all prerequisites and pursued credits, the Green Rater is ready to submit the appropriate documentation to the LEED for Homes Provider for their quality assurance review. This occurs before your Provider submits your completed LEED for Homes Workbook for certification review to GBCI.**

Once your Provider has submitted your LEED for Homes Workbook, you will receive a prompt to pay the certification fees – once received, GBCI will begin your certification review. The Verification Team will participate in the review process with GBCI.

All LEED for Homes projects undergo a standard review, in which your Provider will submit your entire application (all credits and prerequisites) once the project is complete.

### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- Your Provider will first submit your completed application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review, pending further information or denied.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied or submit new or revised documentation, and/or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

### **Part 2: Final Review (optional)**

- The final review stage allows your Verification Team to submit supplementary information or amend/clarify the application. GBCI will review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review.

- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and submit for re-review (appeal).

### **Part 3: Re-review/Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)**

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal.

### **Optional pre-review**

The pre-review allows you to get feedback from GBCI during the design process, prior to submitting for certification review, and is available for the following model/credits only (if you'd like feedback on a different prerequisite or credit from GBCI prior to the certification review, please read up on how to file an inquiry, below):

- *As-designed energy model for LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010 and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise projects:* The pre-review will ensure that you will meet the minimum energy performance requirement and earn sufficient points. Once construction is complete, you'll need to submit an as-built version of the energy model to your Verification Team if any changes to the model have occurred.
- *Water Efficiency Credit 2.3 and Sustainable Sites Credit 2.5 in LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010:* Submit your "reduction in irrigation demand" calculations to confirm that your team has completed the calculation correctly and that the project is on track to earn the associated points, so long as you fully implement the strategies indicated in the pre-review.

All required documentation should be submitted to your Verification Team, who will then submit directly to GBCI.

### **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? [Contact GBCI](#) at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half (reduced from 20-25 business days to 10-12 business days per review phase). Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

### **Submitting an inquiry**

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) (unless you haven't registered yet – in which case, please reach out to [GBCI](#)) and should address only one credit or prerequisite. Here are your options:

## Important considerations

### Deadline for submitting for review

Your Provider will need to submit for review no later than two years after your project is substantially completed (the date on which your building receives a certificate of occupancy or similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use). If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please contact GBCI so that they can close your application and maintain accurate records.

### Appeals

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

- **Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and indicate the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted.
  - **LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our [searchable database](#).
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## Certify

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your certification is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final certification report. If you've achieved certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

Once you've accepted the final certification report, the project will be deemed "closed out" – meaning that you will no longer be able to appeal the certification level or review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final certification.

## Certification Levels

While all LEED certified projects are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED Certification that your project will receive.

Certification levels for LEED v4 BD+C: Homes and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise:

- LEED Certified™: 40-49 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 50-59 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 60-79 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 80+ points earned

Certification levels for LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010:

- LEED Certified™: 45-59 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 60-74 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 75-89 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 90+ points earned

## Promote your project

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your personal or business bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) for LEED-certified projects can help you do that. You'll also receive a formal certificate of recognition, and can choose to order LEED plaques and certificates. [Learn more.](#)

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership.](#))

## Project information: How USGBC handles your data

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### How is USGBC utilizing your project data?

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

Residential LEED-certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

### Project directory information

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address, with link to Google map
- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned

- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Project scorecard
- Rating system and version
- Builder name
- Builder type
- Builder organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in [LEED Online](#). All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it. We respect your privacy, and should you choose to retain your "private" project status, we will never share your confidential project information. Please note, confidential, or private LEED-certified projects are not authorized to use the LEED certification logos.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for achieving certification**

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Revocation of LEED certification**

Verification teams and GBCI reviewers work hard to ensure that any problems with a project application are discovered and resolved during the certification process. However, in rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the **Certification Challenge Policy** to ensure that all LEED project applications and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge. Click below to read the policy in its entirety.

This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbc.org](mailto:legal@gbc.org).

- 1.1 Certification Challenge Overview: All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI's evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.
- 1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge: GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints ideally should be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- 1.3 Initiation of a Certification Challenge: The GBCI President may initiate a formal investigation into the appropriateness of an award of certification to a particular project if the veracity or accuracy of the documentation supporting such award is called into question, or if GBCI's evaluation of such documentation is suspected to have been incomplete or flawed. A formal investigation will be deemed opened upon the date that GBCI sends written notice to the project owner that such investigation has been initiated. The investigation will remain open until a final determination is reached on such certification challenge. GBCI shall not publicly comment on an ongoing investigation prior to the forwarding of the final determination on such certification challenge to the project owner.
- 1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process: In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit.

No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

- 1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:
  1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
  2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement to notify GBCI if it disputes the findings and to provide a written response; and
  3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.
- 1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
  2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;
  3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
  4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.
- 1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination: If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request

for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

- 1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors: If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section,

the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

- **1.9 Revocation of LEED certification:** Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI

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## Fees

### **LEED certification provides an exceptional value for your money: So, how much will it cost to certify your project?**

- **Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee (discounted for USGBC Silver-level members and above) calculated on a per-project (building) basis that you'll pay up front at the time of registration. If we haven't received your payment within 60 days of your registration, we'll assume you changed your mind and go ahead and cancel the registration.
- **Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project (building) basis and based on the size of the project and the rating system under which the project is registered. Certification fees are due when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Remember, GBCI will not begin your review until payment in full has been received and cleared our system (thank you!). Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review.
- **Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED

certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

[Access the comprehensive fee chart »](#)

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## Resources & Tools

**USGBC offers a number of resources and tools to support you during the process of LEED certification.**

### General resources

[Credit Library](#)

[Addenda database](#)

[Pilot Credit library](#)

[Regional Priority Credit lookup](#)

[LEED Online](#)

### Homes specific

[LEED BD+C: Homes v4 | LEED BD+C: Multifamily Midrise v4 Verification and Submittal Guidelines](#)

[LEED for Homes v2008 Verification and Submittal Guidelines](#)

Reference Guide: [v2008](#), [v4](#)

Rating System Document (v2008): [Homes](#), [Home California](#), [Midrise](#), [Midrise California](#)

Checklist (v2008): [Homes](#), [Homes California](#), [Midrise](#), [Midrise California](#)

[LEED v4 for Homes and Midrise - Ballot Version](#)

[Checklist \(v4\)](#)

[Green Rater Directory](#)

[LEED for Homes Provider Directory](#)

[LEED v4 Homes and Multifamily Workbook](#)

[California T24 LEED v4 Homes and Multifamily Workbook](#)

[LEED for Homes: International market update](#)

[Summary of Changes: LEED 2008 to v4 — Homes and Midrise](#)

[Overview](#)

## Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification!

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your project. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED for Homes certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by selecting your team, completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Verify** your project milestones and achievements through the on-site verification process.
3. **Review.** Submit the necessary information, calculations and documentation to your Green Rater. Your LEED application is then reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [call or email us](#).

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[Register](#)

## Register

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project has the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED.

Building projects pursuing LEED 2008 certification must:

- Be defined as a dwelling unit by all applicable codes - so every participating building must have a cooking area and a bathroom
- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Be a complete, permanent building:
  - A building cannot be partially certified. Single units in multi-family buildings cannot participate in LEED for Homes unless the entire building is registered to participate. Stacked attached homes, such as condominium flats, are considered to be multi-family buildings.
  - Every unit within a multi-family building must earn the same certification level (e.g. Silver, Gold).
  - Single-family side-by-side attached homes, such as row houses, are considered to be separate buildings
- Work with a credentialed LEED for Homes Green Rater

Building projects pursuing LEED v4 certification must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

For more information, LEED 2008 projects should read the [Scope and Eligibility Guidelines LEED for Homes - 2008 Version](#). LEED v4 projects should visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements and the Supplemental Guidance to the Minimum Program Requirements.

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system for your project using our Rating System Selection Guidance for [LEED 2009](#) or [LEED v4](#).

Now, onward to registration: visit [LEED Online](#), the online portal through which you will submit your application for certification, as well as access a variety of tools and resources, complete the registration information related to your project, submit payment and sign the certification agreement (the project owner must do this last one). Once you've finished, your project application will be accessible in [LEED Online](#).

From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

### Verification team roles

LEED for Homes requires on-site verification and performance testing - your Verification Team will provide these services for your project. Verification Team members are a great resource for you: they have worked on hundreds, if not thousands, of LEED for Homes projects, and can walk you and your team through the best way to incorporate the rating system requirements into your project's planning, design and construction. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **LEED for Homes Provider organization:** Your [LEED for Homes Provider Organization](#) will oversee the certification process. Provider organizations work with a network of Green Raters (below) and provide quality assurance of their verification services.
- **LEED for Homes Green Rater:** [Green Raters](#) provide the required on-site verification for LEED for

Homes projects and complete the LEED for Homes Workbook (view a [sample](#)), the comprehensive tool that documents fulfillment of [LEED Credit Library](#) and prerequisites.

- **Energy rater:** The LEED for Homes rating system requires that the project is performance tested by a qualified energy rater. The Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) administers credentials and oversees the largest body of energy raters, called Home Energy Raters (HERS Raters). In many cases, your Green Rater may also be a qualified energy rater, or HERS Rater, and can provide you with both the required on-site verification and performance testing services. Your Provider and/or Green Rater can help you select a qualified energy rater.



You can begin by contacting either the Green Rater or the Provider directly; they work closely together. To find a LEED for Homes Provider Organization, visit the [Provider Directory](#). Another good way to find a Provider is through a Green Rater. With a growing network of Green Raters (see our [directory](#)), you'll be sure to find a Green Rater in your area who works with one of our Provider organizations. While it is not uncommon for the Provider to be located in a different city than the project, the Green Rater will be visiting your project site for a minimum of two visits - often more. It is most common and convenient to have a local Green Rater. If you register your project in [LEED Online](#) without a Verification Team identified, we will contact you to assist. It's very important to engage with your Verification Team as early in the process as possible and before construction begins.

Click [here](#) to view a detailed Verification Team Scope of Services. This document details the mandatory services that will be provided by your verification team.

## Project Team Roles

In addition to your LEED for Homes Verification team, you will also select project team members to work with you throughout the project process:

- **Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property associated with your project, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for registration

We encourage you to complete the registration steps as early in the design process as possible, before you begin construction. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### Single buildings vs. multiple buildings:

A project is defined as a single building. For example, a development consisting of six single-family homes would be six projects, and a project consisting of three large multifamily buildings with 50 residential units each would be considered three projects. If you are working on multiple buildings at once, such as a group of multifamily buildings or a production home development, we offer **bulk registration** and **batch certification** to help streamline verification requirements and reduce cost.

### Identify your building type(s):

#### Bulk registration:

Bulk registration allows you to register a group of buildings in a single registration, given that all buildings in the bulk registration are:

#### Batch Certification:

Within a bulk registration group, you may submit multiple projects as a batch certification, given that all buildings in the batch certification:

- **Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).
  - **Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED submission is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time
  - **Single family attached:** Townhouse-style single family homes. Adjoining units are separated by vertical dividing walls.
  - **Single family detached:** Stand-alone single family structures.
  - **Multifamily lowrise:** Multifamily housing (apartments, condominiums, etc.) consisting of units that are separated by horizontal dividing walls so the units are stacked up to three conditioned stories above grade.
  - **Multifamily midrise:** Multifamily housing (apartments, condominiums, etc.) consisting of units that are separated by horizontal dividing walls so that the units are stacked four or more stories (LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise, LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010). *Note: Buildings with four to five stories can use LEED Homes Multifamily Lowrise if they have 80 percent in-unit space OR, if they are required to use ENERGY STAR for Homes by a funding or incentive program.*
  - Under the responsibility of one builder/developer

- Located in a single country
  - Pursuing certification under the same rating system (LEED for Homes v2008, LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010, LEED v4 BD+C:Homes or LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise)
  - Meet bulk registration requirements
  - Are part of a single metropolitan area and within the same country. For metropolitan areas in the U.S. or Canada that cross state or province lines, a batch may consist of buildings in up to two states or provinces
  - Have the same project team and verification team
  - Are located in the same climate zone
  - Earn the same certification level
  - Utilize the “worst-case” set of LEED for Homes credits: this means if some units earn more credits than others, the batch is reviewed at the lower level of credits achieved.
  - *For LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010 only:* Have the same designer, builder, and subcontractors
  - *For LEED v4 BD+C: Homes and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise only:* Have the same designer and builder
- 

## [Verify](#)

### **Verify**

Off to a good start? Great. In order to verify that your project is on track and properly achieving certain milestones and steps in the LEED for Homes certification process, you'll need to participate in on-site verification throughout the design and construction process. On-site verification involves working with your Verification Team to arrange site visits and provide supplemental documentation when requested.

### **Preliminary Rating**

Integrative Project Planning Prerequisite 1.1 within the LEED for Homes rating system requires you to conduct a preliminary meeting with the Verification Team and key members of your project team early in the design process. As part of the meeting, you will create an action plan that identifies the following:

- The targeted LEED certification level
- The LEED for Homes credits that you have selected to pursue in order to meet the targeted award level
- 
- The individuals accountable for meeting the LEED for Homes requirements for each selected prerequisite and credit

Communication with your Verification Team during construction is critical to ensure the Green Rater and energy rater visit the site at key milestones – your project team is responsible for scheduling these visits. Verification Teams follow the LEED for Homes Verification and Submittal Guidelines in order to adequately verify all prerequisites and pursued credits – you may wish to peruse these guidelines for reference.

### **Mid-construction verification visit**

LEED for Homes requires a mid-construction verification site visit, sometimes called the “pre-drywall” visit. During this visit, the Green Rater and energy rater will verify certain building systems that are only visible while the building walls remain open, such as efficient framing measures and installed ventilation ducting. Please note that this verification visit is mandatory for certification, and provides the Green Rater an opportunity to observe your project’s compliance with credit requirements that are fulfilled over time, such as construction waste management.

## **Final construction verification visit**

Once construction is complete, including landscape, the Green Rater and energy rater return for the second mandatory site visit. During this visit, the Green Rater verifies that you have met all remaining prerequisite and credit requirements, and the energy rater conducts the required performance testing.

## **Supplemental documentation**

Many prerequisite and credit requirements cannot be adequately verified through site visits alone. For those reasons, the Verification Team will ask to see appropriate documentation, such as project plans, material specifications, etc. Make sure to keep key documents on-hand and well organized!

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## [Review](#)

## **Review**

**Once your Verification Team has verified all prerequisites and pursued credits, the Green Rater is ready to submit the appropriate documentation to the LEED for Homes Provider for their quality assurance review. This occurs before your Provider submits your completed LEED for Homes Workbook for certification review to GBCI.**

Once your Provider has submitted your LEED for Homes Workbook, you will receive a prompt to pay the certification fees – once received, GBCI will begin your certification review. The Verification Team will participate in the review process with GBCI.

All LEED for Homes projects undergo a standard review, in which your Provider will submit your entire application (all credits and prerequisites) once the project is complete.

### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- Your Provider will first submit your completed application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review, pending further information or denied.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied or submit new or revised documentation, and/or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

### **Part 2: Final Review (optional)**

- The final review stage allows your Verification Team to submit supplementary information or amend/clarify the application. GBCI will review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits,

and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review.

- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and submit for re-review (appeal).

### **Part 3: Re-review/Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)**

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal.

## **Optional pre-review**

The pre-review allows you to get feedback from GBCI during the design process, prior to submitting for certification review, and is available for the following model/credits only (if you'd like feedback on a different prerequisite or credit from GBCI prior to the certification review, please read up on how to file an inquiry, below):

All required documentation should be submitted to your Verification Team, who will then submit directly to GBCI.

## **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? [Contact GBCI](#) at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half (reduced from 20-25 business days to 10-12 business days per review phase). Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

## **Submitting an inquiry**

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) (unless you haven't registered yet – in which case, please reach out to [GBCI](#)) and should address only one credit or prerequisite. Here are your options:

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for submitting for review**

Your Provider will need to submit for review no later than two years after your project is substantially completed (the date on which your building receives a certificate of occupancy or similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use). If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please contact GBCI so that they can close your application and maintain accurate

records.

## Appeals

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

- *As-designed energy model for LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010 and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise projects:* The pre-review will ensure that you will meet the minimum energy performance requirement and earn sufficient points. Once construction is complete, you'll need to submit an as-built version of the energy model to your Verification Team if any changes to the model have occurred.
- *Water Efficiency Credit 2.3 and Sustainable Sites Credit 2.5 in LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010:* Submit your "reduction in irrigation demand" calculations to confirm that your team has completed the calculation correctly and that the project is on track to earn the associated points, so long as you fully implement the strategies indicated in the pre-review.
  - **Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and indicate the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted. /li>
  - **LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our [searchable database](#) .

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## [Certify](#)

# Certify

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your certification is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final certification report. If you've achieved certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

Once you've accepted the final certification report, the project will be deemed "closed out" – meaning that you will no longer be able to appeal the certification level or review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final certification.

## Certification Levels

While all LEED certified projects are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification

to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED Certification that your project will receive.

Certification levels for LEED v4 BD+C: Homes and LEED v4 BD+C: Multifamily Midrise:

- LEED Certified™: 40-49 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 50-59 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 60-79 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 80+ points earned

Certification levels for LEED for Homes v2008 and LEED for Homes Midrise Pilot v2010:

- LEED Certified™: 45-59 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 60-74 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 75-89 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 90+ points earned

## **Promote your project**

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your personal or business bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) for LEED-certified projects can help you do that. You'll also receive a formal certificate of recognition, and can choose to order LEED plaques and certificates. [Learn more.](#)

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership.](#))

## **Project information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

Residential LEED-certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

### **Project directory information**

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address, with link to Google map
- Date of registration
- Date of certification

- Certification level
- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Project scorecard
- Rating system and version
- Builder name
- Builder type
- Builder organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in [LEED Online](#). All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it. We respect your privacy, and should you choose to retain your "private" project status, we will never share your confidential project information. Please note, confidential, or private LEED-certified projects are not authorized to use the LEED certification logos.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for achieving certification**

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Revocation of LEED certification**

Verification teams and GBCI reviewers work hard to ensure that any problems with a project application are discovered and resolved during the certification process. However, in rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the **Certification Challenge Policy** to ensure that all LEED project applications and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge. Click below to

read the policy in its entirety.

This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbc.org](mailto:legal@gbc.org).

- 1.1 Certification Challenge Overview: All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI's evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.
- 1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge: GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints ideally should be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- 1.3 Initiation of a Certification Challenge: The GBCI President may initiate a formal investigation into the appropriateness of an award of certification to a particular project if the veracity or accuracy of the documentation supporting such award is called into question, or if GBCI's evaluation of such documentation is suspected to have been incomplete or flawed. A formal investigation will be deemed opened upon the date that GBCI sends written notice to the project owner that such investigation has been initiated. The investigation will remain open until a final determination is reached on such certification challenge. GBCI shall not publicly comment on an ongoing investigation prior to the forwarding of the final determination on such certification challenge to the project owner.
- 1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process: In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved

in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit.

No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

- 1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:
  1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
  2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement to notify GBCI if it disputes the findings and to provide a written response; and
  3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.
- 1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;
3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.

- 1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination: If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

- 1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors: If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as

Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section, the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

- **1.9 Revocation of LEED certification:** Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI

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## [Fees](#)

### **Fees**

### **LEED certification provides an exceptional value for your money: So, how much will it cost to certify your project?**

- **Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee (discounted for USGBC Silver-level members and above) calculated on a per-project (building) basis that you'll pay up front at the time of registration. If we haven't received your payment within 60 days of your registration, we'll assume you changed your mind and go ahead and cancel the registration.
- **Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project (building) basis and based on the size of the project and the rating system under which the project is registered. Certification fees are due when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your

documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Remember, GBCI will not begin your review until payment in full has been received and cleared our system (thank you!). Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review.

- **Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

[Access the comprehensive fee chart »](#)

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[Resources & Tools](#)

## Resources & Tools

**USGBC offers a number of resources and tools to support you during the process of LEED certification.**

### General resources

[Credit Library](#)

[Addenda database](#)

[Pilot Credit library](#)

[Regional Priority Credit lookup](#)

[LEED Online](#)

### Homes specific

[LEED BD+C: Homes v4 | LEED BD+C: Multifamily Midrise v4 Verification and Submittal Guidelines](#)

[LEED for Homes v2008 Verification and Submittal Guidelines](#)

Reference Guide: [v2008](#), [v4](#)

Rating System Document (v2008): [Homes](#), [Home California](#), [Midrise](#), [Midrise California](#)

Checklist (v2008): [Homes](#), [Homes California](#), [Midrise](#), [Midrise California](#)

[LEED v4 for Homes and Midrise - Ballot Version](#)

[Checklist \(v4\)](#)

[Green Rater Directory](#)

[LEED for Homes Provider Directory](#)

[LEED v4 Homes and Multifamily Workbook](#)

[California T24 LEED v4 Homes and Multifamily Workbook](#)

[LEED for Homes: International market update](#)

[Summary of Changes: LEED 2008 to v4 — Homes and Midrise](#)

# Guide to LEED Certification: Cities and Communities Pilot

[Download pdf](#)

[Overview](#)

[Register](#)

[Apply](#)

[Review](#)

[Certify](#)

## Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification for your project!

You're on your way to impacting and improving the performance of your city or community. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED for Cities and LEED for Communities certifications involve three main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply for precertification and/or certification** by submitting information for review through the [Arc](#) online platform and paying the associated certification fee.
3. **Review.** Your LEED application is reviewed by GBCI.

If you need assistance at any time, please contact [gbc.org/contact](http://gbc.org/contact).

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## Register

Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project is appropriate for LEED for Cities and LEED for Communities. Your project should:

- Have a managing entity
- Have a reasonable LEED boundary established
- Be used regularly by people

A project using LEED for Cities should register the entire city; a sub-section of a city can use LEED for Communities.

If you're not sure whether your project is appropriate for LEED for Cities or LEED for Communities, please contact [gbc.org/contact](http://gbc.org/contact).

Note: There are [separate guides](#) for the LEED Commercial, Homes, and Neighborhood Development rating systems.

To get started with your city or community project, you will use the Arc platform to provide registration information, submit payment and sign the services agreement. Once you've completed these steps, your

project will be accessible in Arc.

From here, you can assemble your project team and the data collection process begins!

## Project Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to perform certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **Owner:** The owner of the project is the person/managing entity who has authority to hold and control land or infrastructure or implement policy changes within the project boundary and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the services agreement. While there may be multiple managing entities for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the managing entity has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that GBCI will respond to the managing entity regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.
- **Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the managing entity to register the project and accept the services agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).
- **Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks and requirements. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED application is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

## Important considerations

### Precertification Review (optional)

You may choose to pursue precertification ahead of full certification if you'd like additional support and formal recognition up-front. Precertification involves sharing key project details and planning initiatives and preparing for performance tracking. Precertification sets you up for success in collecting performance data.

To pursue precertification ahead of full certification, you'll submit part of your application up-front (the precertification actions), and will receive two rounds of review. Once you've achieved a performance score of at least 40, you'll submit all of your remaining actions and performance data for full certification review.

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## Apply

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation.

Working with your project team, you will enter information into Arc to fulfill each of the required actions, including any supporting documents. You will also track data and enter it into the Arc platform. As you add data to Arc, you will receive a performance score. After providing annual data, if you have achieved a minimum score of 40, your project will be eligible for certification review.

Make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of all of your recorded data before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each action and check that you have included all required information, and open each file to verify that you have submitted the correct document.

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# Review

After paying the certification fee, your project will undergo review using the process described above in which GBCI checks your application for completeness and reviews your performance data for technical accuracy.

## Part 1: Preliminary Review

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with rating system requirements. During this stage, GBCI may reach out to you to discuss your project's approach and ask questions about your project's planning documents.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary Review Report within 20-25 business days, indicating which areas of the application have been approved and if further information is required.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, or prepare new or revised documentation before submitting for final review.

## Part 2: Final Review (optional)

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information or amend the application. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted information.
- GBCI will respond with a final Review Report within 20-25 business days, indicating whether the application is approved.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final or revise your application and resubmit for a supplemental (appeal) review.

## Part 3: Supplemental (Appeal) Review (optional)

- The supplemental (appeal) review stage provides an additional round of review and allows you to submit additional information or amend the application. GBCI will review the revised or newly submitted information and update the LEED Review Report accordingly. The fee associated with supplemental (appeal) reviews may vary depending on the level of complexity of the credit/prerequisite submitted for review.
- GBCI will respond with an updated LEED Review Report within 20-25 business days, indicating any changes to the precertification/certification approval status.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the supplemental review results as final, or submit for additional supplemental reviews. There is no cap on the number of supplemental reviews you can receive.

## Contesting a Review Ruling

If resolution of a technical issue related to a review ruling has not been achieved via GBCI's customer support channels and discussion with GBCI reviewers ([www.gbci.org/contact](http://www.gbci.org/contact)), GBCI has put in-place a Review Challenge Policy whereby a project team may challenge the accuracy of a review decision regarding the sufficiency of already submitted materials. Please refer to the [GBCI Review Challenge Policy](#) which outlines the process for doing so.

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## Certify

After successful review by GBCI, projects with a confirmed minimum performance score of 40 meet the requirements for certification. If you've met the requirements for certification, congratulations from all of us

here at USGBC and GBCI!

## **Certification Levels**

While all LEED-certified projects are a cut above the rest, projects are assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The performance score your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that you will receive.

- LEED Certified™: a verified score of 40-49
- LEED Silver®: a verified score of 50-59
- LEED Gold®: a verified score of 60-79
- LEED Platinum®: a verified score of 80+

## **Promote your project**

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world – and we do too! USGBC will reach out to you directly to showcase your achievement to the world and underscore your sustainability efforts.

## **Project information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your city/community's plans, strategies and insights, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC’s public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here’s a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

### **Project directory information**

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Project location
- Date of registration
- Date of initial certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned during certification
- Project scorecard
- Project type
- Project acreage
- Current performance score
- Performance score over time
- Performance tracking status
- Performance certification status
- Performance certification dates

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in LEED Online. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

Remember, projects that retain their “private” (or confidential) status after certification, may not be marketed or represented as LEED certified to the general public. Please carefully review of the [LEED Trademark Policy and Branding Guidelines](#) for more information.

## **Important considerations**

### **Revocation of LEED Certification**

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the [GBCI Certification Challenge Policy](#) to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. The certification challenge may include additional review of project documentation, the review of supplemental information, and/or a site visit. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and precertification, for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

### **Maintaining LEED Certification**

The journey doesn’t end with your project’s initial certification. Achieving LEED certification means that your project meets the high standards of LEED across its entire lifespan, not just at a single point in time.

Projects can track and record performance data for the required metrics in Arc on an ongoing basis, with the performance score updating along the way.

### [Overview](#)

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[Review](#)

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## **Part 3: Supplemental (Appeal) Review (optional)**

- The supplemental (appeal) review stage provides an additional round of review and allows you to submit additional information or amend the application. GBCI will review the revised or newly submitted information and update the LEED Review Report accordingly. The fee associated with supplemental (appeal) reviews may vary depending on the level of complexity of the credit/prerequisite submitted for review.
- GBCI will respond with an updated LEED Review Report within 20-25 business days, indicating any changes to the precertification/certification approval status.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the supplemental review results as final, or submit for additional supplemental reviews. There is no cap on the number of supplemental reviews you can receive.

## **Contesting a Review Ruling**

If resolution of a technical issue related to a review ruling has not been achieved via GBCI's customer support channels and discussion with GBCI reviewers ([www.gbci.org/contact](http://www.gbci.org/contact)), GBCI has put in-place a Review Challenge Policy whereby a project team may challenge the accuracy of a review decision regarding the sufficiency of already submitted materials. Please refer to the [GBCI Review Challenge Policy](#) which outlines the process for doing so.

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## [Certify](#)

# **Certify**

After successful review by GBCI, projects with a confirmed minimum performance score of 40 meet the requirements for certification. If you've met the requirements for certification, congratulations from all of us here at USGBC and GBCI!

## **Certification Levels**

While all LEED-certified projects are a cut above the rest, projects are assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The performance score your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that you will receive.

- LEED Certified™: a verified score of 40-49
- LEED Silver®: a verified score of 50-59
- LEED Gold®: a verified score of 60-79
- LEED Platinum®: a verified score of 80+

## **Promote your project**

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world – and we do too! USGBC will reach out to you directly to showcase your achievement to the world and underscore your sustainability efforts.

## **Project information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your city/community's plans, strategies and insights, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC’s public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here’s a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

### **Project directory information**

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Project location
- Date of registration
- Date of initial certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned during certification
- Project scorecard
- Project type
- Project acreage
- Current performance score
- Performance score over time
- Performance tracking status
- Performance certification status
- Performance certification dates

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in LEED Online. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

Remember, projects that retain their “private” (or confidential) status after certification, may not be marketed or represented as LEED certified to the general public. Please carefully review of the [LEED Trademark Policy and Branding Guidelines](#) for more information.

## **Important considerations**

### **Revocation of LEED Certification**

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the [GBCI Certification Challenge Policy](#) to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. The certification challenge may include additional review of project documentation, the review of supplemental information, and/or a site visit. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and precertification, for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

### **Maintaining LEED Certification**

The journey doesn’t end with your project’s initial certification. Achieving LEED certification means that your project meets the high standards of LEED across its entire lifespan, not just at a single point in time.

Projects can track and record performance data for the required metrics in Arc on an ongoing basis, with the performance score updating along the way.

# Guide to LEED Certification: Commercial

**BD+C, ID+C, O+M**

[Download PDF](#)

[Overview](#)

[Register](#)

[Apply](#)

[Review](#)

[Certify](#)

[Fees](#)

[Resources & Tools](#)

## **Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification for your project!**

*Updated Sept. 25, 2017*

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your project. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply** for LEED certification by submitting your completed certification application through and paying a certification review fee.
3. **Review.** Your LEED application is reviewed by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI).
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [contact us](#).

Note: Are you working on projects using LEED Volume? Check out our [LEED volume program supplement](#), which works in conjunction with this guide to give you a full picture of the LEED Volume Program.

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## **Register**

**Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.**

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project meets all of the LEED Minimum Program Requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED.

Building projects pursuing LEED 2009 certification must:

- Comply with environmental laws
- Be a complete, permanent building
- Use a reasonable site boundary
- Comply with minimum floor area requirements
- Comply with minimum occupancy requirements

- Commit to sharing whole-building energy and water usage data
- Comply with a minimum building area to site area ratio

Building projects pursuing LEED v4 certification must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

Visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements. LEED 2009 projects should also read the [Supplemental Guidance to the Minimum Program Requirements](#).

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system for your project using our guidance for [LEED v4](#).

The content in this guide applies to all LEED 2009 and LEED v4 commercial rating systems. For guidance on LEED Homes and Multifamily Midrise certification, visit the [Guide to Certification: Homes](#).

- LEED for Building Design and Construction (LEED BD+C) (please note that there is a [separate guide for Homes and Mid-Rise rating systems](#))
- LEED for Interior Design and Construction (LEED ID+C)
- LEED for Operations and Maintenance (LEED O+M)

Now, onward to registration. There are two online portals available for project registration, [Arc](#) and [LEED Online](#). Select the portal your project should use to register and pursue LEED certification based on the rules below.

- The following projects register directly on the Arc platform:
  - LEED for Cities
  - LEED for Communities
  - LEED v4 Operations and Maintenance projects that plan to use the Performance Score to LEED Certification ACP
- All other projects pursuing LEED certification register on the LEED Online platform.

In addition to registration, you'll also use the portal (Arc or LEED Online) to submit your application for certification, as well as access a variety of tools and resources, provide the registration information related to your project, submit payment and sign the certification services agreement (the project owner must do this last one). Once you've finished, your project application will be accessible.

From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

## Project Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to perform certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

**Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that GBCI (the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.

**Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent’s Authority Form](#).

**Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED application is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for registration

In order to optimize an integrated design process, which is a core part of LEED, we encourage you to register as early as possible – ideally, during the design phase for LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, and early in the planning and facility assessment phase for LEED O+M projects. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines](#).

### Precertification review

#### BD+C

This is an optional review pathway available for a fee for LEED BD+C projects using LEED v4 and LEED 2009 that is focused on your intended design and construction strategies. We offer precertification prior to a full certification application to help you determine which credits and prerequisites your project is likely to achieve during the full review, attract tenants, financiers, and even permitting benefits in certain localities. If you are interested in pursuing precertification, select this option after registration in [LEED Online](#) on the “timeline” tab. Achieve precertification by completing the LEED Precertification Worksheet that is provided in LEED Online and in the LEED Credit Library, marking prerequisites and credits as attempted, and submitting the project for review according to the process described below.

LEED BD+C precertification expires after three years.

#### O+M

LEED v4 O+M projects have the option of pursuing precertification and full certification using the Performance Score to LEED Certification ACP via the Arc platform. This option encourages all projects to measure and improve performance, focusing on outcomes from ongoing implementation sustainability strategies, via a streamlined and data-based pathway to LEED certification.

If the precertification option is selected prior to full certification, GBCI offers this option as an opportunity for a project to have their prerequisites and base credits reviewed prior to evaluation of the project’s performance. If you are interested in pursuing O+M precertification, complete all prerequisites, any attempted base points, set up performance tracking for energy, water, waste, transportation and human experience, and then select the precertification option when submitting the project for review. LEED O+M precertification expires after one year.

The application completion, review, and certification, follows the same procedures described in this guide. After successful review by GBCI, projects meeting the requirements of the Performance Score to LEED Certification ACP.

### Recertification (LEED O+M)

If your project has already been certified under LEED O+M, in order for your certification to remain current, we require you to recertify your project within five years of the previous certification. We encourage you to

register for recertification as soon as possible after achieving your initial LEED O+M certification. For more information, LEED 2008/2009 projects may view the [Recertification Guidance](#).

Remember, your project is eligible for recertification after 12 months and every 12 months thereafter; we encourage projects to update their certification regularly, and the [Performance Score to LEED Certification ACP](#) can be used to do this on an annual basis.

### Campus projects

If you are planning to bring more than one building located on a single shared site and under the control of a single entity (for example, a corporate or educational campus, government installation or commercial development) through certification, you may register your project as a campus or group project to streamline the documentation you'll need to submit for review. Please note, however, that individual building registration and certification fees apply to campus and group projects. Depending on the campus approach you select, you will pursue a slightly modified registration process, as compared to one-off project registration.



**Campus credit approach:** This approach enables you to streamline the documentation process by earning “campus credits” – prerequisites and credits that can be applied to all LEED projects on the master site. You will need to register a “master site,” which includes a general narrative of the overall campus projects and a schematic site plan, in addition to registering each individual project on the site.

If your team is pursuing this approach, be sure to document all campus credit information within the master site.

**Campus group project approach:** In this approach, you’ll register the group of projects on the site as a single LEED project that will then receive a single LEED rating and certification. To be eligible for this approach, LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C projects must be under the same construction contract and be constructed at the same time, and LEED O+M projects must be under the same ownership and management, share the same performance period and have substantially similar space types. For this approach, your team’s campus project documentation must demonstrate that the group of projects collectively meets the credit requirements using a “group credit.” You may use a campus group project certification independently or in combination with campus credits documented under a master site review, through the campus credit approach above.

For more information on submittal requirements for master sites, campus credit approaches, campus group

approaches, visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) and the [LEED Campus Guidance](#).

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## Apply

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation so that GBCI may review your project. Working with your project team, you will identify [LEED credits](#) to pursue and assign them to project team members. Your team will then collect information, perform calculations and analysis, and prepare documentation demonstrating your achievement of the prerequisites and your selected credits.

Once your application is prepared, upload your completed materials and make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of your entire application before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each form and check that you have included all required information, and open each file to verify that you have submitted the correct document. Cross-check credits and prerequisites to make sure that you have reported common data points, such as gross square footage, occupancy and total materials cost consistently. Want more tips? Here are some characteristics common among high quality submissions:

- Relevant prerequisite/credit information is clearly highlighted within the submission
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled
- Only required documentation is submitted (if only a few pages of a large report are needed to provide the required credit/prerequisite information, highlight the relevant sections only, no need to submit more!)
- Concise narratives are included to describe project-specific circumstances (these are really helpful for the GBCI reviewer)

All finished? Ready, set, submit! Don't forget to pay your certification review fee - and remember, your review will commence once your payment has cleared our system.

## Important considerations

### LEED O+M projects

If pursuing LEED O+M for the first time, you may choose to extend the performance period for any prerequisite or credit to a maximum of 24 months preceding your certification application, in case you need more time to establish performance. All performance periods must overlap and come to a conclusion within one month of each other. Please be sure to submit your completed application for review within 60 days of the conclusion of the performance period.

The recertification performance period includes the entire time since the previous certification and must be at least a year in length, but may be up to five years in length. You'll need to track and record building performance data throughout the entire recertification performance period.

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## Review

**After you've submitted your application and paid the certification fee, GBCI will conduct a thorough technical review. But don't kick back yet – you'll need to be an active participant throughout the process.**

While the type of review you'll undergo will vary depending on your sustainability goals, the specific needs of your project, and the rating system under which you are certifying (more on that below), the general

review process is the same:

### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and credits are awarded and which are marked as pending, with a request for more information.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, or prepare new or revised documentation or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

### **Part 2: Final Review (optional)**

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information requested by the reviewer during the preliminary review or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 25 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any awarded credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review was completed.
- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit for a supplemental (appeal) review.

### **Part 3: Supplemental (appeal) Review (optional, fees apply)**

- The supplemental (appeal) review stage provides an additional round of review and allows you to submit additional information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the previously denied or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with supplemental (appeal) reviews varies depending on the level of complexity of the credits or prerequisites submitted.
- GBCI will respond with an updated LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and attempted credits have been either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the supplemental (appeal) review results as final, or submit for additional supplemental (appeal) reviews. There is no cap on the number of supplemental (appeal) reviews you can receive.

### **Standard review (all rating systems)**

Through the standard review path, you will submit your entire application (all credits and prerequisites) once you've completed your project.

### **Split review (LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems)**

You may choose to pursue split review if you are certifying under a design and construction rating system. To do this, you'll submit part of your application at the conclusion of your project's design phase (design credits and prerequisites), and the rest at the conclusion of construction (construction credits and prerequisites), completing two phases of reviews. The split review is designed to help your team determine if your project is on track to achieve LEED certification at its preferred level. Please note that only credits and prerequisites identified as design credits can be submitted during the design review.

If any changes occur to the project after the design review that might affect the point total, approach or

credit/prerequisite compliance, those changes must be re-reviewed by GBCI. In these cases, documentation for the affected credits must be updated and submitted for one additional round of review during the construction phase.

## **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? [Contact GBCI](#) at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half (reduced from 20-25 business days to 10-12 business days per review phase). Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If your request can be accommodated, GBCI will confirm availability and provide an updated review schedule for your project.

## **Submitting an inquiry**

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or plan or as you're working through your LEED application. Here are your options:

**Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and indicate the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted. CIRs for LEED commercial projects are filed through LEED Online.

**LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our searchable [addenda database](#). [Contact us](#) if you'd like to submit a LEED Interpretation.

**Contesting a review ruling:** If resolution of a technical issue related to a review ruling has not been achieved via [GBCI's customer support channels](#) and discussion with GBCI reviewers, GBCI has put in place a Review Challenge Policy whereby a project team may challenge the accuracy of a review decision regarding the sufficiency of already submitted materials. Please refer to the GBCI Review Challenge Policy which outlines the process for doing so.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for submitting for review**

For LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, you will need to submit for your construction phase review (preliminary standard review or preliminary construction review) no later than two years after your project is substantially completed (the date on which your building receives a certificate of occupancy or

similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use).

LEED O+M projects are required to submit for review within 60 days of the end of their performance period.

If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please [contact GBCI](#) so that your application can be closed and accurate records maintained.

## **Campus projects**

We recommend that you complete the master site review prior to submitting any associated, individual or group projects for review, since the campus credits earned through the master site review will then become available to your individual or group projects associated with it. Review processes for the master site and the individual or group projects proceed as outlined above. You have the option to select standard or split reviews for design and construction rating systems.

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## **Certify**

Congratulations, it's time to accept your review results to confirm your LEED certification! Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final review report or request an additional supplemental (appeal) review.

Once you've accepted the final certification report, you will no longer be able to submit for supplemental (appeal) reviews, or contest review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites. Please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final certification.

## **Certification Levels**

While all LEED-certified projects and plans are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that you will receive.

- LEED Certified™: 40-49 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 50-59 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 60-79 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 80+ points earned

## **Promote your project**

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your business's bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) for LEED-certified projects can help you do that. You'll also have the option to order formal certificates of recognition, and can choose to order LEED plaques and certificates. [Learn more.](#)

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership.](#))

## **Project information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving

LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

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Here’s a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

#### **Project directory information**

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Rating system and version
- Owner type
- Owner name
- Owner organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type
- Recognition for reporting energy, water, waste, transportation and human experience performance data

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in LEED Online. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

Please note, confidential, or private LEED-certified projects are not authorized to use the LEED certification logos. Please carefully review the [LEED Trademark Policy and Branding Guidelines](#) for more information.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for achieving certification**

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they'll work with you on a solution for your project. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Maintaining LEED certification**

Remember, LEED 2009 and LEED v4 certified projects are required to track and report energy and water data, at a minimum, as described in LEED 2009 Minimum Program requirement 6 (Must Commit to Sharing Whole-Building Energy and Water UseData), LEED v4 EA prerequisite Building-Level Energy Metering and LEED v4 WE prerequisite Building-Level Water Metering.

All LEED projects have free access to Arc, a performance platform helping streamline this process.

Tracking and reporting waste, transportation and human experience performance is also encouraged for all projects – this is a way to showcase your project's continuing commitment to being a high performing building!

### **Expiration of LEED certification**

If you've earned certification for your LEED O+M project, you must recertify within five years of the previous certification.

### **Revocation of LEED certification**

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We've created the [GBCI Certification Challenge Policy](#) to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project's certification. The certification challenge may include additional review of project documentation, the review of supplemental information, and/or a site visit. In line with the policy, you'll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

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## **Fees**

**LEED certification provides an exceptional value for your money: So, how much will it cost to certify your project?**

**Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee calculated on a per-project (building) basis that you'll pay

up front at the time of registration. Rates are based on the fee schedule published at the time of registration.

**Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project (building) basis and based on the size of the project and the rating system under which the project is registered. Certification fees are due within 30 calendar days from when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Remember, GBCI will not begin your review until payment in full has been received and cleared our system (thank you!). Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review and cover both the preliminary and final reviews for either review path (standard or split review).

**Pre-pay:** Certification fees may be paid in advance. If certification fees are paid in advance, you will not be charged for the difference should a subsequent increase in fees occur. If your project increases in size, you will be charged any additional fees at the increased rate. If your project decreases in size, upon request, you will be refunded any fees at the rate at which you pre-paid.

**Square footage changes between design and construction review:** Additional design phase fees will apply if your project increases in size between the design and construction phases of review. This additional fee will be added to the construction phase certification fee invoice, and is calculated based on the added floor area and the fee schedule that was in place when the design application was originally submitted for review.

**Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

**Payment terms:** Invoices must be paid within 30 calendar days. A one-time extension of an additional 30 calendar days is available – please contact GBCI. If invoices are not paid within the required timeframe, they will be cancelled, and in subsequent requests for services, the invoice amount may change according to the prevailing fee schedule. Fees are non-transferrable. In the case of registration, non-payment may result in a cancellation of project registration.

**Member discounts:** [USGBC Silver, Gold and Platinum level member organizations](#) benefit from discounted LEED registration and certification fees. Discounts are available based on the membership status of either the owner or the project administrator for a given LEED project. Visit the fee charts page below for more information on available discounts.

[View all of the fee charts »](#)

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## Resources & Tools

**USGBC offers a number of resources and tools to support you during the process of LEED certification.**

### General resources

[Credit Library](#)

[Addenda database](#)

[Pilot Credit library](#)

[Regional Priority Credit lookup](#)

[LEED Online](#)

[Education @USGBC](#)

[Arc](#)

Legal agreements: [LEED Certification Agreement](#), [Confirmation of Agent's Authority](#), [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority](#), [Change of Owner Agreement](#)

## **BD+C specific**

### **LEED v4**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED 2009**

[Reference Guide](#)  
Supplements: [Healthcare](#), [Retail](#)  
Rating System Document: [New Construction](#), [Retail](#), [Healthcare](#), [Schools](#), [Core & Shell](#)  
Checklist: [New Construction](#), [Core & Shell](#), [Schools](#), [Healthcare](#)

## **ID+C specific**

### **LEED v4**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED 2009**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Retail Supplement](#)  
Rating System Document: [Commercial Interiors](#), [Retail](#)  
Checklist: [Commercial Interiors](#), [Retail](#)

## **O+M specific**

### **LEED v4**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED 2009**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

[Overview](#)

**Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification for your project!**

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your project. This guide will lead

you through the process.

LEED certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply** for LEED certification by submitting your completed certification application through [LEED Online](#) and paying a certification review fee.
3. **Review**. Your LEED application is reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify**. Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [call or email us](#).

Note: Are you working on projects within the LEED Volume Program? Check out our [LEED Volume Program supplement](#), which works in conjunction with this guide to give you a full picture of the LEED Volume Program.

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[Register](#)

## Register

**Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.**

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project meets all of the LEED Minimum Program Requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED.

Building projects pursuing LEED 2009 certification must:

- Comply with environmental laws
- Be a complete, permanent building
- Use a reasonable site boundary
- Comply with minimum floor area requirements
- Comply with minimum occupancy requirements
- Commit to sharing whole-building energy and water usage data
- Comply with a minimum building area to site area ratio

Building projects pursuing LEED v4 certification must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

Visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements. LEED 2009 projects should also read the [Supplemental Guidance to the Minimum Program Requirements](#).

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system for your project using our guidance for [LEED 2009](#) or [LEED v4](#).

The content in this guide applies to all LEED 2009 and LEED v4 commercial rating systems. For guidance on LEED Homes and Midrise certification, visit the Guide to Certification: Homes.

- LEED for Building Design and Construction (LEED BD+C) (please note that there is a [separate guide for Homes and Mid-Rise rating systems](#))

- LEED for Interior Design and Construction (LEED ID+C)
- LEED for Operations and Maintenance (LEED O+M)

Now, onward to registration: visit [LEED Online](#), the online portal through which you will submit your application for certification, as well as access a variety of tools and resources, provide the registration information related to your project, submit payment and sign the certification agreement (the project owner must do this last one). Once you've finished, your project application will be accessible in [LEED Online](#).

From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

## Project Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to fill certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

**Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property associated with your project, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.

**Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).

**Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED submission is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for registration

In order to optimize an integrated design process, which is a core part of LEED, we encourage you to register as early as possible – ideally, during the design phase for LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, and early in the planning and facility assessment phase for LEED O+M projects. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### Recertification (LEED O+M only)

If your project has already been certified under LEED O+M, in order for your certification to remain current, we require you to recertify your project within five years of the previous certification. Your project is eligible for recertification after 12 months and every 12 months thereafter, and we encourage you to register for recertification as soon as possible. For more information, view the [Recertification Guidance](#).

### Campus projects

If you are planning to bring more than one building located on a single shared site and under the control of a single entity (for example, a corporate or educational campus, government installation or commercial development) through certification, you may register your project as a campus or group project to streamline

the documentation you'll need to submit for review. Please note, however, that individual building registration and certification fees apply to campus and group projects. Depending on the campus approach you select, you will pursue a slightly modified registration process, as compared to one-off project registration.



**Campus credit approach:** This approach enables you to streamline the documentation process by earning “campus credits” – prerequisites and credits that can be applied to all LEED projects on the master site. You will need to register a “master site,” which includes a general narrative of the overall campus projects and a schematic site plan, in addition to registering each individual project on the site.

**Campus group project approach:** In this approach, you'll register the group of projects on the site as a single LEED project that will then receive a single LEED rating and certification. To be eligible for this approach, LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C projects must be under the same construction contract and be constructed at the same time, and LEED O+M projects must be under the same ownership and management, share the same performance period and have substantially similar space types. For this approach, your team's campus project documentation must demonstrate that the group of projects collectively meets the credit requirements using a “group credit.” You may use a campus group project certification independently or in combination with campus credits documented under a master site review, through the campus credit approach above.

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[Apply](#)

## Apply

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation via [LEED Online](#) so that GBCI may review your project. Working with your project team, you will identify [LEED credits](#) to pursue and assign them to project team members. Your team will then collect information, perform calculations and analysis, and prepare documentation demonstrating your achievement of the prerequisites and your selected credits.

[Once your application is prepared, upload your completed materials into LEED Online](#) and make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of your entire application before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each form and check that you have included all required information, and open each file upload to verify that you have uploaded the correct document. Cross-check credits and prerequisites to make sure that you have reported common data points, such as gross square footage, occupancy and total material cost

consistently. Want more tips? Here are some characteristics common among high quality submissions:

- Relevant prerequisite/credit information is clearly highlighted within the submission
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled
- Only required documentation is submitted (if only a few pages are needed to provide the required credit/prerequisite information, no need to submit more!)
- Concise narratives are used to describe project-specific circumstances (these are really helpful for the GBCI reviewer)

All finished? Ready, set, submit! Don't forget to pay your certification review fee - and remember, your review will commence once your payment has cleared our system.

## Important considerations

### LEED O+M projects

You may choose to extend the performance period for any prerequisite or credit to a maximum of 24 months preceding your certification application, in case you need more time to establish performance. All performance periods must overlap and come to a conclusion within one month of each other. Please be sure to submit your completed application for review within 60 days of the conclusion of the performance period.

The recertification performance period includes the entire time since the previous certification and must be at least a year in length, but may be up to five years in length. You'll need to track and record building performance data throughout the entire recertification performance period.

### Campus Projects

**Campus credit approach:** If your team is pursuing this approach, be sure to document all campus credit information within the master site.

**Campus group project approach:** For this approach, your team's group project documentation must demonstrate that the group of projects collectively meets the credit requirements using a "group credit." You may use our group project certification independently or in combination with campus credits documented under a master site review, through the campus credit approach above.

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## [Review](#)

## Review

**After you've submitted your application and paid the review fee, GBCI will conduct a thorough technical review. But don't kick back yet – you'll need to be an active participant throughout the process.**

While the type of review you'll undergo will vary depending on the specific needs of your project and the rating system under which you are certifying (more on that below), the process is the same:

### Part 1: Preliminary Review

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review, pending further information or denied.

- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, submit new or revised documentation, or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

## **Part 2: Final Review (optional)**

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 25 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review.
- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit, this time as an appeal.

## **Part 3: Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)**

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with appeals varies depending on the level of complexity of the credits or prerequisites involved in the appeal.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal. There is no cap on the number of appeals you may submit.

## **Standard review (all rating systems)**

Through the standard review path, you will submit your entire application (all credits and prerequisites) once you've completed your project.

## **Split review (LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems)**

You may choose to pursue split review if you are certifying under a design and construction rating system. To do this, you'll submit part of your application at the conclusion of your project's design phase (design credits and prerequisites), and the rest at the conclusion of construction (construction credits and prerequisites), completing two rounds of reviews. The split review is designed to help your team determine if your project is on track to achieve LEED certification at its preferred level. Please note that only credits and prerequisites identified as design credits can be submitted during the design review, and that your application must be submitted before your project is substantially completed.

## **Precertification review (LEED for BD+C: Core & Shell projects only)**

This is an optional review pathway available for a fee for LEED BD+C: Core & Shell projects that is focused on your intended design and construction strategies. We offer precertification to help your project attract tenants and help you determine which credits and prerequisites your project is likely to achieve during the full review.

## **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? Contact GBCI at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half (reduced from 20-25 business days to 10-12 business days per review phase). Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

## Submitting an inquiry

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) (unless you haven't registered yet – in which case, please reach out to GBCI) and should address only one credit or prerequisite. Here are your options:

**Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and indicate the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted.

**LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our searchable [addenda database](#).

## Important considerations

### Deadline for submitting for review

For LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, you will need to submit for your construction phase review (preliminary standard review or preliminary construction review) no later than two years after your project is substantially completed (the date on which your building receives a certificate of occupancy or similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use). LEED O+M projects are required to submit for review within 60 days of the end of their performance period. If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please contact GBCI so that they can close your application and maintain accurate records.

### Campus projects

**Campus credit approach:** We recommend that you complete the master site review prior to submitting any associated, individual or group projects for review, since the campus credits earned through the master site review will then become available to your individual or group projects associated with it. Review processes for the master site and the individual or group projects proceed as outlined above. You have the option to

select standard or split reviews for design and construction rating systems.

## Appeals

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

## Upgrading your version of LEED Online

We're constantly working to improve the LEED certification experience for you, and upgrades to [LEED Online](#) that provide a smoother user experience are a key part of those efforts. Check below to see which upgrades are available.

We recently launched LEED Online for Campus, created specifically for campus projects. If you're currently registered as such a project and utilizing LEED Online version 3, please contact GBCI and they will guide you through the process of re-registering in LEED Online for Campus. Once the upgrade has been completed, GBCI will issue a refund of the registration fee associated with the project that was cancelled out in LEED Online version 3. Unfortunately, if you've already submitted your campus project for review, you'll need to stick with the version of LEED Online that you registered with – your project cannot be transferred.

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## [Certify](#)

## Certify

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your certification is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final certification report. If you've achieved certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

Once you've accepted the final certification report, the project will be deemed "closed out" –meaning that you will no longer be able to appeal the certification level or review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final certification.

## Certification Levels

While all LEED-certified projects are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that your project will receive.

- LEED Certified™: 40-49 points earned
- LEED Silver®: 50-59 points earned
- LEED Gold®: 60-79 points earned
- LEED Platinum®: 80+ points earned

## Promote your project

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your business's bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) for LEED-certified projects can help you do that. You'll also receive a formal certificate of recognition, and can choose to order LEED plaques and certificates. [Learn more.](#)

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership](#).)

## **Project information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

### **Project directory information**

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Rating system and version
- Owner type
- Owner name
- Owner organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project's features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs

- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in LEED Online. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it. Please note, confidential, or private LEED-certified projects are not authorized to use the LEED certification logos.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for achieving certification**

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project.

[View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Expiration of LEED certification**

If you’ve earned certification for your LEED O+M project, you must recertify within five years of the previous certification.

### **Revocation of LEED certification**

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the Certification Challenge Policy to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

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This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbc.org](mailto:legal@gbc.org).

- **1.1 Certification Challenge Overview:** All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI’s evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly

demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.

- **1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- **1.3 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- **1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process:** In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit.

No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

- **1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:
  1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
  2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement;
  3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.
- **1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
  2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;
  3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
  4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.
- **1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination:** If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an actual or

apparent conflict of interest relating to the project.

If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

- **1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors:** If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section, the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written

briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

- **1.9 Revocation of LEED certification:** Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI.

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## [Fees](#)

### **Fees**

**LEED certification provides an exceptional value for your money: So, how much will it cost to certify your project?**

**Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee calculated on a per-project (building) basis that you'll pay up front at the time of registration. If we haven't received your payment within 60 days of your registration, we'll assume you changed your mind and go ahead and cancel the registration.

**Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project (building) basis and based on the size of the project and the rating system under which the project is registered. Certification fees are due when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Remember, GBCI will not begin your review until payment in full has been received and cleared our system (thank you!). Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review.

**Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

**Member discounts:** [USGBC Silver, Gold and Platinum level member organizations](#) benefit from discounted LEED registration and certification fees. Discounts are available based on the membership status of either the owner or the project administrator for a given LEED project. Visit the fee charts page below for more information on available discounts.

[View all of the fee charts »](#)

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[Resources & Tools](#)

## Resources & Tools

USGBC offers a number of resources and tools to support you during the process of LEED certification.

### General resources

[Credit Library](#)

[Addenda database](#)

[Pilot Credit library](#)

[Regional Priority Credit lookup](#)

LEED Online: [v4](#), [v3](#)

[Education @USGBC](#)

Legal agreements: [LEED Certification Agreement](#), [Confirmation of Agent's Authority](#), [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority](#), [Change of Owner Agreement](#)

### BD+C specific

#### LEED v4

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

#### LEED 2009

[Reference Guide](#)

Supplements: [Healthcare](#), [Retail](#)

Rating System Document: [New Construction](#), [Retail](#), [Healthcare](#), [Schools](#), [Core & Shell](#)

Checklist: [New Construction](#), [Core & Shell](#), [Schools](#), [Healthcare](#)

#### LEED v2.2

[Reference Guide](#) (New Construction)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

#### LEED v2.1

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

#### LEED v2.0

[Reference Guide](#) (New Construction)

[Reference Guide](#) (Schools)

[Reference Guide](#) (Core and Shell)

Rating System Document

Checklist

## **ID+C specific**

### **LEED v4**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED 2009**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Retail Supplement](#)  
Rating System Document: [Commercial Interiors](#), [Retail](#)  
Checklist: [Commercial Interiors](#), [Retail](#)

### **LEED v2**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

## **O+M specific**

### **LEED v4**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED 2009**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

### **LEED v2**

[Reference Guide](#)  
[Rating System Document](#)  
[Checklist](#)

# Guide to LEED Certification: Neighborhood Development

Version: LEED v4

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[Overview](#)

[Register](#)

[Apply](#)

[Review](#)

[Certify](#)

*This document includes guidance for LEED v4 Neighborhood Development projects. Looking for LEED 2009? [View](#) the policies and guidance for LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development.*

## **Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED v4 certification for your neighborhood development project or plan!**

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your community. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply** for LEED certification by submitting your completed certification application to Green Business Certification, Inc. (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) and paying a certification review fee.
3. **Review.** Your LEED application is reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [contact us](#).

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## **Register**

### **Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.**

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project or plan meets all of the LEED Minimum Program Requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED. LEED v4 ND projects must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

Visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements.

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system using our [Rating System Selection Guidance](#).

The content in this guide applies to:

- **LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Plan:** Registration for LEED v4 ND Plan is available for neighborhood-scale projects in any phase of planning and design with no more than 75% of the project's total floor area constructed. We designed this adaptation to help you market and fund your project among prospective tenants, financiers, and public officials by affirming your intended sustainability strategies. If your project is in the early conceptual phase (less than 100% of your project's total floor area has been entitled by the local governing authority), the project has the option of pursuing a letter of support review, prior to the plan review. This letter of support may be desirable to teams still working through the approvals process who wish to demonstrate an early commitment to LEED ND. Once the project is fully entitled, the project may pursue recognition as a LEED certified plan. Please refer to the [USGBC Trademark Policy](#) for more information on how to promote your LEED-certified or –registered plan.
- **LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Built Project:** Is your neighborhood-scale project near completion, or was it completed within the last three years? If so, you'll want to pursue LEED ND: Built Project certification. We consider a project substantially complete if the certificates of occupancy for buildings and acceptance of infrastructure have been issued by public authorities with jurisdiction over the project. A project may be registered under LEED v4 ND: Built Project at any time, but must be substantially complete before submitting for review. If your project previously earned LEED ND: Plan certification, this adaptation will help your team earn recognition for constructing the development to the level of sustainability indicated in your plan.

Note: If you are unsure about your project's rating system selection or LEED ND eligibility, you are encouraged to [contact us](#) for additional guidance.

Now, onward to registration: While functionality for LEED v4 is not yet live in [LEED Online](#), we have established an alternative process through which interested project teams can still register, document, and submit LEED ND applications to GBCI. If you are interested in learning more about this process, please [contact us](#) and specify that you are ready to register a LEED v4 ND Built Project or Plan.

After you have registered your project, the next step is to assemble your project team!

## Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to perform certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the land within the project boundary, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that GBCI will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.
- **Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to work with GBCI after the project is registered to send us a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).
- **Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED application is complete and

accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be assumed to be the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

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## Apply

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation for review by GBCI. Working with your project team, you will identify LEED credits to pursue and assign them to project team members. Your team will then collect information, perform calculations and analysis, and prepare documentation demonstrating your achievement of the prerequisites and your selected credits.

Once your application is prepared, submit your completed materials and make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of your entire application before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each form and check that you have included all required information, and open each file to verify that you have submitted the correct document. Cross-check credits and prerequisites to make sure that you have reported common data points, such as total project acreage, number of dwelling units, and nonresidential square footage consistently across your application. Want more tips? Here are some characteristics common among high quality submissions:

- Relevant prerequisite/credit information is clearly highlighted within the submission
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled
- Only required documentation is submitted (if only a few pages are needed to provide the required credit/prerequisite information, no need to submit more!)
- Concise narratives are used to describe project-specific circumstances (these are really helpful for the GBCI reviewer)

All finished? Ready, set, submit! Don't forget to pay your certification review fee - and remember, your review will commence once your payment has cleared our system.

## Important considerations

### Project boundary

One of the key elements of LEED ND projects and documentation is the LEED ND project boundary. Note that any changes to the boundary between reviews must be communicated to GBCI in advance of submitting for review and additional documentation and/or fees may be required.

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## Review

**After you've submitted your application and paid the review fee, GBCI will conduct a thorough technical review. But don't kick back yet – you'll need to be an active participant throughout the process. There are several different types of reviews that LEED ND projects may pursue:**

Note: When registering your project, you should always consider what its eligibility status will be at the time you submit for review. For example, if your project is not yet fully entitled, but will be by the time you submit for plan review, it's okay to register for LEED ND: Plan certification and complete your application

accordingly. The same is true for projects approaching substantial completion. They may register for LEED ND: Built Project and submit when ready.

#### **LEED ND Prerequisite Review: SLL & NPD only (Optional)**

The LEED ND prerequisite review is an optional review of the Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) prerequisites and/or the Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD) prerequisites. These prerequisites address the location of your project site, the avoidance of sensitive areas like wetlands and endangered species habitat, and the project's contextual site design and urban design criteria. This path is most beneficial if you are uncertain whether your project can meet the requirements of these prerequisites.

Note: Project information as detailed in the project information workbook and form must be provided to compliment documentation of the prerequisites.

#### **Letter of Support Review (Optional)**

If your project is in the early conceptual phase (i.e., less than 100% of project's total floor area entitled by the local governing authority), you may opt to pursue a letter of support review prior to a plan review. The optional letter of support review is designed to help your team gain support for the project during the local planning approval process.

#### **Plan Review**

If your project is fully entitled and up to 75% constructed (based on floor area), you can pursue LEED ND: Plan certification.

#### **Built Project Review**

If your project is substantially complete with all certificates of occupancy awarded, your project is eligible to pursue LEED ND Built Project certification.

#### **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? Contact GBCI at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half. Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

#### **Review process**

While the type of review you'll choose to pursue will vary depending on your sustainability goals, the specific needs of your project, and how far along in the development process the project is, the process for each of the reviews described in the section above is the same:

#### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days for most review options, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review and which

are denied pending further information.

- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, or prepare new or revised documentation or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

### Part 2: Final Review (optional)

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 45 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review.
- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit, this time as an appeal.

### Part 3: Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with appeals varies depending on the level of complexity of the credits or prerequisites involved in the appeal.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and attempted credits have been either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal. There is no cap on the number of appeals you may submit.

### Review Options

LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development: Plan	Letter of Support Prerequisite (SLL & NPD) Certification	Preliminary and final reviews available for all options
LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development: Built Project	Prerequisite (SLL & NPD) Certification	

### Submitting an inquiry

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or plan or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) and should address only one credit or prerequisite at a time. Here are your options:

- **Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and include the approved CIR within your

application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted.

- **LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our searchable [addenda database](#).

## Important considerations

### Deadline for submitting for review

LEED ND Plan projects are required to submit for review before greater than 75% of project floor area is complete. LEED ND Built Project projects must submit for review no later than three years after the project is substantially completed. If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please [contact GBCI](#) so that they can close your application, in order to maintain accurate records.

### Transition between Plan and Built Project

If your project has already been certified as a LEED ND: Plan and you're seeking an additional certification as a LEED ND: Built Project, you'll need to proceed through the registration process as though the project were being newly registered. Note: projects are limited to registering under versions of the rating system that are open for registration. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines](#).

### Appeals

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

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### Accepting your results

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your review results is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final review report. Once you've accepted the final review report, you will no longer be able to appeal the review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final review results. If you have completed a prerequisite review or letter of support review, we applaud you on setting yourself up on a path towards ND: Plan or ND: Built Project certification. If you've achieved ND: Plan or ND: Built Project certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

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## Certify

While all LEED-certified projects and plans are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that you will receive.

## Certification Levels

The number of points a project earns determines the level of LEED Certification that the project will receive.

- **LEED Certified™:** 40-49 points earned
- **LEED Silver®:** 50-59 points earned
- **LEED Gold®:** 60-79 points earned
- **LEED Platinum®:** 80+ points earned

## Promote your project

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your business's bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) can help you do that. You'll also have the option to order formal certificates of recognition. Teams that have earned ND: Built Project certification may also choose to order LEED plaques.

Note: the public relations guide will also describe how to talk publicly about your project if you have completed a prerequisite review or a letter of support review.

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership](#).)

### **Project Information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

Project directory information:

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address

- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Rating system and version
- Owner type
- Owner name
- Owner organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

## **Important considerations**

### **Deadline for achieving certification**

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project.

[View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Revocation of LEED Certification**

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the Certification Challenge Policy to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

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This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbci.org](mailto:legal@gbci.org).

- **1.1 Certification Challenge Overview:** All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI's evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.
- **1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- **1.3 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If

GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.

- 1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process: In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit.

No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

- 1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:
  1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
  2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement;
  3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.
- 1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings: If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;

3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
  4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.
- 1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination: If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an actual or apparent conflict of interest relating to the project.

If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will

contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

- **1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors:** If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section, the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

- **1.9 Revocation of LEED certification:** Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI.

## [Overview](#)

*This document includes guidance for LEED v4 Neighborhood Development projects. Looking for LEED 2009? [View](#) the policies and guidance for LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development.*

## **Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED v4 certification for your neighborhood development project or plan!**

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your community. This guide will

lead you through the process.

LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply** for LEED certification by submitting your completed certification application to Green Business Certification, Inc. (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) and paying a certification review fee.
3. **Review.** Your LEED application is reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [contact us](#).

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[Register](#)

## Register

**Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.**

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project or plan meets all of the LEED Minimum Program Requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED. LEED v4 ND projects must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

Visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements.

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system using our [Rating System Selection Guidance](#).

The content in this guide applies to:

- **LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Plan:** Registration for LEED v4 ND Plan is available for neighborhood-scale projects in any phase of planning and design with no more than 75% of the project's total floor area constructed. We designed this adaptation to help you market and fund your project among prospective tenants, financiers, and public officials by affirming your intended sustainability strategies. If your project is in the early conceptual phase (less than 100% of your project's total floor area has been entitled by the local governing authority), the project has the option of pursuing a letter of support review, prior to the plan review. This letter of support may be desirable to teams still working through the approvals process who wish to demonstrate an early commitment to LEED ND. Once the project is fully entitled, the project may pursue recognition as a LEED certified plan. Please refer to the [USGBC Trademark Policy](#) for more information on how to promote your LEED-certified or -registered plan.
- **LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Built Project:** Is your neighborhood-scale project near completion, or was it completed within the last three years? If so, you'll want to pursue LEED ND: Built Project certification. We consider a project substantially complete if the certificates of occupancy for buildings and acceptance of infrastructure have been issued by public authorities with

jurisdiction over the project. A project may be registered under LEED v4 ND: Built Project at any time, but must be substantially complete before submitting for review. If your project previously earned LEED ND: Plan certification, this adaptation will help your team earn recognition for constructing the development to the level of sustainability indicated in your plan.

Note: If you are unsure about your project's rating system selection or LEED ND eligibility, you are encouraged to [contact us](#) for additional guidance.

Now, onward to registration: While functionality for LEED v4 is not yet live in [LEED Online](#), we have established an alternative process through which interested project teams can still register, document, and submit LEED ND applications to GBCI. If you are interested in learning more about this process, please [contact us](#) and specify that you are ready to register a LEED v4 ND Built Project or Plan.

After you have registered your project, the next step is to assemble your project team!

## Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to perform certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the land within the project boundary, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#)), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that GBCI will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.
- **Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to work with GBCI after the project is registered to send us a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#).
- **Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED application is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be assumed to be the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

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[Apply](#)

## Apply

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation for review by GBCI. Working with your project team, you will identify LEED credits to pursue and assign them to project team members. Your team will then collect information, perform calculations and analysis, and prepare documentation demonstrating your achievement of the prerequisites and your selected credits.

Once your application is prepared, submit your completed materials and make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of your entire application before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each form and check that you have included all required information, and open each file to verify that you have submitted the correct document. Cross-check credits and prerequisites to make sure that you have reported common data points, such as total project acreage, number of dwelling units, and nonresidential square

footage consistently across your application. Want more tips? Here are some characteristics common among high quality submissions:

- Relevant prerequisite/credit information is clearly highlighted within the submission
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled
- Only required documentation is submitted (if only a few pages are needed to provide the required credit/prerequisite information, no need to submit more!)
- Concise narratives are used to describe project-specific circumstances (these are really helpful for the GBCI reviewer)

All finished? Ready, set, submit! Don't forget to pay your certification review fee - and remember, your review will commence once your payment has cleared our system.

## **Important considerations**

### **Project boundary**

One of the key elements of LEED ND projects and documentation is the LEED ND project boundary. Note that any changes to the boundary between reviews must be communicated to GBCI in advance of submitting for review and additional documentation and/or fees may be required.

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### [Review](#)

## **Review**

**After you've submitted your application and paid the review fee, GBCI will conduct a thorough technical review. But don't kick back yet – you'll need to be an active participant throughout the process. There are several different types of reviews that LEED ND projects may pursue:**

Note: When registering your project, you should always consider what its eligibility status will be at the time you submit for review. For example, if your project is not yet fully entitled, but will be by the time you submit for plan review, it's okay to register for LEED ND: Plan certification and complete your application accordingly. The same is true for projects approaching substantial completion. They may register for LEED ND: Built Project and submit when ready.

### **LEED ND Prerequisite Review: SLL & NPD only (Optional)**

The LEED ND prerequisite review is an optional review of the Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) prerequisites and/or the Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD) prerequisites. These prerequisites address the location of your project site, the avoidance of sensitive areas like wetlands and endangered species habitat, and the project's contextual site design and urban design criteria. This path is most beneficial if you are uncertain whether your project can meet the requirements of these prerequisites.

Note: Project information as detailed in the project information workbook and form must be provided to compliment documentation of the prerequisites.

### **Letter of Support Review (Optional)**

If your project is in the early conceptual phase (i.e., less than 100% of project's total floor area entitled by

the local governing authority), you may opt to pursue a letter of support review prior to a plan review. The optional letter of support review is designed to help your team gain support for the project during the local planning approval process.

### **Plan Review**

If your project is fully entitled and up to 75% constructed (based on floor area), you can pursue LEED ND: Plan certification.

### **Built Project Review**

If your project is substantially complete with all certificates of occupancy awarded, your project is eligible to pursue LEED ND Built Project certification.

### **Expedited review**

In a time crunch? Contact GBCI at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half. Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

### **Review process**

While the type of review you'll choose to pursue will vary depending on your sustainability goals, the specific needs of your project, and how far along in the development process the project is, the process for each of the reviews described in the section above is the same:

#### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days for most review options, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review and which are denied pending further information.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, or prepare new or revised documentation or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

#### **Part 2: Final Review (optional)**

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 45 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the preliminary review.
- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit, this time as an appeal.

#### **Part 3: Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)**

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with appeals varies depending on the level of complexity of the credits or prerequisites involved in the appeal.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and attempted credits have been either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal. There is no cap on the number of appeals you may submit.

#### Review Options

LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development: Plan	Letter of Support Prerequisite (SLL & NPD) Certification	Preliminary and final reviews available for all options
LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development: Built Project	Prerequisite (SLL & NPD) Certification	

### Submitting an inquiry

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or plan or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) and should address only one credit or prerequisite at a time. Here are your options:

- **Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and include the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted.
- **LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our searchable [addenda database](#).

### Important considerations

**Deadline for submitting for review**

LEED ND Plan projects are required to submit for review before greater than 75% of project floor area is complete. LEED ND Built Project projects must submit for review no later than three years after the project is substantially completed. If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please [contact GBCI](#) so that they can close your application, in order to maintain accurate records.

### **Transition between Plan and Built Project**

If your project has already been certified as a LEED ND: Plan and you're seeking an additional certification as a LEED ND: Built Project, you'll need to proceed through the registration process as though the project were being newly registered. Note: projects are limited to registering under versions of the rating system that are open for registration. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### **Appeals**

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

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### **Accepting your results**

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your review results is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final review report. Once you've accepted the final review report, you will no longer be able to appeal the review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final review results. If you have completed a prerequisite review or letter of support review, we applaud you on setting yourself up on a path towards ND: Plan or ND: Built Project certification. If you've achieved ND: Plan or ND: Built Project certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

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### [Certify](#)

## **Certify**

While all LEED-certified projects and plans are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that you will receive.

### **Certification Levels**

The number of points a project earns determines the level of LEED Certification that the project will receive.

- **LEED Certified™:** 40-49 points earned
- **LEED Silver®:** 50-59 points earned
- **LEED Gold®:** 60-79 points earned
- **LEED Platinum®:** 80+ points earned

### **Promote your project**

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your business's bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for

celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) can help you do that. You'll also have the option to order formal certificates of recognition. Teams that have earned ND: Built Project certification may also choose to order LEED plaques.

Note: the public relations guide will also describe how to talk publicly about your project if you have completed a prerequisite review or a letter of support review.

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership](#).)

#### **Project Information: How USGBC handles your data**

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

#### **How is USGBC utilizing your project data?**

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

Project directory information:

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Rating system and version
- Owner type
- Owner name
- Owner organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project's features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for achieving certification

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system's certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project.

[View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines.](#)

### Revocation of LEED Certification

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the Certification Challenge Policy to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

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This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbc.org](mailto:legal@gbc.org).

- **1.1 Certification Challenge Overview:** All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI’s evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly

demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.

- **1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- **1.3 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge:** GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.
- **1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process:** In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit.

No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

- **1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:
  1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
  2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement;
  3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.
- **1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
  2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;
  3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
  4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.
- **1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination:** If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an actual or

apparent conflict of interest relating to the project.

If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

- **1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors:** If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section, the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written

briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

- 1.9 Revocation of LEED certification: Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI.

# Guide to LEED Certification: Volume

## LEED Volume Certification Supplement

[Download pdf](#)

[Overview](#)

[Register](#)

[Precertify](#)

[Certify](#)

[Fees](#)

### Interested in pursuing LEED volume certification? Great.

This supplement to the Guide to LEED Certification will explain the basic process of LEED volume certification.

Certification through LEED volume certification involves three main steps:

1. **Get started** with LEED volume certification by applying for admittance, connecting with your new account manager and attending the required orientation after submitting the volume certification admission fee.
2. **Precertify** a prototype that can be applied across your building portfolio by submitting key documentation and the prototype fee in [LEED Online](#), and then participating in the review process.
3. **Certify** projects based on your prototype and participate in ongoing, quality-assurance audits.

If you need assistance at any time, please [contact us](#).

Note: Check out our [Guide to LEED Certification: Commercial](#), which works in conjunction with this guide to give you a full picture of LEED volume certification. The content in this guide applies to all LEED 2009 and LEED v4 volume prototypes and projects, regardless of prototype registration date. Learn about how the LEED Volume program can streamline your LEED certification process with "[Accelerating Portfolio Certification with LEED Volume](#)" on Education @USGBC.

Core and Shell projects require a special setup in LEED Online. Please [connect with us](#) before considering volume certification for these projects.

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## Register

### First, some background...

LEED volume certification is available for the following LEED rating systems:

- LEED for Building Design and Construction (LEED BD+C) not including Homes and Multifamily Midrise\*
- LEED for Interior Design and Construction (LEED ID+C)
- LEED for Operations and Maintenance (LEED O+M)

*\*As of August 2016, LEED Core and Shell may also pursue LEED volume certification.*

Before we dive in to the process for participating in LEED volume certification, let's review the basics behind how volume certification works.

Since LEED volume certification is designed to streamline certification processes and costs across an organization's building portfolio (while preserving LEED's rigor), it's based around a simple concept: **the prototype**. Participants in LEED volume certification complete precertification of a prototype, which is a conceptual building or framework that can then be applied across a group of projects that have major elements in common, and can therefore pursue a common set of credits (in a single LEED rating system).

After completing precertification, you can submit **volume projects** (the group of buildings or spaces that will ultimately earn LEED certification under a given prototype) using customized LEED documentation approved in the prototype. Some of these projects will receive a full review through the LEED volume certification audit process as a way to ensure the ongoing quality of the submissions.

## Getting started

Your first step to getting started with LEED volume certification is to apply for admittance. All volume certification participants are organizations that own, manage or lease real estate – however, please note that consultants, architects and contractors are not eligible. [Contact USGBC to learn more](#) and request an application.

Our team will work with you to complete the application, which calls for information about your organization, experience with LEED, and the potential set of projects you'll eventually submit for volume certification. This will allow us to determine if your organization is a good fit for this type of certification, and assess your readiness.

After you submit your volume application and it is accepted, you'll receive a dedicated USGBC account manager and a **portfolio** in [LEED Online](#), the web-based resource for managing the LEED documentation process, as well as access to a variety of tools and resources, including dedicated technical support. The portfolio is a group tool that allows you to track and organize prototypes and volume projects, in one place. Within LEED Online, all members of a portfolio's team will have access to prototypes and projects.

Next up? We ask that you complete an orientation program that requires you to review helpful guidance documents and participate in orientation. Your account manager will help you schedule your team's participation in one of the upcoming one-day volume certification workshops. While we only require a single representative from your organization to attend the in-person event, your program fee covers up to three attendees. We look forward to meeting you!

## Projects team roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to fill certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. You may have one person fill multiple roles. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **Portfolio Administrator:** The program-level management contact who is responsible for signing legal documents related to LEED certification. This individual must be employed by you (the volume certification participant).
- **Portfolio Manager:** The day-to-day contact person responsible for managing all the prototype submittals. We definitely recommend that this individual attend the in-person orientation. This individual can be contracted.

- **Portfolio Team Member:** The individual responsible for managing submittals for the volume project and for coordinating with the Portfolio Manager on the quality control and education processes. This individual can be contracted, as well.
- 

## Precertify

With orientation under your belt, you're ready to move forward with precertifying your prototype.

**Prototype precertification** is the process in which prototype standards are developed and reviewed prior to the implementation of volume projects. This phase of LEED volume certification includes registering and submitting the prototype in [LEED Online](#), at which point the Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will conduct a comprehensive review to ensure that it meets LEED volume certification requirements.

Ready to begin? To register for this phase, you'll need to submit the prototype fee and enter basic prototype information into [LEED Online](#). After completing registration, you may begin to assign team members in [LEED Online](#).

### Informal feedback

Volume prototypes and projects are held to all LEED requirements that are in place when the prototype is registered (rather than those that are in place when you pay the volume certification admission fee). In order to assist you in the prototype development process and give you an idea of what review teams look for, GBCI requests that you submit one to two prototype credits for informal feedback (not including [complex credits](#)) prior to submitting for full review. You'll send these credits directly to your account manager, who will then coordinate with your dedicated review team. GBCI targets returning informal feedback within 20 business days of receiving the credit documentation.

### Review process

Once you have incorporated the informal feedback and finalized your prototype documentation, you can submit your full prototype in [LEED Online](#). The review process follows the "standard review" process outlined in the [Guide to LEED Certification](#) and also includes the option for appeals, inquiries, and other aspects outlined in the [Guide to LEED Certification](#) (please note that expedited reviews are unfortunately not available for Volume prototypes). GBCI targets the delivery of the preliminary prototype review within 30 business days and the final prototype review within 20 business days.

To be eligible for precertification, your prototype must include all LEED prerequisites and enough credits to achieve certification at the LEED Certified™ level or higher. We'll refer to the prerequisites and credits included in a particular prototype as **prototype credits** throughout this document. Prototype credits must be earned using the same techniques, methods and management strategies across all volume projects.

### A few clarifications about prototypes:

- You may choose to have more than one prototype, depending on the diversity of your building portfolio.
- It's up to you how much variance occurs among the group of volume projects under a given prototype, but there must be enough uniformity to share a common set of prototype credits. Note that not all prototype credits need to be used by all volume projects.
- Some of the projects that you own or manage may not be suitable for a given prototype. These one-off projects may lack the uniformity needed to meet the prototype's criteria. In such cases, these projects

are best suited for the standard one-off LEED review process.

- For projects submitted under a LEED BD+C prototype, construction or renovations can begin only after the prototype has earned precertification.
- For projects submitted under a LEED O+M prototype and pursuing an initial certification, the performance period must include at least three months that are post-precertification. The performance period must also include at least three months that the project is under the volume participant's management. These two periods could happen concurrently. We strongly recommended that the performance period for all credits start after you achieve precertification.
- For projects submitted under a LEED O+M prototype and pursuing recertification, the performance period does not need to include three months that are post-precertification, however, the performance period end date of all credits cannot precede the prototype precertification date.

## **Submitting your prototype precertification application**

In order to complete your application, you'll need to provide documentation that addresses both the prototype credit strategies that you will pursue as well as the education, quality control and audit documentation that you will have in place to support these strategies. The format for these submittals is flexible to allow you to leverage your own organizational processes, tools and technology platforms as you facilitate LEED volume certification. For additional details regarding submittals, see the LEED Volume Program: Submittal Guidance, which your account manager will provide you.

Your precertification application consists of general and credit-level documentation.

The general submittals include a high-level overview of your organization as well as a quality control plan and education plan, which must show that you have the processes, tools, and education program necessary to deliver projects that consistently meet the LEED credit requirements.

The credit level submittals must include the following four components:

- Technical documentation demonstrates that the prototype meets the LEED credit requirements.
- The quality control process demonstrates the specific steps and tools that are in place to ensure that the LEED credit requirements are consistently met in the volume projects.
- The education process demonstrates that everyone involved in the process is properly educated on the required implementation steps for each credit.
- Finally, the audit documentation should identify sample deliverables that will be collected during a potential future audit to demonstrate that processes and procedures were followed.

Prototypes must ensure that related projects satisfy the requirements of all MPRs, prerequisites, and enough LEED credits to achieve certification along with all needed documentation.

### **Which prototype credits to include**

Prototypes are designed to be applied across a large number of buildings that, although very similar, may have specific nuances. For this reason, we offer you the flexibility to prototype as many credits that you believe are suitable for the group of volume projects under the prototype. We encourage you to consider the prototype credits as a catalog of offerings to utilize for your volume projects. Once you achieve precertification for your prototype, you can draw from this "catalog" and apply credits in various combinations to achieve LEED certification success in your volume project.

### **Which prototype credits not to include**

There are no requirements for how frequently a given prototype credit must be used on volume projects.

Rather, we encourage you to consider the frequency that you anticipate applying each credit when deciding whether or not to include a credit in the prototype precertification. For credits that you anticipate using less frequently, you may opt to leave them out of your prototype precertification and instead, supplement the prototype by using them as **individual credits** in unique circumstances. Individual credits incur an additional fee – you can learn more about them in the “Certify” section below.

#### **Want to use more than one credit strategy for your projects?**

For each prototype credit, you’ll (typically) submit only one **credit approach**: a complete package of credit documentation to support one of the cases, options, or paths outlined in the LEED credit requirements. Up to five additional credit approaches per prototype are included in the standard review of the prototype, but volume certification includes the flexibility to submit as many as you need during the initial review, for an additional review fee.

#### **Additional credits or changed credits**

You may experience unanticipated changes in the volume projects that you are certifying under a particular prototype – changes that affect the prototype credits and the path you pursue (changes of materials, construction methods, policy updates, etc.). If this occurs, please reach out to your account manager as soon as possible. If the changes affect the quality control process, audit documentation, credit options or paths, or the performance levels of the credits (in design and construction), then they are considered substantive changes that will require you to submit relevant documentation for a further round of precertification review for those credits. **Additional credits or changed credits** can be submitted for a prototype after the initial prototype is precertified, for a fee.

#### **Applicability of project credit interpretation rulings (CIRs)**

Unlike the standard certification program, under volume certification, there are two forms of CIRs. A formal inquiry pertaining to a prototype is referred to as a **prototype CIR**, which is applicable to the particular prototype for which it was submitted and all buildings in the participant’s portfolio where the technical approach is similar for the given prerequisite or credit. However, a **volume project CIR** is applicable only to the specific volume project for which it was submitted. Both types of CIRs may be submitted for a fee.

#### **Deadlines for prototypes and volume projects**

Volume prototype registration closes when individual project registration closes. Preliminary submissions for volume prototype precertification are accepted up to 12 months after this registration deadline. You must also achieve volume prototype precertification before any registered volume projects may submit for certification. Volume projects have an additional three years to register after the closure of registration of any LEED rating system - a benefit unique to this type of certification. Volume projects must submit for preliminary review by the sunset date for the version of the LEED rating system under which they are certifying.

Deadlines for volume prototypes and volume projects pursuing LEED 2009:

- The prototype registration closure for LEED v2009 was Oct. 21, 2016
  - Volume prototypes registered under LEED v2009 must be submitted for preliminary review by Oct. 31, 2017
  - Volume LEED v2009 projects must be registered and purchased by Oct. 31, 2019
  - Volume LEED v2009 projects must submit for preliminary review by June 30, 2021
-

# Certify

Once your prototype has achieved precertification (congratulations!), you're ready to enter the certification phase, at which point your volume projects can be certified using the prototype standards. During the certification phase, you can register and begin construction on your volume projects, and pursue certification for them using the prototyped standards and credits. For LEED EB: O+M prototypes, you may begin the performance period for your volume projects.

## Review process

The review process for this phase is slightly different than the review process outlined in the Guide to LEED Certification, since it relies on audits for quality control. Volume project reviews occur in two parts: the preliminary review, and a final review, in which the full audit documentation is reviewed for the first three projects and those thereafter randomly selected for audit. The audit process ensures that your volume projects are in compliance with LEED standards and verify that your quality control and education processes are working effectively.

### Part 1: Preliminary Review

- Note: please be sure to verify the accuracy of the volume project scorecard that you submit. This is a critical step in your process. The scorecard must reflect accurate credit achievement and a certification level that you have verified prior to submission.
  - You submit the project's basic information, LEED volume project scorecard and key metrics for a preliminary review in [LEED Online](#). Your application will be checked for completeness and compliance.
  - GBCI will respond with its preliminary review and offer of certification or notification of audit within five business days.
  - We ask that you accept the certification within 25 business days.

### Part 2: Final review of audit documentation (select projects only)

When a volume project is in the audit review process, subsequent volume projects will remain in a queue, and the review timeline for the subsequent volume projects of the same prototype will commence when the audit reviews for all preceding volume projects are finalized, including any appeals, additional credit reviews, remediation plans, and/or re-precertification.

- For volume projects that are selected for audit (including the first three volume projects that you submit, and a percent of randomly selected projects), you'll need to provide the full audit documentation (identified during precertification) within 15 business days.
- GBCI will respond with its audit review within 20 business days.
- Your team can either accept the review as final, if you are satisfied, or choose to appeal the results of the review. If GBCI has found that you have failed certain credits or prerequisites, we ask that you do not submit any additional volume projects until the audit review results are accepted.
- Multiple audit reviews may run concurrently. However, the first three audit reviews must be completed before subsequent audit reviews begin.

## Maintaining quality across volume projects

Audits are a key element of quality control throughout the volume process, helping to ensure that volume projects achieve the same rigorous standards as one-off projects that go through the traditional LEED certification process.

We want your volume projects to succeed and we will provide you with the guidance and expertise that will set you up for success. However, in certain instances, if a project has not successfully achieved a prototype credit that is submitted on a volume project scorecard, GBCI may deny these credits. You may pursue the standard appeals process, detailed above in the “Prototype precertification” section, for any denied credits. If GBCI determines through the appeals process that the volume project did indeed fail to achieve the credits in question, GBCI will remove the denied prototype credit from the prototype scorecard, and you are not eligible to apply the prototype credit to a volume project until you have precertified it again. You may precertify a denied prototype credit again using the process to add or revise credits noted in the “Additional or changed credits” paragraph in the “Precertify” section.

The following audit review outcomes will result in a failed volume project, requiring you to submit a remediation plan for a fee:

- Three or more denied prototype credits
- The failure of a prerequisite
- If the denial of one or more prototype credits reduces the total number of points awarded such that the project cannot achieve the level of LEED certification indicated on the volume project scorecard

In the subsequent remediation plan, you should identify the cause of the failure in the process and the steps you’ve taken to correct the failure before submitting any additional volume projects for certification. The remediation plan receives one review, for which GBCI targets delivery within 20 business days. Once your remediation plan has been reviewed and approved, for the next three volume projects that you submit for certification, GBCI will review the full audit documentation for all three projects. There is a fee associated with the remediation plan, which covers the report review as well as the review of the full audit documentation for those three projects.

In the event that the full audit documentation review of one of these three projects results in an additional failed volume project, the entire prototype will be suspended and you’ll need to complete the precertification phase again. Your volume project purchases are not forfeited when a prototype is suspended, however, you will not be allowed to submit a volume project for certification until the re-precertification process is complete, including payment of the prototype fee again. To re-precertify a prototype, you’ll need to provide full precertification submittals, including information on all prototype prerequisites and credits. It is up to you to determine what aspects of the prototype’s precertification submittals must change in order for you to correct the failure. Some components of the prototype’s technical documentation and management processes may not have contributed to the failure, so the information that you submit for re-precertification of these components can be the same documentation as you originally submitted.

Please note that if one of the aforementioned audit documentation review outcomes occurs in the first three projects submitted under a prototype, a remediation plan and fee is not required as long as you’re able to correct the failure in the process for future volume projects.

## **Individual Credits**

For a specific volume project, you may wish to submit additional credits not included in the prototype precertification, which we refer to as **individual credits**. Typically, these individual credits represent a small portion of the overall credits submitted with any volume project, since you’ll include the majority of credits

pursued as prototype credits. You should document individual credits using the standard LEED credit forms and supporting documentation, and indicate the individual credits you've pursued on the scorecard for preliminary review in [LEED Online](#). If the project is not selected for audit, the project will be returned to you to provide the individual credit documentation with an [invoice](#). You may then submit for final review and GBCI will respond within 20 business days. If the project is also selected for audit, the individual credit review will occur concurrently with the audit review.

## Project information

Please check out the Guide to LEED Certification for a full rundown of how USGBC utilizes project data. In addition to the project directory and other information we collect for all LEED projects, for volume certification participants, we also collect:

- Name of Volume participant
  - Number of projects pursuing LEED volume certification
  - Square footage associated with a participant's projects pursuing LEED volume certification
  - Prototype registration date
  - Prototype precertification date
  - Prototype precertification level
  - Prototype points earned
  - Prototype scorecard
  - Prototype rating system and version
- 

## Fees

### LEED volume certification provides an exceptional value for your money. So, how much does it cost to participate?

- **Program admission fee:** The program admission fee is a one-time fee due once you've been accepted into LEED volume certification. Payment is due before your team participates in the orientation workshop. Once you've submitted payment, the program admission fee unlocks access to your USGBC account manager, a portfolio account in [LEED Online](#), the orientation program (covers up to three attendees; please note that travel and lodging costs are not covered) and public recognition of your participation in LEED volume certification.
- **Prototype fee:** The prototype fee is issued once you register your prototype in [LEED Online](#), and payment is due before you submit your prototype for preliminary review. Your payment covers one credit approach per prototype credit, plus five additional credit approaches that can be applied across any of the credits in the prototype.
- **Volume projects fee:** Volume projects may be purchased in LEED Online – these are non-refundable and are not transferable between prototypes. The fee is due at the time of volume project registration.
- **Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

[View all of the fee charts »](#)

[Overview](#)

### Interested in pursuing LEED volume certification? Great.

This supplement to the Guide to LEED Certification will explain the basic process of LEED volume

certification.

Certification through LEED volume certification involves three main steps:

1. **Get started** with LEED volume certification by applying for admittance, connecting with your new account manager and attending the required orientation after submitting the volume certification admission fee.
2. **Precertify** a prototype that can be applied across your building portfolio by submitting key documentation and the prototype fee in [LEED Online](#), and then participating in the review process.
3. **Certify** projects based on your prototype and participate in ongoing, quality-assurance audits.

If you need assistance at any time, please [contact us](#).

Note: Check out our [Guide to LEED Certification: Commercial](#), which works in conjunction with this guide to give you a full picture of LEED volume certification. The content in this guide applies to all LEED 2009 and LEED v4 volume prototypes and projects, regardless of prototype registration date.

Core and Shell projects require a special setup in LEED Online. Please [connect with us](#) before considering volume certification for these projects.

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[Register](#)

## Register

### First, some background...

LEED volume certification is available for the following LEED rating systems:

- LEED for Building Design and Construction (LEED BD+C) not including Homes and Multifamily Midrise\*
- LEED for Interior Design and Construction (LEED ID+C)
- LEED for Operations and Maintenance (LEED O+M)

*\*As of August 2016, LEED Core and Shell may also pursue LEED volume certification.*

Before we dive in to the process for participating in LEED volume certification, let's review the basics behind how volume certification works.

Since LEED volume certification is designed to streamline certification processes and costs across an organization's building portfolio (while preserving LEED's rigor), it's based around a simple concept: **the prototype**. Participants in LEED volume certification complete precertification of a prototype, which is a conceptual building or framework that can then be applied across a group of projects that have major elements in common, and can therefore pursue a common set of credits (in a single LEED rating system).

After completing precertification, you can submit **volume projects** (the group of buildings or spaces that will ultimately earn LEED certification under a given prototype) using customized LEED documentation approved in the prototype. Some of these projects will receive a full review through the LEED volume certification audit process as a way to ensure the ongoing quality of the submissions.

### Getting started

Your first step to getting started with LEED volume certification is to apply for admittance. All volume

certification participants are organizations that own, manage or lease real estate – however, please note that consultants, architects and contractors are not eligible. [Contact USGBC to learn more](#) and request an application.

Our team will work with you to complete the application, which calls for information about your organization, experience with LEED, and the potential set of projects you'll eventually submit for volume certification. This will allow us to determine if your organization is a good fit for this type of certification, and assess your readiness.

After you submit your volume application and it is accepted, you'll receive a dedicated USGBC account manager and a **portfolio** in [LEED Online](#), the web-based resource for managing the LEED documentation process, as well as access to a variety of tools and resources, including dedicated technical support. The portfolio is a group tool that allows you to track and organize prototypes and volume projects, in one place. Within LEED Online, all members of a portfolio's team will have access to prototypes and projects.

Next up? We ask that you complete an orientation program that requires you to review helpful guidance documents and participate in orientation. Your account manager will help you schedule your team's participation in one of the upcoming one-day volume certification workshops. While we only require a single representative from your organization to attend the in-person event, your program fee covers up to three attendees. We look forward to meeting you!

## Projects team roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to fill certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. You may have one person fill multiple roles. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

- **Portfolio Administrator:** The program-level management contact who is responsible for signing legal documents related to LEED certification. This individual must be employed by you (the volume certification participant).
- **Portfolio Manager:** The day-to-day contact person responsible for managing all the prototype submittals. We definitely recommend that this individual attend the in-person orientation. This individual can be contracted.
- **Portfolio Team Member:** The individual responsible for managing submittals for the volume project and for coordinating with the Portfolio Manager on the quality control and education processes. This individual can be contracted, as well.

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## [Precertify](#)

## Precertify

With orientation under your belt, you're ready to move forward with precertifying your prototype.

**Prototype precertification** is the process in which prototype standards are developed and reviewed prior to the implementation of volume projects. This phase of LEED volume certification includes registering and submitting the prototype in [LEED Online](#), at which point the Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will conduct a comprehensive review to ensure that it meets LEED volume certification requirements.

Ready to begin? To register for this phase, you'll need to submit the prototype fee and enter basic prototype information into [LEED Online](#). After completing registration, you may begin to assign team members in [LEED Online](#).

## Informal feedback

Volume prototypes and projects are held to all LEED requirements that are in place when the prototype is registered (rather than those that are in place when you pay the volume certification admission fee). In order to assist you in the prototype development process and give you an idea of what review teams look for, GBCI requests that you submit one to two prototype credits for informal feedback (not including [complex credits](#)) prior to submitting for full review. You'll send these credits directly to your account manager, who will then coordinate with your dedicated review team. GBCI targets returning informal feedback within 20 business days of receiving the credit documentation.

## Review process

Once you have incorporated the informal feedback and finalized your prototype documentation, you can submit your full prototype in [LEED Online](#). The review process follows the "standard review" process outlined in the [Guide to LEED Certification](#) and also includes the option for appeals, inquiries, and other aspects outlined in the Guide to LEED Certification (please note that expedited reviews are unfortunately not available for Volume prototypes). GBCI targets the delivery of the preliminary prototype review within 30 business days and the final prototype review within 20 business days.

To be eligible for precertification, your prototype must include all LEED prerequisites and enough credits to achieve certification at the LEED Certified™ level or higher. We'll refer to the prerequisites and credits included in a particular prototype as **prototype credits** throughout this document. Prototype credits must be earned using the same techniques, methods and management strategies across all volume projects.

### A few clarifications about prototypes:

- You may choose to have more than one prototype, depending on the diversity of your building portfolio.
- It's up to you how much variance occurs among the group of volume projects under a given prototype, but there must be enough uniformity to share a common set of prototype credits. Note that not all prototype credits need to be used by all volume projects.
- Some of the projects that you own or manage may not be suitable for a given prototype. These one-off projects may lack the uniformity needed to meet the prototype's criteria. In such cases, these projects are best suited for the standard one-off LEED review process.
- For projects submitted under a LEED BD+C prototype, construction or renovations can begin only after the prototype has earned precertification.
- For projects submitted under a LEED O+M prototype and pursuing an initial certification, the performance period must include at least three months that are post-precertification. The performance period must also include at least three months that the project is under the volume participant's management. These two periods could happen concurrently. We strongly recommend that the performance period for all credits start after you achieve precertification.
- For projects submitted under a LEED O+M prototype and pursuing recertification, the performance period does not need to include three months that are post-precertification, however, the performance period end date of all credits cannot precede the prototype precertification date.

### Submitting your prototype precertification application

In order to complete your application, you'll need to provide documentation that addresses both the prototype credit strategies that you will pursue as well as the education, quality control and audit documentation that you will have in place to support these strategies. The format for these submittals is flexible to allow you to leverage your own organizational processes, tools and technology platforms as you

facilitate LEED volume certification. For additional details regarding submittals, see the LEED Volume Program: Submittal Guidance, which your account manager will provide you.

Your precertification application consists of general and credit-level documentation.

The general submittals include a high-level overview of your organization as well as a quality control plan and education plan, which must show that you have the processes, tools, and education program necessary to deliver projects that consistently meet the LEED credit requirements.

The credit level submittals must include the following four components:

- Technical documentation demonstrates that the prototype meets the LEED credit requirements.
- The quality control process demonstrates the specific steps and tools that are in place to ensure that the LEED credit requirements are consistently met in the volume projects.
- The education process demonstrates that everyone involved in the process is properly educated on the required implementation steps for each credit.
- Finally, the audit documentation should identify sample deliverables that will be collected during a potential future audit to demonstrate that processes and procedures were followed.

Prototypes must ensure that related projects satisfy the requirements of all MPRs, prerequisites, and enough LEED credits to achieve certification along with all needed documentation.

#### **Which prototype credits to include**

Prototypes are designed to be applied across a large number of buildings that, although very similar, may have specific nuances. For this reason, we offer you the flexibility to prototype as many credits that you believe are suitable for the group of volume projects under the prototype. We encourage you to consider the prototype credits as a catalog of offerings to utilize for your volume projects. Once you achieve precertification for your prototype, you can draw from this “catalog” and apply credits in various combinations to achieve LEED certification success in your volume project.

#### **Which prototype credits not to include**

There are no requirements for how frequently a given prototype credit must be used on volume projects. Rather, we encourage you to consider the frequency that you anticipate applying each credit when deciding whether or not to include a credit in the prototype precertification. For credits that you anticipate using less frequently, you may opt to leave them out of your prototype precertification and instead, supplement the prototype by using them as **individual credits** in unique circumstances. Individual credits incur an additional fee – you can learn more about them in the “Certify” section below.

#### **Want to use more than one credit strategy for your projects?**

For each prototype credit, you’ll (typically) submit only one **credit approach**: a complete package of credit documentation to support one of the cases, options, or paths outlined in the LEED credit requirements. Up to five additional credit approaches per prototype are included in the standard review of the prototype, but volume certification includes the flexibility to submit as many as you need during the initial review, for an additional review fee.

#### **Additional credits or changed credits**

You may experience unanticipated changes in the volume projects that you are certifying under a particular prototype – changes that affect the prototype credits and the path you pursue (changes of materials,

construction methods, policy updates, etc.). If this occurs, please reach out to your account manager as soon as possible. If the changes affect the quality control process, audit documentation, credit options or paths, or the performance levels of the credits (in design and construction), then they are considered substantive changes that will require you to submit relevant documentation for a further round of precertification review for those credits. **Additional credits or changed credits** can be submitted for a prototype after the initial prototype is precertified, for a fee.

### **Applicability of project credit interpretation rulings (CIRs)**

Unlike the standard certification program, under volume certification, there are two forms of CIRs. A formal inquiry pertaining to a prototype is referred to as a **prototype CIR**, which is applicable to the particular prototype for which it was submitted and all buildings in the participant's portfolio where the technical approach is similar for the given prerequisite or credit. However, a **volume project CIR** is applicable only to the specific volume project for which it was submitted. Both types of CIRs may be submitted for a fee.

### **Deadlines for prototypes and volume projects**

Volume prototype registration closes when individual project registration closes. Preliminary submissions for volume prototype precertification are accepted up to 12 months after this registration deadline. You must also achieve volume prototype precertification before any registered volume projects may submit for certification. Volume projects have an additional three years to register after the closure of registration of any LEED rating system - a benefit unique to this type of certification. Volume projects must submit for preliminary review by the sunset date for the version of the LEED rating system under which they are certifying.

Deadlines for volume prototypes and volume projects pursuing LEED 2009:

- The prototype registration closure for LEED v2009 was Oct. 21, 2016
- Volume prototypes registered under LEED v2009 must be submitted for preliminary review by Oct. 31, 2017
- Volume LEED v2009 projects must be registered and purchased by Oct. 31, 2019
- Volume LEED v2009 projects must submit for preliminary review by June 30, 2021

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## [Certify](#)

# **Certify**

Once your prototype has achieved precertification (congratulations!), you're ready to enter the certification phase, at which point your volume projects can be certified using the prototype standards. During the certification phase, you can register and begin construction on your volume projects, and pursue certification for them using the prototyped standards and credits. For LEED EB: O+M prototypes, you may begin the performance period for your volume projects.

## **Review process**

The review process for this phase is slightly different than the review process outlined in the Guide to LEED Certification, since it relies on audits for quality control. Volume project reviews occur in two parts: the preliminary review, and a final review, in which the full audit documentation is reviewed for the first three projects and those thereafter randomly selected for audit. The audit process ensures that your volume projects are in compliance with LEED standards and verify that your quality control and education processes are working effectively.

### **Part 1: Preliminary Review**

- Note: please be sure to verify the accuracy of the volume project scorecard that you submit. This is a critical step in your process. The scorecard must reflect accurate credit achievement and a certification level that you have verified prior to submission.
  - You submit the project's basic information, LEED volume project scorecard and key metrics for a preliminary review in [LEED Online](#). Your application will be checked for completeness and compliance.
  - GBCI will respond with its preliminary review and offer of certification or notification of audit within five business days.
  - We ask that you accept the certification within 25 business days.

### **Part 2: Final review of audit documentation (select projects only)**

When a volume project is in the audit review process, subsequent volume projects will remain in a queue, and the review timeline for the subsequent volume projects of the same prototype will commence when the audit reviews for all preceding volume projects are finalized, including any appeals, additional credit reviews, remediation plans, and/or re-precertification.

- For volume projects that are selected for audit (including the first three volume projects that you submit, and a percent of randomly selected projects), you'll need to provide the full audit documentation (identified during precertification) within 15 business days.
- GBCI will respond with its audit review within 20 business days.
- Your team can either accept the review as final, if you are satisfied, or choose to appeal the results of the review. If GBCI has found that you have failed certain credits or prerequisites, we ask that you do not submit any additional volume projects until the audit review results are accepted.
- Multiple audit reviews may run concurrently. However, the first three audit reviews must be completed before subsequent audit reviews begin.

### **Maintaining quality across volume projects**

Audits are a key element of quality control throughout the volume process, helping to ensure that volume projects achieve the same rigorous standards as one-off projects that go through the traditional LEED certification process.

We want your volume projects to succeed and we will provide you with the guidance and expertise that will set you up for success. However, in certain instances, if a project has not successfully achieved a prototype credit that is submitted on a volume project scorecard, GBCI may deny these credits. You may pursue the standard appeals process, detailed above in the “Prototype precertification” section, for any denied credits. If GBCI determines through the appeals process that the volume project did indeed fail to achieve the credits in question, GBCI will remove the denied prototype credit from the prototype scorecard, and you are not eligible to apply the prototype credit to a volume project until you have precertified it again. You may precertify a denied prototype credit again using the process to add or revise credits noted in the “Additional or changed credits” paragraph in the “Precertify” section.

The following audit review outcomes will result in a failed volume project, requiring you to submit a remediation plan for a fee:

- Three or more denied prototype credits
- The failure of a prerequisite
- If the denial of one or more prototype credits reduces the total number of points awarded such that the project cannot achieve the level of LEED certification indicated on the volume project scorecard

In the subsequent remediation plan, you should identify the cause of the failure in the process and the steps you’ve taken to correct the failure before submitting any additional volume projects for certification. The remediation plan receives one review, for which GBCI targets delivery within 20 business days. Once your remediation plan has been reviewed and approved, for the next three volume projects that you submit for certification, GBCI will review the full audit documentation for all three projects. There is a fee associated with the remediation plan, which covers the report review as well as the review of the full audit documentation for those three projects.

In the event that the full audit documentation review of one of these three projects results in an additional failed volume project, the entire prototype will be suspended and you’ll need to complete the precertification phase again. Your volume project purchases are not forfeited when a prototype is suspended, however, you will not be allowed to submit a volume project for certification until the re-precertification process is complete, including payment of the prototype fee again. To re-precertify a prototype, you’ll need to provide full precertification submittals, including information on all prototype prerequisites and credits. It is up to you to determine what aspects of the prototype’s precertification submittals must change in order for you to correct the failure. Some components of the prototype’s technical documentation and management processes may not have contributed to the failure, so the information that you submit for re-precertification of these components can be the same documentation as you originally submitted.

Please note that if one of the aforementioned audit documentation review outcomes occurs in the first three projects submitted under a prototype, a remediation plan and fee is not required as long as you’re able to correct the failure in the process for future volume projects.

## **Individual Credits**

For a specific volume project, you may wish to submit additional credits not included in the prototype precertification, which we refer to as **individual credits**. Typically, these individual credits represent a small portion of the overall credits submitted with any volume project, since you’ll include the majority of credits pursued as prototype credits. You should document individual credits using the standard LEED credit forms and supporting documentation, and indicate the individual credits you’ve pursued on the scorecard for preliminary review in [LEED Online](#). If the project is not selected for audit, the project will be returned to you to provide the individual credit documentation with an [invoice](#). You may then submit for final review

and GBCI will respond within 20 business days. If the project is also selected for audit, the individual credit review will occur concurrently with the audit review.

## Project information

Please check out the Guide to LEED Certification for a full rundown of how USGBC utilizes project data. In addition to the project directory and other information we collect for all LEED projects, for volume certification participants, we also collect:

- Name of Volume participant
- Number of projects pursuing LEED volume certification
- Square footage associated with a participant's projects pursuing LEED volume certification
- Prototype registration date
- Prototype precertification date
- Prototype precertification level
- Prototype points earned
- Prototype scorecard
- Prototype rating system and version

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## [Fees](#)

## Fees

### **LEED volume certification provides an exceptional value for your money. So, how much does it cost to participate?**

- **Program admission fee:** The program admission fee is a one-time fee due once you've been accepted into LEED volume certification. Payment is due before your team participates in the orientation workshop. Once you've submitted payment, the program admission fee unlocks access to your USGBC account manager, a portfolio account in [LEED Online](#), the orientation program (covers up to three attendees; please note that travel and lodging costs are not covered) and public recognition of your participation in LEED volume certification.
- **Prototype fee:** The prototype fee is issued once you register your prototype in [LEED Online](#), and payment is due before you submit your prototype for preliminary review. Your payment covers one credit approach per prototype credit, plus five additional credit approaches that can be applied across any of the credits in the prototype.
- **Volume projects fee:** Volume projects may be purchased in LEED Online – these are non-refundable and are not transferable between prototypes. The fee is due at the time of volume project registration.
- **Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

[View all of the fee charts »](#)

# LEED Certification Deadlines

## LEED Certification Deadlines

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### LEED Certification Deadlines

As new versions of the LEED rating systems are introduced, earlier versions are phased out so that we are constantly pushing for the transformation we aspire to.

At any given point, LEED rating systems are either:

- Open for registration and certification, or
- Closed for registration, but open for certification, or
- Closed for registration and certification (sunset)

**How long do you have to register or certify?** Use the table below to find the registration and certification deadlines for all LEED rating systems. Learn more about LEED deadlines in the [Guide to LEED Certification](#) for Commercial projects or Homes.

Projects pursuing LEED volume certification, should also reference the [Guide to LEED Certification: Volume supplement](#).

Rating system	Registration close	Certification sunset
v2.0		
New Construction v2.2	6/27/09	6/27/15
Core and Shell	6/27/09	6/27/15
Commercial Interiors	6/27/09	6/27/15
Existing Buildings	5/31/08	8/31/14
v2007		
Schools	6/27/09	6/27/15
v2008		
Homes	10/31/16	6/30/21
Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance	6/27/09	6/27/15
v2009		
New Construction (and Italia NC)	10/31/16	6/30/21
Core and Shell	10/31/16	6/30/21
Schools	10/31/16	6/30/21
Retail: New Construction	10/31/16	6/30/21
Retail: Commercial Interiors	10/31/16	6/30/21
Healthcare	10/31/16	6/30/21
Commercial Interiors	10/31/16	6/30/21
Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance	10/31/16	6/30/21
Neighborhood Development	10/31/16	6/30/21
v2010		

Homes Midrise v2011	10/31/16	6/30/21
LEED India	10/31/16	6/30/21

# LEED Certification Fees

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[Introduction](#)

[BD+C](#)

[ID+C](#)

[O+M](#)

[ND](#)

[Homes](#)

[Campus](#)

[Volume](#)

[Cities and Communities](#)

## Registration and Certification Fees

Registration is a flat fee paid up front at the time of registration; rates are based on the fee schedule published at the time of registration. The certification fee is based on your project's rating system and size; it is calculated and paid when the project team submits documentation for review in LEED Online (either in LEED Online or through Arc). The fees cover both the preliminary and final reviews for either review path (standard or split review).

What is included with your LEED fees?

- Integration and access to the new Arc platform: All projects in LEED Online have automatic access to Arc at no additional cost; simply [log into Arc](#) and link to your project.
- A dedicated LEED Coach: Newly registered projects are given a dedicated LEED Coach. LEED Coaches have more than a decade of green building and LEED expertise and can assist with questions during your LEED certification process.
- Award-winning customer service: Our customer service team has received 13 awards since 2013, including “Customer Service Team of the Year” from the American Business Awards and the International Business Awards.

## Policies

Registration and certification fees are subject to change and are calculated on the dates of registration and certification submission. Project teams may prepay certification fees at any time to lock-in current rates. Payment policies can be found in the Guide to LEED Certification or you can visit our [payment help section](#) to search for frequently asked questions. If you need assistance please [contact us](#).

## Member discounts

There is discounted pricing for [USGBC members](#). Discounts are available based on the membership status of either the owner or the project administrator for a given LEED project.

## Projects in Canada

All fees in the tables below apply to projects located outside of Canada. The pricing for projects located within Canada can be found on [cagbc.org](http://cagbc.org). GBCI Canada is a joint venture between GBCI and CaGBC established to more effectively support the Canadian market. Member pricing will apply to USGBC members and CaGBC members.

*Choose from the rating systems and programs in the tabs below to review registration and certification fees.*

## Building Design and Construction Fees

<b>Building Design and Construction Fees per Building</b>	<b>Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members</b>		<b>Organizational or Non-members</b>	
Registration	\$1,200		\$1,500	
<b>Precertification</b>				
Flat fee (per building)	\$4,000		\$5,000	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000			
<b>Combined Certification Review: Design and Construction</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.057 /sf	\$2,850	\$0.068 /sf	\$3,420
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.055 /sf	\$14,250	\$0.066 /sf	\$17,100
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.050 /sf	\$27,500	\$0.060 /sf	\$33,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Design</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.047 /sf	\$2,325	\$0.055 /sf	\$2,740
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.045 /sf	\$11,625	\$0.053 /sf	\$13,760
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.041 /sf	\$22,500	\$0.049 /sf	\$26,625
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Construction</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.016 /sf	\$775	\$0.018 /sf	\$910

Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.015 /sf	\$3,875	\$0.018 /sf	\$4,585
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.014 /sf	\$7,500	\$0.016 /sf	\$8,875
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Appeals</b>				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
<b>Formal Inquiries</b>				
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit			

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## Interior Design and Construction Fees

Interior Design and Construction Fees per Space	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members		Organizational or Non- members	
	Rate	Minimum	Rate	Minimum
Registration	\$1,200		\$1,500	
<b>Combined Certification Review: Design and Construction</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900	\$0.046 /sf	\$2,250
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.035 /sf	\$9,500	\$0.042 /sf	\$11,400
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.030 /sf	\$17,500	\$0.036 /sf	\$21,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Design</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.032 /sf	\$1,615	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.030 /sf	\$8,060	\$0.035 /sf	\$9,400
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.026 /sf	\$15,000	\$0.031 /sf	\$17,625
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Construction</b>				

Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.011 /sf	\$540	\$0.013 /sf	\$635
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.010 /sf	\$2,690	\$0.012 /sf	\$3,100
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.009 /sf	\$5,000	\$0.010 /sf	\$5,875
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Appeals</b>				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
<b>Formal Inquiries</b>				
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit			

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## Building Operations and Maintenance Fees

Operations and Maintenance Fees per Building	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members		Organizational or Non- members	
Registration	\$1,200		\$1,500	
<b>Precertification (performance path projects only - available in Arc)</b>				
Flat fee (per building)	\$4,000		\$5,000	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000			
<b>Certification Review</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900	\$0.046 /sf	\$2,250
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000-499,99 sq ft	\$0.035 /sf	\$9,500	\$0.042 /sf	\$11,400
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000-749,999 sq ft	\$0.030 /sf	\$17,500	\$0.036 /sf	\$21,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 750,000 sq ft or greater	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>		<a href="#">Request a quote</a>	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Appeals</b>				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
<b>Formal Inquiries</b>				

## Neighborhood Development Fees

Neighborhood and Development Fees	First 20 Acres	21-100 Acres	More than 100 Acres
Registration	\$1,500 (for all)		
Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) Prerequisite Review (Optional for LEED v2009)	\$2,250 (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000 (for all)		
Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) and Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD) Prerequisite Review (Optional for LEED v4)	\$5,000 (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000 (for all)		
Initial Stage Review	\$18,000	\$350 per acre	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$25,000 (for all)		
Subsequent Stage Review	\$10,000	\$350 per acre	<a href="#">Request a quote</a>
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$15,000 (for all)		
Appeals	\$500 per credit (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$500 per credit (for all)		

All LEED-ND projects larger than 100 acres must [contact GBCI](#) about pricing.

All projects are subject to the Initial Stage Review fee, which includes both a Preliminary and Final Review with GBCI. Projects are only subject to a Subsequent Stage Review fee if they have previously successfully completed a stage of LEED ND certification and are returning for another round of review.

## Homes Fees

Note: Additional fees will be charged by the verification team – contact your team for more information.

Residential Fees	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Organizational or Non-members
Single Family (per home)		
Registration (1-25 homes)	\$150	\$225
Registration (>25 homes)	\$50	\$125
Certification (1 home)	\$225	\$300
Certification (per batch submittal)	\$175 per batch plus \$50 per home	\$225 per batch plus \$75 per home

<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$1,000 per project	
Appeals	\$175 per project	
Formal Inquiries ( <a href="#">Project CIRs</a> )	\$220 per credit	
Multifamily (per building)		
Registration	\$900	\$1,200
Certification (0-49 Units)	\$0.035 per sf	\$0.045 per sf
Certification (>50 Units)	\$0.030 per sf	\$0.040 per sf
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000 per project	
Appeals: <a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit	
Appeals: <a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit	
Appeals: <a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit	
Formal Inquiries		
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit	

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## Campus Fees

Campus Fees	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Member Savings	Organizational Level or Non-Members
<b>Campus Approach (Master Site)</b>			
Master Site registration	\$1,200	\$300	\$1,500
Each individual on-campus project registration	\$1,200 per building or space	\$300 per building or space	\$1,500 per building or space
<b>Precertification Review</b>			
Master Site	Cannot be submitted for precertification		
Each individual on-campus project	\$3,250	\$1,000	\$4,250
<b>Combined Review: Design and Construction &amp; Operations and Maintenance</b>			
Master Site	\$1,500	\$500	\$2,000
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000		\$10,000
Each individual on-campus project	20% off standard certification fees*		
<b>Split Review: Design</b>			
Master Site	\$1,200	\$300	\$1,500
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000		\$5,000
Each individual on-campus project	20% off standard certification fees*		
<b>Split Review: Construction</b>			
Master Site	\$500	\$250	\$750

[Expedited review](#) (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity) \$5,000 \$5,000

Each individual on-campus project 20% off standard certification fees\*

*\*Please note that Group projects are not eligible for the 20% discount on certification fees even if they are utilizing campus credits from a Master Site.*

<b>Group Certification Approach</b>	<b>Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members</b>	<b>Member Savings</b>	<b>Organizational Level or Non-Members</b>
Registration*	\$1,200 per building or space within group	\$300 per building	\$1,500 per building or space within group
Precertification Review (LEED CS only)			
Group project certification*	Standard certification fees as calculated per building or space within the group project		

*\*Registration, precertification review (CS only) and certification review fees for group projects are equivalent to what would be charged if each building or space within the group were registered and reviewed as a separate LEED project. However, fees for appeals and formal inquiries are assessed per group project, not per building or space within the group.*

**All Projects (Campus and Group)**

**Appeals**

[Complex credits](#) \$800 per credit

[Credits](#) \$500 per credit

[Expedited review](#) (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity) + \$500/credit

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**Volume Program Fees**

<b>Volume Fees</b>	<b>Gold and Platinum Level Members*</b>
Program Admission Fee	\$10,000
Prototype Fee	\$30,000
<b>Volume Projects Fee</b>	
Projects 1-3	\$2,000 per project
Projects 4+	\$2,000 maximum per project
<b>Additional Fees or Services</b>	
Additional credit, re-precertified credit, additional credit approach, appeal, or CIR Review (prototype)	\$1,000
Individual credit, appeal, or CIR Review (volume project)	\$500
Additional or customized training	\$5,000 per training
Remediation plan (if required)	\$5,000

*\*Contact us for pricing for organizational or silver level members, or for non-members.*

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**Cities and Communities Fees**

<b>Cities and Communities Fees</b>	<b>Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members</b>	<b>Organizational or Non-members</b>
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Registration \$2,500 \$5,000

Precertification

Contact us for pricing at [contact@arcskoru.com](mailto:contact@arcskoru.com).

Certification Review

Contact us for pricing at [contact@arcskoru.com](mailto:contact@arcskoru.com).

[Introduction](#)

## Registration and Certification Fees

Registration is a flat fee paid up front at the time of registration; rates are based on the fee schedule published at the time of registration. The certification fee is based your project's rating system and size; it is calculated and paid when the project team submits documentation for review in LEED Online (either in LEED Online or through Arc). The fees cover both the preliminary and final reviews for either review path (standard or split review). Please note: registration and certification fees are subject to change and are calculated on the dates of registration and certification submission.

You'll notice discounted pricing options for [USGBC members](#). Discounts are available based on the membership status of either the owner or the project administrator for a given LEED project.

Registration and certification fee payment policies can be found in the Guide to LEED Certification or you can visit our [payment help section](#) to search for frequently asked questions. If you need assistance at any time, please call, email, or live chat with us. [Contact us](#).

What is included with your LEED fees?

*Choose from the rating systems and programs in the tabs below to review registration and certification fees.*

- A dedicated LEED Coach: Newly registered projects are given a dedicated LEED Coach. LEED Coaches have more than a decade of green building and LEED expertise and can assist with any questions that arise during your LEED certification process.
- Award-winning customer service: Our customer service team has received 11 awards since 2011, including “Customer Service Team of the Year” from the American Business Awards and the International Business Awards.
- Integration and access to the new Arc platform: All projects in LEED online have automatic access to Arc at no additional cost – simply [log into Arc](#) and link up your project.

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[BD+C](#)

## Building Design and Construction Fees

<b>Building Design and Construction Fees per Building</b>	<b>Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members</b>	<b>Organizational or Non- members</b>
Registration	\$1,200	\$1,500
<b>Precertification</b>		
Flat fee (per building)	\$4,000	\$5,000
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000	

<b>Combined Certification Review: Design and Construction</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.057 /sf	\$2,850	\$0.068 /sf	\$3,420
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.055 /sf	\$14,250	\$0.066 /sf	\$17,100
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.050 /sf	\$27,500	\$0.060 /sf	\$33,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Design</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.047 /sf	\$2,325	\$0.055 /sf	\$2,740
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.045 /sf	\$11,625	\$0.053 /sf	\$13,760
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.041 /sf	\$22,500	\$0.049 /sf	\$26,625
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Split Review: Construction</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.016 /sf	\$775	\$0.018 /sf	\$910
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.055 /sf	\$14,250	\$0.066 /sf	\$17,100
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.050 /sf	\$27,500	\$0.060 /sf	\$33,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Appeals</b>				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
<b>Formal Inquiries</b>				
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit			

# Interior Design and Construction Fees

Interior Design and Construction Fees per Space	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members		Organizational or Non- members	
	Rate	Minimum	Rate	Minimum
Registration	\$1,200		\$1,500	
<b>Combined Certification Review: Design and Construction</b>				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900	\$0.046 /sf	\$2,250
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.035 /sf	\$9,500	\$0.042 /sf	\$11,400
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.030 /sf	\$17,500	\$0.036 /sf	\$21,000
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
Split Review: Design				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.032 /sf	\$1,615	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.030 /sf	\$8,060	\$0.035 /sf	\$9,400
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.026 /sf	\$15,000	\$0.031 /sf	\$17,625
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
Split Review: Construction				
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.011 /sf	\$540	\$0.013 /sf	\$635
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 250,000 - 499,999 sq ft	\$0.010 /sf	\$2,690	\$0.012 /sf	\$3,100
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): 500,000 - 749,999 sq ft	\$0.009 /sf	\$5,000	\$0.010 /sf	\$5,875
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): more than 750,000 sq ft	Contact GBCI		Contact GBCI	
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
Appeals				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
Formal Inquiries				

[O+M](#)

## Building Operations and Maintenance Fees

Operations and Maintenance Fees per Building	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Organizational or Non-members		
Registration	\$1,200	\$1,500		
<b>Precertification</b> (performance path projects only - available in Arc)				
Flat fee (per building)	\$4,000	\$5,000		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000			
Certification Review	Rate	Minimum	Rate	Minimum
Project <a href="#">gross floor area</a> (excluding parking): less than 250,000 sq ft	\$0.038 /sf	\$1,900	\$0.046 /sf	\$2,250
Project <a href="#">Contact GBCI</a>	Contact GBCI			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000			
<b>Appeals</b>				
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit			
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit			
<a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit			
<b>Formal Inquiries</b>				
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit			

[ND](#)

## Neighborhood Development Fees

Neighborhood and Development Fees	First 20 Acres	21-100 Acres	More than 100 Acres
Registration	\$1,500 (for all)		
Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) Prerequisite Review (Optional for LEED v2009)	\$2,250 (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000 (for all)		
Smart Location and Linkage (SLL) and Neighborhood Pattern and Design (NPD) Prerequisite Review (Optional for LEED v4)	\$5,000 (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000 (for all)		
Initial Stage Review	\$18,000	\$350 per acre	Contact GBCI
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 30-35 business days to 15-17, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$25,000 (for all)		

Subsequent Stage Review	\$10,000	\$350 per acre	Contact GBCI
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 30-35 business days to 15-17, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$15,000 (for all)		
Appeals	\$500 per credit (for all)		
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$500 per credit (for all)		

All LEED-ND projects larger than 320 acres must [contact GBCI](#) about pricing.

All projects are subject to the Initial Stage Review fee, which includes both a Preliminary and Final Review with GBCI. Projects are only subject to a Subsequent Stage Review fee if they have previously successfully completed a stage of LEED ND certification and are returning for another round of review.

## [Homes](#)

### Homes Fees

Note: Additional fees will be charged by the verification team – contact your team for more information.

<b>Residential Fees</b>	<b>Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members</b>	<b>Organizational or Non-members</b>
Single Family (per home)		
Registration (1-25 homes)	\$150	\$225
Registration (> 25 homes)	\$50	\$125
Certification (1 home)	\$225	\$300
Certification (per batch submittal)	\$175 per batch plus \$50 per home	\$225 per batch plus \$75 per home
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$1,000 per project	
Appeals	\$175 per project	
Formal Inquiries ( <a href="#">Project CIRs</a> )	\$220 per credit	
Multifamily (per building)		
Registration	\$900	\$1,200
Certification (0-49 Units)	\$0.035 per sf	\$0.045 per sf
Certification (< 50 Units)	\$0.030 per sf	\$0.040 per sf
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000 per project	
Appeals: <a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit	
Appeals: <a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit	
Appeals: <a href="#">Expedited review</a>	\$500 per credit	
Formal Inquiries		
<a href="#">Project CIRs</a>	\$220 per credit	

## [Campus](#)

# Campus Fees

Campus Fees	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Member Savings	Organizational Level or Non-Members
Campus Approach (Master Site)			
Master Site registration	\$1,200	\$300	\$1,500
Each individual on-campus project registration	\$1,200 per building or space	\$300 per building or space	\$1,500 per building or space
Precertification Review (optional, LEED CS only)			
Master Site	Cannot be submitted for precertification		
Each individual on-campus project	\$3,250	\$1,000	\$4,250
Combined Review: Design and Construction & Operations and Maintenance			
Master Site	\$1,500	\$500	\$2,000
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$10,000		\$10,000
Each individual on-campus project	20% off standard certification fees*		
Split Review: Design			
Master Site	\$1,200	\$300	\$1,500
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000		\$5,000
Each individual on-campus project	20% off standard certification fees*		
Split Review: Construction			
Master Site	\$500	\$250	\$750
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	\$5,000		\$5,000
Each individual on-campus project	20% off standard certification fees*		

*\*Please note that Group projects are not eligible for the 20% discount on certification fees even if they are utilizing campus credits from a Master Site.*

Group Certification Approach	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Member Savings	Organizational Level or Non-Members
Registration*	\$1,200 per building or space within group	\$300 per building	\$1,500 per building or space within group
Precertification Review (LEED CS only)			
Group project certification*	Standard certification fees as calculated per building or space within the group project		

*\*Registration, precertification review (CS only) and certification review fees for group projects are equivalent to what would be charged if each building or space within the group were registered and reviewed as a separate LEED project. However, fees for appeals and formal inquiries are assessed per group project, not per building or space within the group.*

### All Projects (Campus and Group)

Appeals	
<a href="#">Complex credits</a>	\$800 per credit
<a href="#">Credits</a>	\$500 per credit
<a href="#">Expedited review</a> (reduce from 20-25 business days to 10-12, available based on GBCI review capacity)	+ \$500/credit

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### [Volume](#)

## Volume Program Fees

Volume Fees	Gold and Platinum Level Members*
Program Admission Fee	\$10,000
Prototype Fee	\$30,000
Volume Projects Fee	
Projects 1-3	\$2,000 per project
Projects 4+	\$2,000 maximum per project
Additional Fees or Services	
Additional credit, re-precertified credit, additional credit approach, appeal, or CIR Review (prototype)	\$1,000
Individual credit, appeal, or CIR Review (volume project)	\$500
Additional or customized training	\$5,000 per training
Remediation plan (if required)	\$5,000

*\*[Contact us](#) for pricing for organizational or silver level members, or for non-members.*

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### [Cities & Communities](#)

## Cities and Communities Fees

Cities and Communities Fees	Silver, Gold and Platinum Level Members	Organizational or Non-members
Registration	\$2,500	\$5,000
Precertification		
Contactus for pricing at <a href="mailto:contact@arcskoru.com">contact@arcskoru.com</a> .		
Certification Review		
Contactus for pricing at <a href="mailto:contact@arcskoru.com">contact@arcskoru.com</a> .		