

Energy Efficiency Requirements

Enterprise Green Communities Criteria

A project must comply with all of the mandatory provisions of the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities (EGC) Criteria as amended for Colorado, unless the project meets the requirements to use LEED or National Green Building Standards (NGBS).

Projects must meet a minimum number of EGC Criteria from each of the following categories:

- **Integrated Design Process**
Sustainable building strategies are considered from the earliest stages of project planning, with an experienced green building design specialist participating at every stage;
- **Location and Neighborhood Fabric**
Locations that conserve resources, take advantage of existing infrastructure and civic amenities, are close to transportation, and contribute to the fabric of healthy, livable communities;
- **Site Improvements**
Chosen to conserve natural resources, improve operational efficiencies, enhance health, and promote public or non-automotive means of transit;
- **Water Conservation**
Utilization of water-efficient appliances and fixtures, low-water landscaping and irrigation, and gray water (water recaptured and recycled from showers, sinks, and clothes washers) when possible;
- **Energy Efficiency**
A guiding principle in all stages of development, including efficient construction methods, design, and insulation of units for efficient heating and cooling; use of ENERGY STAR™ appliances; and efficient interior and exterior lighting;
- **Materials Beneficial to the Environment**
Including reuse and recycling on the construction site to decrease waste, and use of building products and techniques that contribute to more durable, healthy, and resource-efficient buildings;
- **Healthy Living Environment**
Including the use of safe biodegradable materials such as Low-/No-VOC paints and primers, adhesives, and sealants; use of materials and construction techniques to reduce mold and ensure adequate ventilation; garage isolation; and
- **Operations and Maintenance**
Training for employees and residents to explain and assist in the preservation of the property's green character.

CHFA Green Communities Program

CHFA requires “self-certification” by a project’s Applicant, which certifies that a project complies with all of the mandatory provisions of the 2015 EGC Criteria, as amended for Colorado.

Self-certification is a three-step process:

Step 1

Preliminary Application

The Applicant may conduct one or more integrative design meetings (charrettes) as appropriate for the project that outlines the integrative design approach to be used for the development and demonstrates involvement of the entire project team throughout the design and development process. Charrettes describe the process of designing the goals and strategies of implementing the green elements of the project and indicates the involvement of the Development Team. Results of the charrette can be provided in the project narrative.

Applicants download the EGC Certification Workbook at www.chfainfo.com/arh/lihtc/pages/Application_egc-preliminary-documents.aspx.

Developer then completes the following worksheets:

1. Intended Methods

The Intended Methods Worksheet is to provide preliminary information on how the project will implement the mandatory and optional criteria and meet the required points for the optional criteria. The Excel workbook with the completed Intended Methods form must be sent electronically as part of the Application. If additional narrative is required to describe how criterion will be implemented, include this description on the Narratives Intended Method tab in the workbook.

2. Green Self-certification

This form serves as the Applicant’s self-certification that the project complies with all Mandatory and Optional Criteria as identified in the Intended Methods Worksheet. The Applicant must sign the Green Self-certification Form in the “Preliminary LIHTC Application” section and send electronically as part of the Application.

3. Waivers and Workarounds

If the Applicant is requesting any waivers of specific EGC Criteria, the worksheet titled Waivers and Workarounds should be completed and sent electronically with the Excel workbook.

It is not necessary to complete any of the other worksheets in the workbook at this stage to meet CHFA’s requirements. The Applicant, however, should keep an electronic copy of the workbook for use at the Carryover and Final Application stages as updated information is required at these stages utilizing other sections of the workbook.

Step 2

Carryover Application

Using the EGC Certification Workbook from the Preliminary Application, the Applicant completes the following worksheets:

1. Green Self-certification

The section titled “Carryover LIHTC Application” must be signed and sent electronically as part of the Application.

2. Intended Methods

If the plans for implementation of any criteria have changed since the Preliminary Application, the Applicant will mark the applicable cell with an ‘X’ under the “Carryover LIHTC Application” section and provide a description of the change on the “Waivers and Workarounds” tab.

3. Waivers and Workarounds

If the Applicant is requesting any waivers of specific EGC Criteria, the worksheet titled Waivers and Workarounds should be completed.

The “Green Self-certification” and the other required worksheets should be sent electronically with the Carryover Application.

Step 3 Final Application

Applicant implements the project’s green features and elements during construction. At Final Application, the Applicant completes the following worksheets from the EGC Certification Workbook:

1. Green Self-certification

The section titled “Final LIHTC Application” must be signed by the Applicant, architect, and general contractor and sent electronically as part of the Application.

2. Intended Methods

In the “Final LIHTC Application” section, the Applicant indicates whether the criterion is still being met for all Mandatory Criteria and the Optional Criteria selected for the project. The Applicant also indicates the amount of optional points achieved. If there are any changes from the Carryover stage, they must be described on the Waivers and Workarounds tab.

3. Waivers and Workarounds

If the Applicant is requesting waivers of any of the criteria, the Waivers and Workarounds tab should be completed.

The Green Self-certification and the other required worksheets should be sent electronically with the Final Application. The other worksheets should be sent electronically.

Enterprise Green Communities Designation

CHFA does not require that a project attain “Enterprise Green Communities Designation.” If an Applicant, however, chooses to seek this designation, Enterprise offers an online process currently at no cost to affordable housing developers, which is found at www.enterprisecommunity.org/solutions-and-innovation/green-communities/criteria.

To pursue this designation from Enterprise, an Applicant would apply online during the design phase before construction starts. Please note that EGC will only certify projects meeting the 2015 criteria.

CHFA will accept the following alternatives to EGC:

- LEED or NGBS certification
If the Applicant is required by local building code or elects to certify the project under LEED or NGBS, CHFA will waive the EGC requirements. For projects pursuing LEED or NGBS, the Applicant must:
 1. Submit a Green Self-certification Form at Preliminary Application signed by the Applicant and architect indicating which certification the project will pursue (LEED or NGBS). The project Applicant shall indicate whether the certification is mandated by the local municipality or voluntarily pursuing the certification;
 2. Submit evidence of project registration under LEED or NGBS at Carryover Application;
 3. Provide at Final Application proof of LEED or NGBS certification, or proof of filing for final certification upon project completion.

Waivers

- CHFA may waive compliance with specific criteria if the Applicant can demonstrate that the criteria creates a substantial hardship or is inadvisable for a specific project, and that an alternative proposal will meet the intent of the criteria.
- Applicant needing a waiver will use the form found in the Waivers and Workarounds tab of the EGC Certification Workbook and submit electronically with the Application. Applicants will be notified via email of any waiver approvals.
- CHFA will review these documents and will provide a clarification letter if clarification is needed.

Compliance

Colorado Green Communities is a self-certifying program. Documentation submitted in support of meeting specific criteria must include a statement by a licensed architect or building engineer certifying that all criteria has been met, unless a waiver was approved by CHFA, and incorporated into the project.

Colorado Green Communities Criteria Certification Form

The 2015 EGC Criteria and Green Certification Form can be found on the CHFA website at www.chfainfo.com/arh/lihtc/pages/application_egc-preliminary-documents.aspx.