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Comparison of 2011 Enterprise Green Communities and LEED for Homes Program

Enterprise is a leading provider of the development capital and expertise it takes to create decent, affordable homes and rebuild communities. For 25 years, Enterprise has pioneered neighborhood solutions through public-private partnerships with financial institutions, governments, community organizations and others that share our vision. In 2004, Enterprise launched Green Communities as an initiative to transform the way America thinks about, designs and builds affordable communities. Enterprise Green Communities brings together affordable housing investment strategies with environmentally responsible building practices. The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria provide a holistic framework for promoting smart growth, public health, energy and water conservation, operational savings and sustainable building practices in affordable housing design. The 2011 Criteria is purposefully aligned with the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Homes Green Building Rating System™, launched in 2008, and Enterprise maintains a comparison matrix that shows the overlap between the technical requirements in the 2011 Criteria and LEED for Homes (<http://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/tools/criteria/>).

The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria were developed collaboratively by Enterprise and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and in consultation with other industry experts, such as the National Center for Healthy Housing. The Criteria provide significant benefits for families, communities and the environment, and include the following eight categories: integrative design, location + neighborhood fabric, site improvements, water conservation, energy efficiency, materials beneficial to the environment, healthy living environments, and operations + maintenance. The Criteria draw heavily on the LEED Rating Systems, and the U.S. Green Building Council, a national coalition of building industry leaders promoting healthy and environmentally responsible buildings, strongly supports Enterprise Green Communities.

The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria and LEED for Homes are similar in technical content but differ programmatically in three key areas: **participants, construction type, and certification process** (see Table A. Comparison Matrix of Green Communities and LEED for Homes).

Participants

Green Communities. The Criteria are intended specifically for developers of affordable housing and are applicable to both for-sale and rental housing. Enterprise is targeting all housing that is reasonably affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income for for-sale housing or 60% of the area median income for rental housing.

LEED for Homes. The LEED for Homes rating system is targeting the top 25% of home builders of all housing types but is applicable to new homes with best practice environmental features.

Construction Type

Green Communities. The Criteria apply to all affordable housing types: new construction, moderate and substantial rehabilitation, as well as single family and low, mid and high-rise multifamily projects.

LEED for Homes. The LEED for Homes Rating System applies only to gut rehab and new construction projects of three stories or less with an available protocol for mid-rise buildings.

Certification

Both Enterprise Green Communities and LEED for Homes offer checklists that can be followed by any housing developer or homebuilder. These checklists are often used as planning tools for project teams interested in green building during the integrative design process when environmental and performance goals are set. If a builder or developer is interested in certification, both Enterprise and LEED for Homes have requirements for certification in their respective programs which result in formal recognition.

Enterprise Green Communities. The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria are the framework for the two-step Certification process. For Step 1, developers apply online during the design phase before construction starts. Developers submit basic organizational and development information, a plan for Criteria implementation, site plan and context map, appropriate energy modeling information, and key project team member sign offs. Enterprise reviews the application within 30 days, and determines whether the project is approved to move to Step 2. For Step 2, developers submit final documentation online within 60 days of completing construction. Final documentation includes Criteria compliance and cost reports, a utility release form, photos, and key project team member sign offs. Enterprise reviews and determines whether the project will be certified, and issues notification via email within 30 days.

To achieve Enterprise Green Communities Certification, all projects must achieve compliance with the Criteria mandatory measures applicable to that construction type. Additionally, New Construction projects must achieve 35 optional points, Substantial Rehab projects must achieve 30 optional points, and Moderate Rehab projects also must achieve 30 optional points.

Each quarter, Enterprise selects a subset of developments from the pool of Certification applicants and assigns an Enterprise Green Communities TA Provider with expertise in green building assessments to work with the project team. The Verification Protocol consists of three review stages: a desktop review of information submitted during the first step of the certification process, and pre-drywall and post-construction site visits. The TA Provider recommends and documents project improvements as needed for the developer, project team members and Enterprise. The online Certification process is currently offered

at no cost to affordable housing developers, as is participation in the Verification Protocol. Verification costs will be covered by Enterprise.

LEED for Homes. Certification through LEED for Homes requires registering a project with USGBC, working with a LEED for Homes Provider, and submitting project documentation through the Provider for certification. LEED homes are rated by Providers – local organizations selected by USGBC based on demonstrated experience and expertise in supporting builders in the construction of high-performance, sustainable homes in their market. The cost for registering and certifying a project with LEED for Homes ranges based on whether applicant is a member of the USGBC and the size of the project. Registration fees range from \$150 per home for a member with a single family project to \$900 per building for a non-member with a multi-family project (\$1,050 for a midrise building). Certification fees range from \$225 for a member with a single family project to \$0.045 a square foot for a non-member with a multi-family project.

Currently there are 38 Providers that are able to deliver LEED for Homes verification support throughout the country. A list of Providers can be found on the USGBC website. Providers assist project teams with a preliminary checklist of the project, at least two onsite performance tests and visual inspections of various measures in the home during construction, and final field inspection and performance testing of the project after construction completion. Provider and Green Rater verification costs will apply and are based on market prices. Please consult the Provider of your choice for applicable rates and fees.

Table A. Comparison Matrix of Green Communities and LEED for Homes

Program Components	Enterprise Green Communities	LEED for Homes
Website	www.greencommunitiesonline.org	www.usgbc.org/leed/homes
Target Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developers of affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top 25% of homebuilders in the U.S.
Target Construction Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All affordable housing types New construction, substantial rehab and moderate rehab Single-family, multi-family and low, mid- and high-rise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and market-rate Gut rehab and new construction Single-family and low and mid-rise multi-family (3-6 stories)
Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 1: Apply online during the design phase before construction starts. Enterprise reviews the application within 30 days, and determines whether the project is approved to move to Step 2. Step 2: Submit final documentation online within 60 days of completing construction. Enterprise reviews and determines whether the project will be certified, and issues notification via email within 30 days. A select number of developers will receive the added benefit of expert, on-site review and technical assistance from Enterprise’s Green Communities Technical Assistance Provider Network to help effectively implement the Criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with Provider Register project with USGBC (pay fee to USGBC) Provider completes onsite inspections and performance tests of project throughout construction process Provider submits documentation to USGBC for review and certification (pay fee to USGBC). USGBC notifies project team of certification and sends certification to the project