



Comparison of Enterprise Green Communities Criteria and USGBC's LEED for Homes Multifamily Mid-Rise

The LEED for Homes Multifamily Midrise program builds off of the LEED for Homes Rating System released in 2008. Both the LEED for Homes program and the LEED Midrise program are initiatives designed to promote the transformation of the mainstream homebuilding industry toward more sustainable practices. LEED for Homes is targeting the top 25% of new homes with best practice environmental features. By recognizing sustainable design and construction in homes nationwide, LEED for Homes helps home builders differentiate their homes as some of the best homes in their markets, using a recognized national brand. Furthermore, homebuyers can more readily identify third-party verified green homes.

PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY:

The LEED Mid-rise was designed for buildings that are greater than four stories above grade and is available nationally in all climate zones. Similar to LEED-H, the Mid-rise program targets new construction projects, but can also be applied to gut rehab projects.

Projects eligible for LEED MFMR include:

- Residential buildings that include four or more above-grade occupiable stories (any occupiable space, including commercial space, should be counted toward the number of stories except garages, basements, or cellars; a story should be counted if 20% or more of the space is occupiable)
- At least 50% of the occupied space must be residential.
- The building must include at least 2 living units.
- Existing buildings that meet these requirements (gut rehab only)

All projects participating in the LEED for Homes certification program must use a LEED for Homes Provider and submit an informal request for participation to the LEED for Homes Program Director prior to construction. See "Certification" for more details about the certification process.

POINT STRUCTURE:

The LEED-H MFMR rating system has four certification tiers that a project team can achieve by meeting all of the applicable prerequisites and obtaining the required number of optional points in a series of categories to determine if the project is "Certified" (45-59 pts), "Silver" (60-74), "Gold" (75-89 pts), or "Platinum" (90-136 pts). The program also requires that a home adjuster be applied to the project that will shift the required number of optional points for "smaller-

than-average and larger-than-average homes” effectively penalizing or rewarding sustainable home sizes. ¹ The categories, along with points available and required, include:

LEED Midrise Categories	EGC Section	Pre-reqs	Optional Points	Point Floor
Innovation and Design Process (ID)	1/7	4	11	0
Location and Linkages (LL)	2	0	10	0
Sustainable Sites (SS)	2/3/6	2	22	5
Water Efficiency (WE)	4	0	15	3
Energy and Atmosphere (AE)	5	3	38	0
Materials and Resources (MR)	6/7	3	16	2
Indoor Environmental Quality (EQ)	7	8	21	6
Awareness and Education	8	1	3	0
Totals	-	19²	136	16

CERTIFICATION PROCESS:

Buildings pursuing Certification under the LEED for Homes Rating System must follow the steps below:³

- Contact a LEED for Homes Provider and register project with USGBC
 - The Provider will conduct an analysis of the building ensure it is certifying to the appropriate for the program, and determine a preliminary estimate of their LEED score and certification level. The project team (typically the LEED for Homes Provider) registers the project online. See table below for fees.
- Identify a project team
- Build the home to the stated goals and have green measures verified by a Green Rater and qualified energy rater.
 - At the design phase, a project will select a green rater to work with and review the design. During the construction process, the green rater will conduct onsite verification at critical points such as a pre-drywall site visit. Verification fees will be negotiated and charged by the green rater with the project team.
- Achieve certification as a LEED Home
- Post-certification PR and marketing support.

Performance Tests

The Green Rater will conduct several inspections and provide performance testing for several of the credits under the LEED for Homes Rating System. Those include:

- EA 1.1 Meet performance of ENERGY STAR home (prerequisite)
- EA 3 Envelope leakage (prerequisite)
- EA 5 Duct leakage (prerequisite)

¹ LEED for Homes Reference Guide, pp. 9 - 12

² LEED-H Mid-rise summary reports only 18 pre-reqs although the tally was at 19.

³ LEED for Homes Reference Guide, pp. 5.

- EA 6.1 Refrigerate charge test (prerequisite) – test performed by HVAC contractor, not Green Rater
- EQ 4.3 Outdoor air flow test (optional credits)
- EQ 5.3 Local exhaust (optional credits)
- EQ 6.2 Supply air flow test (optional credits)

Certification Notes

The prerequisites and credits and applicable for the entire building, not just the residential spaces. For any section of the building not completed at the time of certification (e.g., commercial space up for lease), tenant fit-out guidelines must be part of any contract and a copy must be submitted with the certification documents to ensure that all prerequisites and credits are met by the entire building, as appropriate.

In addition to the regular documentation required for certification within the LEED for Homes program, MFMR projects must also submit an energy modeling information form. This should be submitted as early as possible, and no later than when the project applies for certification.

LEED for Homes Pricing – Multifamily Projects

	Mid-rise Multifamily Housing (per building)		Multifamily Volume
	Registration	Certification	(50 or more units)
USGBC Member	\$900	\$0.035 per sq ft	Contact your LEED for Homes Green Rater for discount pricing
Non-member	\$1,050	\$0.045 per sq ft	

Note: Green Rater Verification fees are not included within this matrix. Those fees are contracted directly with the Rater.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITH GREEN COMMUNITIES CRITERIA:

Similarities:

- The LEED-Homes Mid-rise Standard is a quality standard backed up with an extensive technical manual. Both LEED-Homes Mid-rise or the Enterprise Green Communities (EGC) Criteria standard would produce truly green buildings.
- Both LEED-H Mid-rise and EGC cover roughly the same categories although each program has some mandatory requirements (prerequisite) or optional points that do not overlap.
- Both standards require a pre-construction Green Development Plan. The Green Development Plan required for EGC is based on an integrative design charrette (EGC Criteria 1.1a/b). LEED for Homes requires a preliminary meeting with key project team members be conducted to determine accountability, project goals, and targeted LEED Certification level (LEED for HOMES ID 1.1). Design Charettes are awarded 1 optional point under LEED for Homes credit ID 1.4 Design Charrette.
- Both programs will accept the LEED-H Mid-rise EA P1 Alternative pathway as means for satisfying the energy efficiency requirements for the project.

- Both programs do not have extensive energy efficiency sections and instead rely on separate programs (i.e. ENERGY STAR) or performance targets to set requirements.

Differences:

- EGC is designed with more mandatory measures (prerequisites) than LEED-H Mid-rise.
- LEED-H Mid-rise has significantly less mandatory requirements and thus gives a project more flexibility in reaching the standard (LEED for Homes: 18 prerequisites. Green Communities has 40 and 36 mandatory requirements for new construction and substantial rehab respectively).
- EGC has a binary certification, whereas LEED has varying levels of certification.
- LEED-H Midrise has a tiered structure.
- EGC satisfies the combustion safety requirements for LEED-H, but LEED-H MR does not satisfy all of the requirements for EGC.
- LEED-H Mid-rise implements a Home Size Adjuster.
- An EGC project will most likely meet the “certified” or “silver” tier of LEED-H MR but LEED-H MR may not meet all of the mandatory requirements of EGC, especially under the Location & Neighborhood Fabric category.