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2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria

Enterprise Green Communities is transforming the way America thinks about, designs, builds, and rehabilitates affordable housing. We are pleased to announce the release of the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria.

The Enterprise Green Communities Criteria were developed collaboratively by a number of leading national organizations and experts for the purpose of providing a clear, cost-effective framework for all affordable housing development types. All measures for all project types (single-family, low-rise multifamily, and mid- / high-rise multifamily) and construction types (New Construction, Moderate Rehab, and Substantial Rehab) are located within this set of criteria.

Since its inception in 2004, the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria have been updated on a regular cycle. The Criteria respond to technological advances, evaluation outcomes, environmental, industry and policy trends and input from developers and policymakers on specific criterion. Enterprise has relied on the following set of guiding principles in its evolution:

- Achievable for all affordable housing development types (new construction, substantial and moderate rehab; single family, and low to high-rise multifamily);
- Cost-effective and proven green development approaches;
- Designed to deliver significant health, economic and environmental benefits;
- Technically sound and rigorous performance standards that are best in class and comparable to other national and regional green residential programs;
- Measurable and verifiable (whether through paper or field review).

Updating the Criteria on a regular cycle maintains relevance for Green Communities in relation to advances in the field, changing codes, and evolving green and energy programs. Updates also provide Green Communities staff and partners to strengthen or diminish various criterion categories and integrate critical recommendations for the nation's affordable housing stock.

2015 Updates

The 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria are grouped into the following eight categories:

- 1. Integrative Design**
- 2. Location + Neighborhood Fabric**
- 3. Site Improvements**
- 4. Water Conservation**
- 5. Energy Efficiency**
- 6. Materials**

7. Healthy Living Environment

8. Operations, Maintenance + Resident Engagement

The 2015 Criteria will break new ground in the affordable housing and green building industries. With an achievable yet ambitious agenda around issue areas, particularly health, resilience, location and energy data transparency, combined with a re-tooled approach to integrative design, Enterprise Green Communities will remain a high-profile illustration of Enterprise's leadership and commitment.

- The 2015 Criteria requires that seekers of EGC certification assess, and address, community health characteristics and relevant resilience measures during the integrative design process.
- For projects pursuing Certification, energy and water data will not simply be collected by Enterprise, but will also be managed by each project owner in a manner that influences project operations.
- Projects pursuing Certification must explore best practices of TOD, offering means to connect to community amenities, and Resilience, in more meaningful ways than ever before.

The descriptions that follow provide a brief overview of the major updates in each category of the 2015 Criteria.

Integrative Design

Each of the Integrative Design criteria were adjusted to better emphasize our objective of an intentionally collaborative process. Four new criteria (one mandatory and one optional each in regards to considering health and considering resilience) were developed. These new mandatory criteria reference optional measures elsewhere in the Criteria, and offer project teams a straightforward pathway to address health and resilience in a manner that is relevant to their project type and resident population. The two new optional criteria offer project teams the opportunity to thoroughly address considerations of health and of resilience, and go above and beyond the mandatory measures.

Location + Neighborhood Fabric

Within Category 2: Location + Neighborhood Fabric criterion, we retained special considerations for projects located in rural areas. Of all of the other adjustments and additions made within Category 2, the most significant is the requirement of all new construction projects to meet access to public transportation guidelines.

Site Improvements

All criteria within Category 3: Site Improvements were fine-tuned.

Water Conservation

Our water consumption performance standards have increased in stringency but also have relaxed in terms of the method of how these water conservation goals may be achieved (see criterion 4.2). We have also added three new water conservation criteria.

Energy Efficiency

Within Category 5: Energy Efficiency, the baseline standards which 5.1 references were updated. Criterion 5.5: Lighting was significantly changed. Otherwise, throughout this category you will

notice slight adjustments to existing criteria and the addition of several new criteria that promote greater efficiency as well as resilience.

Materials

The criteria within Category 6: Materials were all refreshed to reference today's best in class standards. Criterion 6.12: Construction Waste Management received the most significant revision, now offering three options of compliance. Note that criteria within this category, formerly known as "Materials Beneficial to the Environment," have been rearranged to better reflect lifecycle considerations of material choices.

Healthy Living Environment

Within Category 7: Healthy Living Environment, the most significant changes are the consolidation of our ventilation requirements into 7.1: Ventilation, and the addition of mandatory and optional criteria regarding Active Design (criteria 7.12, 7.13, 7.14). Please note that our Universal Design criteria, formerly found in Category 1: Integrative Design, are now located in this Healthy Living Environment category.

Operations, Maintenance + Resident Engagement

Category 8: Operations, Maintenance, and Resident Engagement was re-written to encourage more effective manuals and plans for green operations. Criteria 8.5 and 8.6 were structured to build awareness of property energy/water consumption in property owners and managers.

For additional information related to the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, please contact Enterprise at greencommunities@enterprisecommunity.org.