

FGBC Green Land Development Standard

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What makes the FGBC designation different from the USGBC LEED for Neighborhoods designation?

The FGBC designation is more encompassing. FGBC strongly considers Florida's natural environment and wildlife, and awards points for wildlife corridors and preservation or restoration of lands. LEED for Neighborhoods is very urban focused, concentrating on density and connections. FGBC addresses those elements strongly in the circulation and amenities categories, but goes on to include four other categories of green features that should be part of a green neighborhood.

2. What is considered a development?

A development designation applies to a project that is selling multiple parcels to multiple buyers. It can be a builder/developer selling to the end user or it can be a campus of parcels sold to a variety of developers. Projects under five acres and more than 10,000 acres have been certified. For a project consisting of just one to three vertical structures, FGBC recommends just certifying each of the buildings using the appropriate FGBC Standard, e.g., commercial, high-rise residential or residential.

3. Who selects the Designated Professional and what credentials does a Designated Professional need?

The project owner is responsible for selecting who will serve as the team leader for the project's FGBC certification application process. This team leader is referred to as the FGBC Designated Professional. The assigned person should have an in-depth knowledge of sustainability and green building and be familiar with green certification tenets. It is suggested that anyone wanting to serve as a Designated Professional become a member of FGBC and participate in the FGBC Green Land Development Committee conference calls.

4. What happens if plans change and we don't follow through on something we planned?

As described in the Standard, the designation can be revoked if the developer does not follow through. It is best to contact FGBC and discuss the change to see if there are alternative points available for the project, such that the designation can be maintained.

5. What if some builders don't want to build green?

FGBC highly recommends that you educate your builders on the benefits of building green and cite examples of the success other builders have had in marketing green so that buyers have a consistent message. There are many points available in the FGBC Green Land Development Standard for committing to 100 percent green vertical construction. However, there are alternatives. Consider how you want to market the community and try to obtain dedicated green builders prior to committing to the vertical points available in the certification process.

6. How much does the FGBC Green Land Development certification cost?

Refer to the rates listed in the FGBC Green Land Development Standard official documents. Rates appear on the Registration form contained within the Excel Checklist. Certification fees are based on a flat rate plus a per acre fee, with a cap fee regardless of the acreage. FGBC certification fees remain extremely affordable compared to other green designation programs for developments.

7. When does my development get certified?

After you have completed the application Checklist and submitted it along with the all required supporting documents for the points claimed within the Checklist, FGBC will review the submittal package to determine eligibility of points submitted. If FGBC determines the project has earned the minimum required points needed for certification as outlined in the FGBC Green Land Development Standard official documents, the development can be certified. Certification can take place while the development is in its planning stages and can be used to increase the marketability of the project.

8. How long does it take to get certified once a project is submitted for review?

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This depends largely on how well the project's assigned Designated Professional has reviewed the FGBC Green Land Development Standard official documents, and provided the appropriate documentation so that FGBC can verify that points claimed have been earned. An organized application package that includes the required submittals as specified in the Reference Guide can be certified within a month, while a poorly submitted application that may require the Designated Professional to submit additional information may drag on for months.

9. What do I receive when the project is certified?

FGBC provides a large, wood-framed certificate to the project owner, which can be presented at a dedication ceremony. FGBC will also distribute a press release to statewide news media, publish a Project Spotlight feature story in the FGBC newsletter and on the FGBC website, and enter the project into the FGBC online project database. A "Certified Project" logo is also made available to the project owner for use in marketing the development. Prior to certification, the Designated Professional may request an "FGBC Certified Green Project Application Pending" site sign for display during construction to enhance the marketability of the project.

10. I am building on farmland or previously developed land, so how do I earn conservation area credits?

Some developments decide to restore land to its natural state. A development may earn one point for each 3 percent of total buildable acreage that is being preserved or restored to its natural state. Required stormwater retention areas and off-site mitigation areas do not count, nor does any land that must be left undeveloped due to other state or federal governmental requirements. Land sold for construction purposes or land temporarily preserved until the next planned phase is not considered conservation area, nor are recreational open space and water retention areas. Refer to the FGBC Green Land Development Reference Guide section P5-Conservation Areas for sample formulas and additional explanation.

11. What is required to earn the no prohibitive green language points in the covenant and deed restriction category?

These are some points available that are difficult to earn for many developers because the CDRs require some element that is not environmentally green. However, the developer may want the item for product appearance or uniformity. Some CDRs require a minimum amount of grass or grass type that is not the best for our environment. Other CDRs prohibit solar collectors in locations that might be the most productive. If the CDRs contain any language that may be a barrier to going green, these points are not available. If there are no CDRs at all, the development earns these points.