

## Green Building Overview

### What is Green Building?

Green building or “sustainable” building is an approach to design and construction that maximizes energy and resource efficiency, protects the environment, and promotes healthier places to live and work. Green building is important not just for its environmental benefits, but also for its economic and health benefits. Green building reduces the everyday energy costs for owners and renters, and provides significantly better indoor air quality for occupants. Green building considers the entire life cycle of a structure and its component parts, focusing on efficiency in operating costs, as well as initial construction costs.

### *Overview of Green Building in Washington, DC*

With the passage of the Green Building Act of 2006, the District of Columbia became the first city in the country to pass a law requiring green building certification for both the public and private sectors. In accordance with The Green Building Act of 2006, publicly financed projects must meet the following standards relative to green design and building. This applies to all projects for which public financing constitutes 15% or more of total project costs. Per DHCD requirements, all projects must implement the following green building requirements for new construction, substantial rehabilitation or moderate rehabilitation.

### Green Building Requirements

*Residential Projects* – Residential projects of 10,000 square feet or more must be certified by Enterprise Community Partners using the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria. Residential projects may also pursue a “substantially similar standard.” Currently certification with the US Green Building Council using LEED for Homes and LEED for Homes Multifamily Midrise rating systems at the Silver level or above are pre-approved “substantially similar standards.” If a project team would like to use another standard, it must be pre-approved by DCRA’s Green Building Division prior to submission.

*Non-Residential Projects* – Non-residential projects must be certified by the US Green Building Council at the LEED Silver level or above using the current version of the LEED rating system. Applicants must consult with DCRA’s Green Building Division prior to submission to determine the correct LEED rating system.

*NEW! Green Building Preference* – As articulated in the Sustainable DC Plan, the District has committed to improving the performance of existing buildings and ensuring the highest standards of green building design for new construction. By 2032 or earlier, the city has committed to retrofit 100% of existing commercial and multifamily buildings to achieve net-zero energy standards and meet net-zero energy use standards with all new construction projects. In order to achieve the targets set forth in the Sustainable DC Plan, the District plans to lead by example and give preference for projects that are exceeding the threshold Green Building Act requirements and forging a path towards true sustainability.

DC-specific market analysis reveals that there are strong financial incentives for building deeply green, utility efficient buildings with renewable energy systems. The Net Zero and Living Building Challenge Financial Study: A Cost Comparison Report for Buildings in the District of Columbia found a 3-year simple payback for typical multifamily or office new construction when incorporating deep energy efficiency and then achieving net zero energy by deploying renewables. A national study of solar financial incentives also lists DC as one of the top cities to invest in solar photovoltaics.

To build capacity for this type of deep green building, the District has a range of initiatives that include financial assistance resources for project teams. These include the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DC SEU), DC Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE), RiverSmart Communities, RiverSmart Rewards, RiverSmart Rooftops, RiverSmart Homes and the Stormwater Retention Credit Trading programs.

## Exhibit I

*Nearing Net Zero* – Offeror may receive additional preference by demonstrating that it will complete one of the following certifications: Passive House Institute US (PHIUS), Living Building Challenge Net Zero Energy Building Certification, or the U.S. Department of Energy’s Zero Energy Ready Home program. To obtain these points, Offeror must demonstrate that it is pursuing 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria (GCC) certification or LEED certification at the Silver level or above and plan to certify with Passive House Institute US (PHIUS), Living Building Challenge Net Zero Energy Building Certification, or the U.S. Department of Energy’s Zero Energy Ready Home program. Offerors pursuing this preference must also incorporate solar photovoltaics in their projects and maximize their rooftop generation potential to the maximum extent as allowable by District of Columbia codes and regulations.

*Living Building Challenge Certification* – Offeror may receive additional preference for designing and constructing the project to achieve either full or petal certification under Living Building Challenge program. The Living Building Challenge is the world’s most rigorous building performance standard. Projects achieving full certification demonstrate a connection to nature and place, net-positive energy generation, net-zero water use, healthy and active design, integration of ecologically responsible material, and equitable development strategies.

***All proposals are required to complete and submit the identified documentation located as Exhibits within this Solicitation.***

### Local Green Building Incentives and Resources

- DC PACE Program (*Approved Leverage Source*)  
<http://www.dcpace.com/home/about>
- DC Green Building Program  
<http://dcra.dc.gov/page/green-building-program>
- DC Sustainable Energy Utility  
<http://www.dcseu.com>
- DC Department of Energy & Environment RiverSmart Program  
<http://doee.dc.gov/riversmart>

### Green Building Standards

- Enterprise Community Partners  
Enterprise Green Communities Criteria (GCC) 2015  
<http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/solutions-and-innovation/enterprise-green-communities/criteria>
- International Living Future Institute  
Living Building Challenge Net Zero Energy Building Certification  
<http://living-future.org/netzero>  
Living Building Challenge Certification and Petal Recognition  
<http://living-future.org/lbc>
- Passive House Institute US (PHIUS)  
[www.passivehouse.us](http://www.passivehouse.us)
- U.S. Department of Energy  
DOE Zero Energy Ready Home  
<http://energy.gov/eere/buildings/zero-energy-ready-home>

## Exhibit I

- U.S. Green Building Council  
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®)  
[www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

### Federal Resources

- Better Buildings Challenge  
<https://www4.eere.energy.gov/challenge/home>
- Better Buildings Challenge for Multifamily Partners  
<https://www4.eere.energy.gov/challenge/partners/multifamily>
- Energy Star (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy)
- Energy Star Target Finder Tool  
[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new\\_bldg\\_design.bus\\_target\\_finder](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new_bldg_design.bus_target_finder)
- Energy Star Portfolio Manager  
[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate\\_performance.bus\\_portfoliomanager](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance.bus_portfoliomanager)