



LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This FAQ has been created to provide information about the registration and certification for LEED for Neighborhood Development. For more information about registration and certification, which are administered by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI), please visit <http://www.gbci.org>.

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For additional general information on LEED for Neighborhood Development, please review the LEED-ND Program FAQ.

Q. Are there minimum or maximum sizes for a LEED for Neighborhood Development project?

A. There is no minimum or maximum size, though the rating system has been designed to function well for at least 2 buildings and up to 320 acres. As the rating system requires at least one certified green building, project teams should consider pursuing one of the other LEED rating systems if your project only includes one building, as it will likely be more efficient and less expensive.

Q. Does LEED-ND have Minimum Program Requirements (MPRs)?

A. Unlike the LEED single building rating systems, LEED-ND does not include MPRs.

Q. Can university campuses and military bases apply for LEED-ND?

Although the LEED for Neighborhood Development program was not designed for campuses or military bases, such projects can register their project under the LEED-ND rating system. Please be aware, that if the campus or base includes a gate, it must be for documented security purposes. If not, the intersections will not be counted in the intersection density calculations, which will impact the project connectivity score.

Q. Can resorts apply for LEED-ND?

A. Although the LEED for Neighborhood Development program was not designed for resorts, they can register their project under the LEED-ND rating system. Projects should pay particular attention



to the connectivity requirements and how dwelling units are calculated in the rating system as the requirements may impact the feasibility of the project using LEED-ND.

Q. Can a LEED-ND project comprise only a single use (i.e. office, residential, etc)?

A. A LEED-ND project may contain a single use, though it is recommended that projects incorporate a diversity of uses within its project boundary or locate the project near a mix of existing uses, as it will make it easier to achieve certain credits with the rating system.

Q. Can project teams only achieve the LEED Accredited Professional innovation credit (IDP) if a team member has the AP-ND credential?

A. At this time, any LEED AP credential is eligible to be counted under the LEED Accredited Professional innovation credit. In addition, two other pathways involving our partner organizations are eligible as well. Regardless of the number of credentialed professionals on your project team, only one point can be achieved for IDPc2. For more information, please refer directly to the credit requirements.

Q. Can I combine multiple sites into one LEED for Neighborhood Development project?

A. LEED-ND project boundaries are required to be contiguous, so parcels that are not adjacent to each other cannot be combined into one project. Projects may include enclaves of non-conforming properties that are not required to comply with the requirements in the rating system. These enclaves cannot exceed 2% of the total project area and may not be listed as part of the certified project. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that owners of the project control or have title to at least 50% of the land area within the boundary.

Q. My project is larger than 320 acres. Will my project size adversely affect my LEED-ND application?

A. Projects larger than 320 acres may successfully achieve certification. However, due to the potential hardship larger projects may have in meeting the requirements in the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system, such as the distance and proximity requirements, GBCI encourages the separation of projects larger than 320 acres into multiple LEED for Neighborhood Development projects each consisting of 320 acres or less.

Q. I live in an existing neighborhood and after reviewing the rating system, feel that our community could achieve many of the credits. Is this something other neighborhoods have done?

A. Although LEED for Neighborhood Development does not directly exclude existing neighborhoods from registering and certifying, certain requirements in the rating system may make success unlikely. Please consider the following:

- The owner, or a group of owners, applying for certification should already own, have title to, or have significant control over the majority of the land within the project boundary.
- It is strongly recommended that the majority (50% or more) of the total project square footage undergo substantial enhancement—either new construction or major renovations.



- For Stage 3 projects, the documentation must be submitted to GBCI **within 3 years** of project completion. A project is complete when: i) the appropriate regulatory authorities have issued certificates of occupancy for all new buildings within the project and have accepted all infrastructure within the project; ii) every aspect of the project that pertains to a prerequisite has been completed; and iii) every aspect of the project that pertains to a credit that is being pursued has been completed.
- The Green Infrastructure and Buildings section will likely be the most difficult for existing projects. The Rating System requires at least one green building (LEED or another eligible system), along with additional water, energy and construction activity waste reductions for new buildings or major renovations. In addition, the imperiled species and wetland & water body prerequisites in the Smart Location & Linkage section may be difficult to document on an existing site although for many prerequisites exceptions are given for previously developed sites.

International Projects

Q. Are international projects allowed to participate in LEED for Neighborhood Development?

A. Yes. Projects outside the U.S. may register and pursue certification under LEED-ND. USGBC is conducting an international pilot of LEED-ND to determine if the rating system encourages regionally appropriate and culturally sensitive planning and design decisions outside of the U.S. This pilot is an opportunity for non-U.S. projects to provide feedback and for USGBC to learn from the international application of the rating system. Non-U.S. projects are required to participate in this pilot. Please visit www.usgbc.org/leed/nd to learn more about the LEED-ND International Pilot.

Q. Will international projects be able to use the Regional Priority Credits (RPC) developed for LEED-ND v2009?

A. Similar to the other LEED 2009 rating systems, international projects will not be able to use the regional priority credits developed for LEED-ND. USGBC does not have the capability to identify and assign credits for countries outside the U.S., but will consider expanding the program for future updates of the rating system.

LEED-ND and other LEED Rating Systems and Programs

Q. What kind of building certification is acceptable for compliance with GIBp1 and GIBc1 in LEED-ND?

A. Under GIBp1, projects must design, construct, or retrofit one whole building within the project to be certified through LEED for New Construction, LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance, LEED for Homes, LEED for Schools, LEED for Retail: New Construction, or LEED for Core and Shell (with at least 75% of the floor area certified under LEED for Commercial Interiors or LEED for Retail: Commercial Interiors), or through a green building rating system requiring review by independent, impartial, third-party certifying bodies as defined by ISO/IEC 17021. Under GIBc1, recognition is given to projects that certify additional buildings or a percentage of total project



square footage under LEED or another green building rating system. Note that green building certifications that were earned pre-project (prior to the date the LEED-ND developer acquired the project site) do not achieve the prerequisite.

Q. I have a LEED CI registered project and my building is located in a certified LEED-ND project. Is my project eligible for the full three points in SSc1 by nature of its location in a LEED-ND project?

A. No. While locating in a LEED-ND project may have indirect benefits, LEED-CI projects must still be located in a LEED certified building in order to obtain the three points for SSc1 option 1. LEED for Homes is currently the only LEED Green Building Rating System that provides direct incentives for locating in a certified LEED-ND project.

Q. Can I use LEED-ND in conjunction with the Multiple Buildings Application Guide?

A. LEED-ND project teams certifying multiple buildings under a LEED green building rating system may utilize the Multiple Buildings Application Guide to certify their buildings as an application separate from their LEED-ND submittal. However, this must be a separate process from LEED-ND certification. LEED-ND projects must meet the LEED-ND Rating System requirements and buildings within a LEED-ND project seeking certification under the MBAG program must meet the requirements of that program. Additionally, in advance of an update to the Multiple Buildings Application Guide, project teams must contact GBCI customer service at <http://www.gbci.org> for guidance prior to submitting multiple buildings for LEED Certification.

Fees

All fees for LEED-ND are listed on GBCI's web site at <http://www.gbci.org>.

Q. What is the registration fee for USGBC members and non-members and what does it include?

A. The registration fee is \$1,500 for USGBC members and non-members. Payment of this fee to GBCI makes the project eligible for an initial stage of certification review. Upon completing the LEED-ND registration process, a project team is allowed an optional and complimentary one-hour introductory call, access to all available submittal forms, and the ability to submit Credit Interpretation Requests (CIRs). GBCI does not currently charge a fee for registering a project for a subsequent stage of certification review.

Q. Will LEED-ND projects using other LEED rating systems be eligible for discounted certification fees?

A. At this time, GBCI does not offer a discount for certifying LEED-eligible buildings within their LEED-ND project. Project teams will be expected to register and submit their building(s) for certification review separately from their LEED-ND submittal.

Q, I registered my project by mistake. Am I eligible for a refund?

A. GBCI will not issue refunds for registration or certification fees.



Q. Can I transfer my project registration from LEED-ND to a different LEED rating system?

A. Yes, GBCI has stated that for a project that has not submitted for certification review, the project registration may be switched from LEED-ND to another LEED rating system. However, GBCI will note refund the difference in registration fees between LEED-ND and the other LEED rating systems. Project teams must contact GBCI customer service at <http://www.gbci.org> to request a registration transfer to another rating system.

Q. If a water body (i.e. lake, pond) is included within my project boundary, is it part of the total acreage when considering certification fees?

A. Yes, if a water body is wholly contained within the project boundary, it should be considered in the total project acreage when determining the total certification fee. The fees set by GBCI are based on gross project acreage.

Registration & Certification

This section is excerpted from the GBCI LEED-ND FAQ.

*****Please note that projects registering in 2010 prior to the launch of the full LEED-ND 2009 Certification Process will not be required to adhere to the submission deadlines for SLL Prerequisite and full stage reviews until the full certification process is publicly delivered. The FAQs below were created to facilitate a better understanding of GBCI's certification policies for LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development.*****

Q. Do I need to register again if I want to submit my LEED-ND application for a subsequent stage of certification review?

A. Yes. GBCI requires a subsequent registration for LEED-ND projects that have completed an initial stage of certification review (Stage 1 or 2) and are seeking certification review for a subsequent stage. Once a project team has accepted the results of their initial stage review, the project forms will become read-only and will not automatically be replaced with forms for a subsequent stage. Upon subsequent registration, the project will regain full access to LEED Online and will be eligible for an optional one-hour call with GBCI prior to the submission for a subsequent stage to discuss any updates to the LEED-ND Program that may have occurred between stages of review. There is currently no fee for registering a project for a subsequent stage of certification review.

Q. Am I held to the Rating System version for which I have initially registered? Why do I need to register my project for a subsequent stage of certification review?

A. By their nature neighborhood development projects have a long time horizon. But it is important that as projects hit their milestones, that they certify to the version of LEED for Neighborhood Development that is current at that time, so LEED-ND projects will not be grandfathered into versions of LEED-ND that may have been in effect at the time of each stage of certification. GBCI will administer the certification of LEED-ND projects as follows: If a project registers and submits for a subsequent stage of certification review, that project must be submitted in accordance with the requirements of the version of the LEED-ND Rating System current at the time of the subsequent



project registration. **As LEED-ND evolves, USGBC will be mindful of this long time horizon while developing future versions of LEED-ND.**

The following example is provided for the purposes of clarity:

A project achieves Stage 1 (conditional approval) under LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development. Prior to registering for Stage 2 (Pre-certification), registration for the 2009 version of LEED for Neighborhood Development closes and registration for the 2012 version becomes available. If the project is to be registered for Stage 2 (Pre-certification), such registration would need to be completed under the LEED 2012 for Neighborhood Development, since registration for LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development is closed, and subsequently the application for Stage 2 (Pre-certification) would be reviewed by GBCI for compliance with the requirements of the 2012 rating system version. For the Stage 2 review, the project would not be grandfathered under the LEED 2009 requirements.

Q. Are LEED-ND projects required to submit for review within a certain time period after completing an initial or subsequent stage registration?

A. Yes, projects must submit a LEED-ND application for review to GBCI within 3 years of initial or subsequent project registration.

Q. Once I complete Stage 1 review, am I limited to a certain number of years to register and submit my project for a subsequent stage of certification review?

A. Yes. Upon completion of a successful Stage 1 certification review, a project team has up to three (3) years to register with GBCI for a subsequent stage of certification review (Stage 2 or Stage 3) at no additional cost. Upon registration for a subsequent stage (Stage 2 or 3), a project team then has up to three (3) years to submit an application for a subsequent stage of certification review.

The following example is provided for the purposes of clarity:

A project achieves Stage 1 (conditional approval) under LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development in December 2010. This project has until December 2013 to register for a subsequent stage of certification review (Stage 2 or Stage 3). If the project registers in December 2013, it then has until December 2016 to submit an application for subsequent stage of certification review. The project will be held to requirements of the most current version of the Rating System at the time of registration (December 2013).

Q. Once I complete Stage 2 review, am I limited to a certain number of years to register and submit my project for a Stage 3 certification review?

A. Yes. Upon completion of a successful Stage 2 certification review, a project team has up to seven (7) years to register with GBCI for a Stage 3 certification review at no additional cost. Upon registration for a Stage 3 certification review, a project team then has up to three (3) years to submit an application for a Stage 3 certification review.



The following example is provided for the purposes of clarity:

A project achieves Stage 2 (pre-certified plan) under LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development in December 2010. This project has until December 2017 to register for a Stage 3 certification review. If the project registers in December 2017, it then has until December 2020 to submit an application for a Stage 3 certification review. The project will be held to requirements of the most current version of the Rating System at the time of registration (December 2017).

Q. What happens if I do not register and/or submit my project for certification review within the timeframes required? **

A. If a project team does not register and/or submit their project for certification review to GBCI within the timeframes required, the project application will expire and any formal designations achieved (conditional approval or pre-certified plan) will no longer be considered in good standing. A project team may re-enter the LEED-ND program by registering as a new project. The project will be subject to all initial registration and certification fees.

Q. Will GBCI grant extensions for projects that need more time to prepare their projects for a subsequent stage of certification review?

A. In its sole discretion, GBCI will consider granting extensions of required timelines to a project that is able to demonstrate hardship in meeting such timelines based on extenuating circumstances, due to size or complexity of the project. It should never be assumed or expected that an extension will be granted. Project teams should contact GBCI customer service at <http://www.gbci.org> to be considered for an extension.

Q. In the event my project fails to successfully achieve certification upon completion of a full stage review, can I submit my project for another stage of review?

A. No. If a project fails to achieve a level of certification upon completion of a full stage review or appeal review, the project can no longer participate in the LEED-ND program. However, individual buildings contained within the project may pursue the appropriate LEED Green Building Rating System.

LEED-ND Introductory Call & SLL Prerequisite Review

Q. What is the purpose of the LEED-ND Introductory Call? Where can I find more information?

A. Project registration for LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) includes an optional one-hour introductory call with GBCI and a LEED-ND reviewer at no additional cost. The purpose of this call is as follows:

- To obtain general guidance on the LEED for Neighborhood Development 2009 Program
- To review the LEED-ND 2009 Certification process
- To provide an opportunity for LEED-ND project teams to explain any overarching issues in regard to their project
- To pose inquiries related to the LEED-ND Certification process



Information on how to request a call as well as specific requirements and policies can be found on GBCI's website at: <http://www.gbci.org>. Calls can only occur prior to a SLL Prerequisite Review (if selected) or a full stage certification review and must be limited to 60 minutes.

Q. What is the purpose of the SLL Prerequisite Review?

A. All registered LEED-ND projects are eligible to pursue an optional SLL Prerequisite Review prior to submitting for an initial Stage 1, 2, or 3 LEED-ND Application. This feature allows project teams to verify that a project's location meets the requirements of the LEED-ND Smart Location & Linkage (SLL) prerequisites. It does not, however, award or guarantee successful achievement of certification. If successful, the project can advance to a full stage review. If unsuccessful, participation in the LEED-ND program can terminate before additional investment is expensed.

Similar to a full stage review, the SLL Prerequisite Review contains a preliminary and final review with an optional appeal review. Each LEED-ND project may undergo only one SLL Prerequisite Review and cannot pursue this option prior to any subsequent stages of review. For more details, please visit GBCI's website at <http://www.gbci.org>

Q. Can I submit a SLL Prerequisite application for review anytime after registration? **

A. No. Project teams must submit a SLL Prerequisite Review application for review within 18 months after the completion of registration.

Q. How much time to do I have to submit a full stage application upon the completion of a SLL Prerequisite Review? **

A. Project teams must submit a full stage application (Stage 1, 2, or 3) for certification review to GBCI no later than three (3) years after the project registration or no later than one (1) year after the completion of a SLL Prerequisite Review, whichever occurs later. If a project application is not submitted by this date, the project registration for such project shall be canceled by GBCI.

Additional Certification FAQs

Q. Can projects use Credit Interpretation Requests (CIRs) from the LEED-ND Pilot in their LEED-ND v2009 submittal?

A. Pilot CIRs may NOT be used in the post-pilot rating system due to significant changes in the prerequisite and credit requirements and structure. Similar to LEED Green Building Rating Systems, LEED-ND CIRs will be project-specific and will NOT be precedent-setting. LEED-ND projects are allowed to submit site plans (when necessary) with their CIR request. The functionality to upload CIRs may not be fully realized in LEED Online v3 until after Phase 1 launch.

Q. Do I have to apply for all three stages of the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system?



A. Although we encourage projects to complete at least Stage 2 and 3, projects are not required to complete all three stages. A project may enter into the program at any stage depending on how far along a project is in the development process. Please be aware that only Stage 3 projects that successfully complete a full review are considered to be officially “certified” under the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system.

Q. When does the owner (or owners) need to sign the LEED 2009 Project Application Review Agreement?

A. The owner(s) will be prompted to sign the LEED 2009 Project Application Review Agreement in LEED Online at the time of submission for certification review. The Owner(s) or Project Administrator must return a fully executed Agreement and pay all applicable fees in order for GBCI to commence the certification review.

Q. Does GBCI perform expedited certification reviews?

A. Project teams must contact GBCI customer service at <http://www.gbci.org> at least 10 (ten) business days prior to the submission of an expedited review to confirm that an expedited application can be accepted at that time. Current pricing for expedited reviews can be found at <http://www.gbci.org>.

Q. Can I alter my project boundary between stages of certification review?

A. No. The LEED project boundary determined at an SLL Prerequisite Review or initial stage of certification review must be consistent throughout the life of a LEED-ND application.

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