



Green Building Certifications At-A-Glance

Fannie Mae offers preferential pricing for Mortgage Loans secured by a multifamily property with a Fannie Mae-recognized Green Building Certification.

Fannie Mae currently recognizes 35 Green Building Certifications from 12 certifying organizations (see [Form 4250](#) for a full list of certifications and requirements). The Green Building Certifications vary in process, timing, cost, and focus. For example, some certifications evaluate energy usage only, while others consider a myriad of green building aspects including construction materials, water usage, and more. This resource provides a brief snapshot of each Multifamily Green Building Certification so you can guide any Borrower interested in obtaining a Green Building Certification.

Types of Green Building Certifications

Green Building Certifications classify multifamily buildings into three groups: New Construction, Substantial/Major Renovation, and Existing Buildings.

Green Building Certifications for New Construction

- **New Construction** Green Certifications are designed for properties at various points during development and construction - anywhere from pre-construction to up to 18 months after completion. Many New Construction certifications have requirements for a Design Review and/or Construction Review, which means that a property must start the certification prior to those points in the development process.

Green Building Certifications for Renovation

- **Renovation** Green Certifications are for properties making significant property improvements, which could be anything from replacing interiors and building systems to a gut renovation of a property. The level of renovation required varies by certification. These certifications operate like New Construction certifications in that they may require a Design Review and/or Construction Review, so it may be necessary to start the certification process prior to the commencement of the design and construction phases.

Green Building Certifications for Existing Buildings

- **Existing Building** Green Certifications are for properties with at least 12 months of operating history that have not made substantial or major renovations recently. These evaluate the property's normal operations.

Certification Timing

New Construction and Substantial/Major Renovation certifications are issued either at the completion of construction, following receipt of certificate of occupancy, or after a performance period. A performance period indicates a period of time (usually 12 months) after which the performance of the building will be evaluated; if the building meets the anticipated minimum performance, the certification will be issued at that time. Existing Building certifications are generally issued after a performance period, but because the buildings are already operational and occupied, the performance period is the period prior to the evaluation for the Green Building Certification.



Certification Requirements

Certifications may have requirements that the property must meet to obtain the certification. The following requirements are noted in the table of certifications where applicable.

- **Design Review and Construction Review:** Many Green Building Certifications require the certification organization or a third-party rater to be involved in the project during design and/or construction. For example, a property that is already under construction may not be eligible for a certification with a Design Review requirement.
- **Data Requirement:** Some certifications require 12-months of post-occupancy data. This requirement is sometimes referred to as a performance period.

Determining the Best Green Building Certification Option

1. Determine where the property is in its development and operations, and identify what type of Green Building Certification would apply to the property.

Phase	Certification Type	What to look for
Pre-Development	New Construction	Certifications that do not require property to be completed or occupied
Under Construction	New Construction	Certifications that do not require a Design Review
Recently Completed	New Construction	Certifications that do not require a Design Review or a Construction Review
Undergoing a Rehab	Substantial/Major Renovation	Certification timing that matches where the property is in rehab planning and implementation
Business as Usual	Existing Building	

2. Use the table of Green Building Certifications to find certifications that meet the property's needs, including Cost, Timing, and Requirements.
3. Contact the Green Building Certification organization to find out more details.

Organization and Green Building Certification	Timing for Certification	Requirements			Estimated Certification Cost Example ¹	Contact Information
		Design Review	Construction Review	Data Requirement		
Existing Building Certifications						
Green Building Initiative Green Globes Multifamily for Existing Buildings Green Globes Multifamily Performance Plus for Existing Buildings	12 months of energy and water data required. Final review ~ 1 month. Expedited certification option available.			•	\$10,250 -16,250	Megan Baker, Sr. Director of Engagement megan@thegbi.org
U.S. Green Building Council LEED O+M	After 75% occupancy has been achieved, 3-12 month performance period required. Final review ~ 1 month.			•	\$4,240 – 6,100	Sarah Karle, Senior Director skarle@usgbc.org
U.S. EPA ENERGY STAR, Existing Multifamily	12 months of whole property energy data required. Final review ~ 1-2 months.			•	\$0	Craig Haglund, Program Manager haglund.craig@epa.gov



Organization and Green Building Certification	Timing for Certification	Requirements			Estimated Certification Cost Example ¹	Contact Information
		Design Review	Construction Review	Data Requirement		
New Construction and Renovation Certifications						
Build It Green GreenPoint Rated New Home Multifamily GreenPoint Rated Whole Building Existing Multifamily	Design review ~ 1 month. Final review 1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		\$4,900	Chloe Chapman, Business Development Manager cchapman@builditgreen.org
Enterprise Green Communities Enterprise Green Communities Criteria	Pre-build submission review 1 month + Final review 2 months Certification obtained following construction completion.	•	•		\$0 (Cost associated with 2020 Criteria)	certification@enterprisecommunity.org
Green Building Initiative Green Globes Multifamily for New Construction Green Globes Multifamily Performance Plus for New Construction	Certification can be obtained without initiating review prior to design/ construction. Design and construction documentation will be reviewed. Design review 2-4 weeks (expedited), 4-6 weeks (standard). Final review 2-4 weeks (expedited), 8-10 weeks (standard).				\$14,500 – 20,500	Megan Baker, Sr. Director of Engagement megan@thegbi.org
Home Innovation Research Labs National Green Building Standard (NGBS) Green Multifamily Building Certification National Green Building Standard (NGBS) Green Home Remodeling Project Certification	Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		\$3,300 – 3,700	Michelle Foster, Vice President of Innovative Services mfoster@homeinnovation.com
International Living Future Institute Living Building Challenge Zero Carbon Certification Zero Energy Certification	Performance period minimum of 12 months. Final review 2-3 months. Certification obtained following performance period.			•	\$4,700 – 16,600	Kathleen Smith, Vice President, Living Building Challenge kathleen.smith@living-future.org
Passive House Institute Certified Passive House EnerPHit Certified Retrofit	Final review ~1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		Variable	building.certification@passiv.de For additional resources: https://naphnetwork.org/certification/



Organization and Green Building Certification	Timing for Certification	Requirements			Estimated Certification Cost Example ¹	Contact Information
		Design Review	Construction Review	Data Requirement		
New Construction and Renovation Certifications (continued)						
PHIUS PHIUS+ Certified	Design review 2-6 months. Results in PHIUS + Precertification letter. Final review ~1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.	•	•		\$16,250	Lisa White, Associate Director lisa@passivehouse.us
Southface EarthCraft	Final review ~1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.	•	•		\$7,500 – 9,000	Jennifer Fundora, Program Coordinator jfundora@southface.org
U.S. Green Building Council LEED BD+C LEED Zero	Design review (optional) ~1-2 month. Final review ~1-2 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		\$6,200 (LEED Zero is an additional \$2,000)	Sarah Karle, Senior Director skarle@usgbc.org
U.S. EPA ENERGY STAR Certified Homes	Final review ~1 month Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		\$0	Dean Gamble, ENERGY STAR Residential Branch, U.S. EPA gamble.dean@epa.gov
U.S. EPA ENERGY STAR Certified New Construction ENERGY STAR Multifamily High Rise	Design review. Final review ~1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.	•	•		\$0	Rebecca Hudson, ENERGY STAR Residential Branch, U.S. EPA HUDSON.REBECCA@EPA.GOV
U.S. DOE Zero Energy Ready Home	Certification obtained following construction completion.		•		\$0	Terrence Mosley, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. DOE terrence.mosley@ee.doe.gov
Viridiant EarthCraft	Final review ~1 month. Certification obtained following construction completion.	•	•		\$0	Sean Evensen-Shanley, Director of Residential Operations (Virginia Only) sean.evensen-shanley@viridiant.org

¹ Certification costs vary. Certification Cost example is for a 100 unit / 100,000 sq. ft property and excludes rater, licensed professional, consultant and documentation costs.

Questions? Contact the Fannie Mae Multifamily Green Team at green_financing@fanniemae.com.