



Applying LEED to multifamily projects

June 2026

What are the advantages of using LEED for multifamily facilities?

LEED-certified multifamily facilities exemplify the triple bottom line—benefiting people, planet, and profit. LEED certification supports healthier, more productive places, reduces environmental impacts, delivers savings through lower utility costs, and can enhance building value. LEED-certified homes promote occupant health and well-being by providing clean indoor air and incorporating safer building materials for comfort and safety. They are designed to conserve critical resources and use less energy and water, helping lower monthly utility bills and providing other financial benefits.

How can multifamily facilities earn LEED certification?

Whether you are pursuing v4, v4.1, or v5, there are multiple pathways to select the rating system that best fits your multifamily project. Use the summary tables below to help select the best rating system for your project. The [LEED Residential Guide to Certification](#) includes detailed rating system selection guidance for residential projects. Note: Some rating systems under v4.1 are not yet approved for use in the U.S. and Canada.

Table 1: **LEED v4 Certification Pathways for Residential Projects**

LEED BD+C: Multifamily Midrise	LEED BD+C: New Construction	LEED BD+C: Homes	LEED O+M: Multifamily	LEED BD+C: Core & Shell
• 4+ Stories • Specific to residential • Onsite verification	• 4+ Stories • Documentation approaches may be better for non-US based projects • No onsite verification	• 1-3 stories multifamily • Single family attached and detached • Onsite verification	• 20+ units • Specific adaptation for multifamily • Community level energy and water meter	• Projects that do not include fitout • Not specific to multifamily

Table 2: **LEED v4.1 Certification Pathways for Residential Projects**

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Residential: Multifamily	Residential: Multifamily Core & Shell	Residential: Single Family	LEED v4.1 O+M
• New construction and major renovation multifamily projects • Any number of stories • Not available for projects in US & CA • Onsite verification	• New construction and major renovation multifamily • Projects that do not include fitout • Not available for projects in US & CA • Onsite verification	• Single family attached and detached • Onsite verification	• Certify with prerequisites and performance data • Not specific to multifamily projects

How many multifamily projects are registered and certified under LEED?

As of June 2026, there are 16,239 LEED-certified and registered multifamily projects representing approximately 2.1 million residential units and 2.7 billion square feet of built space. This includes projects certified as individual stand-alone buildings and those certified through multiple-building applications such as bulk registration and batch certification.

What issues are unique to multifamily projects?

Unlike nonresidential buildings, multifamily projects have occupants 24/7. Full-time residency introduces different demands on energy and water and unique health considerations. Because most multifamily occupants pay their own utility bills, achieving LEED certification can reduce residents' cost of living. On average, a certified LEED home uses 30%–40% less electricity and can avoid more than 100 metric tons of CO₂ emissions over its lifetime. Modest investments in energy-saving and other climate-friendly technologies can make homes and communities healthier, more comfortable, more durable, more energy-efficient, and more environmentally responsible.

Home environments also affect health. Hazardous household pollutants may include carbon monoxide, radon, formaldehyde, mold, dust and dirt, pet dander, and residue from tobacco smoke and candles. Many households store chemicals such as pesticides, fertilizers, solvents, oils and greases, degreasers, gasoline, antifreeze, strong detergents, thinners, and oil-based paints. Preventing indoor air quality problems is generally less expensive than addressing them after they occur. LEED residential rating systems take a proactive approach to indoor air quality and promote health for multifamily residents and occupants.

How does LEED address the unique challenges of multifamily projects?

LEED v5 is the current version of the rating system and is available for commercial projects pursuing certification under New Construction, Core and Shell, Commercial Interiors, and Existing Buildings. Many strategies developed for multifamily projects under previous versions of LEED have been adapted for LEED v5 or incorporated into the Project Priorities and Innovation credit category. Credits in this category offer flexibility to address unique project contexts and priorities, including typology, culture, location, areas of innovation, and individual performance objectives. Sector specific Project Priority credits are being developed and will be released in the [Project Priority Library](#). LEED v4.1 presents a new approach to residential projects, pulling the most relevant language

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from BD+C and residential focused rating systems and aligning it with residential market priorities. With the release of new multifamily options in LEED v4.1, Residential BD+C is the required rating system for all single family and multifamily projects. Residential projects using LEED v4.1 may not use the commercial LEED BD+C rating systems.

The updated Residential rating system is designed to simplify decision making for the residential market. USGBC believes that all buildings should be green—especially homes—because LEED-certified homes are built to be healthier, more efficient, and more cost effective. LEED v4.1 Residential revitalizes our approach to the housing market by streamlining credits that matter most to homeowners and residents, such as health and wellbeing, comfort, energy and water savings, and green and healthy materials. For example, the following credits carry greater weight in residential rating systems:

- EQ Credit: Enhanced Indoor Air Quality Strategies
- MR Credit: Environmentally Preferable Products
- EQ Credit: Low Emitting Products
- EA Credit: Annual Energy Use (energy savings over a baseline)
- WE Credit: Indoor Water Use Options have also been added to existing LEED credits to lower both hard and soft costs to achieve certification. By recognizing the unique circumstances of international projects, LEED v4.1 Residential is now more applicable in key **global markets**. The rating system has been further localized to meet **regional** needs; for example, v4.1 Multifamily includes approaches for both natural and mechanical ventilation strategies.

How does the Arc platform relate to multifamily?

The LEED v4.1 O+M rating system offers a performance-based pathway to certify existing buildings and interior spaces. It uses [Arc](#), a platform designed to collect, manage, and benchmark building performance across five categories: energy, water, waste, transportation, and human experience.

For multifamily, LEED v4.1 O+M enables comparisons to similar facilities pursuing high-performance measures worldwide. Facility managers and owners can continuously monitor data and make informed decisions to optimize building performance based on real-time analytics. This performance pathway can be used to certify and recertify the project every three years. [Learn more](#). We recommend that lowrise multifamily projects—especially those with fewer than 20 units per building—first create a free test project to learn more about Arc and estimate performance. For more details, see the FAQ “[How should a project team decide between using v4 or v4.1 O+M?](#)”

[LEED v5 BD+C](#), [ID+C](#) and [O+M](#) rating systems allow all space types to certify using the new [Arc experience](#), which offers fluidity and flexibility for users. Performance, certification, and reporting will be delivered in one place.

Green Rater requirements for LEED Residential projects

The LEED for Homes program requires a LEED Green Rater to provide onsite verification and complete the LEED application for GBCI review. Your Green Rater will help ensure your project

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is registered correctly, complete a preliminary rating to confirm that prerequisites can be met and identify pursued credits, determine the targeted LEED certification level, and perform midconstruction and final site verification. They also help coordinate and review documentation and submit the project for GBCI certification review.

All LEED Green Raters work under the oversight of a LEED Residential Provider organization.

Your first step is to contact a Green Rater for your project. [Find a LEED Green Rater in your region](#)

- [Review the Residential Guide to Certification for more information](#)
- [Review the residential registration and certification fees](#)

How can multiple buildings and structures in a campus setting earn LEED certification?

Multifamily projects often operate at larger scales with multiple buildings on a single site. Buildings, people, and processes are interconnected. Projects using LEED for Homes v4—including Multifamily Lowrise and Multifamily Midrise—and LEED v4.1 Single Family can use bulk registration and batch certification for projects with multiple buildings. This approach allows projects using the same rating system to submit one workbook using a “worstcase” set of credits. The Residential Verification and Submittal Guidelines include specific guidance for group projects.

Bulk registration: Bulk registration allows you to register a group of buildings in a single registration, given that all buildings in the bulk registration are:

- Under the responsibility of one builder/developer
- Located in a single country
- Pursuing certification under the same rating system

• **Batch certification:** Within a bulk registration group, you may submit multiple projects in one batch for certification, given that all buildings in the batch:

- Meet bulk registration requirements
- Are part of a single metropolitan area and within the same country
- Are in the same climate zone
- Are of the same construction type, using the same envelope systems
- Earn the same certification level under the same LEED rating system. Projects must utilize the “worst-case” set of LEED credits: this means if some units earn more credits than others, the batch is reviewed at the lower level of credits achieved
- Have the same designer and builder/developer

If you have a group project pursuing LEED v4.1 Multifamily in the meantime, please reach out to homes@gbci.org for guidance from our team of residential experts on how to best pursue certification for your project.

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What are the various LEED resources available for multifamily projects?

- [LEED v5 BD+C, ID+C and O+M Rating Systems](#) and [LEED v5 guides](#)
- [Overview of LEED v4.1 Residential](#)
- [Overview of LEEDv4](#)
- [LEED in Motion: Residential](#)
- [Residential: Guide to Certification](#)

Where can I find more owner profiles and case studies on multifamily projects?

- [Ascent MKE](#)
- [Caldwell](#)
- [Frasier Meadows Independent Living](#)
- [Palazzo Novecento](#)
- [Reed College New Residence Hall](#)
- [2821 El Camino Real](#)
- [Las Flores](#)

Does USGBC offer any education for project teams wanting to learn more about multifamily facilities pursuing green building measures?

USGBC education courses that focus on multifamily:

- [Roadmap Multifamily Decarbonization](#)
- [Multifamily Green Building Incentives: ENERGY STAR, Zero Energy Ready Homes LEED, and Section 45L](#)
- [LEED v4.1 Residential Multifamily Overview](#)
- [Strategies for Community Residential Climate Resilience](#)

Who can I contact for more information?

For more information about LEED and multifamily, [contact us](#) or reach out to our team of residential experts directly at homes@gbci.org.