

Creating Green, Affordable Neighborhoods: Get Funded, Get Educated, Get Started

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The benefits of green building and smarter neighborhood planning and design should be available to everyone, regardless of household income level. We know that green communities foster good health through walkable streets, transit connectivity and proximity to resources. Green building and infrastructure reduce carbon emissions and conserve energy and resources. Collectively, these green neighborhood features drive community costs down and create cohesive, active settings. Shouldn't everyone have access to green neighborhoods? Unfortunately, this isn't always the case. Much of the nation's affordable housing stock is outdated, resource inefficient, poorly connected to transit, jobs or neighborhood amenities, and in some cases harmful to inhabitants. The [LEED for Neighborhood Development](#) rating system seeks to change that by serving as a guide for redevelopment of former public housing complexes or development of new mixed-income communities. In addition to prioritizing the selection of infill sites, previously developed sites, and locations with transit access and walkable compact development, the rating system rewards projects for including a certain portion of affordable and workforce housing. But unfortunately, in many cases, nonprofit developers and public housing authorities don't have the experience, capacity or funding to pursue certification. The [Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program](#) was created in 2010 to help developers of affordable housing projects bridge that gap by providing financial, educational and technical support. Ten grant recipients, announced in November 2010, have been actively working towards pursuing LEED for Neighborhood Development for their mixed-income development projects and several have commenced construction. These really are inspirational projects where the nonprofit developers and their partners are truly making a difference in their communities. One of the projects from the first round of funding, [Sunnydale HOPE SF](#) in San Francisco, was the first project in the US to achieve a stage of LEED-ND certification for their plans to revitalize the city's largest and most dilapidated housing projects. Sunnydale's redevelopment plan includes on-site replacement of all public housing units to ensure no displacement of the current residents whose average income falls below 20% of the area median income, an entirely new and reconnected street grid and a site-wide green stormwater management system. Through the generous support of the Bank of America Foundation, USGBC is excited to announce the opening of the 2012 Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program. Building on the success of the first round of projects, USGBC plans to award another 10 grants this November. This is your opportunity get involved. A review committee of industry leaders will award 10 projects with the grant funding generously donated by Bank of America, which includes:

- Cash award of \$25,000 to be used to pursue LEED for Neighborhood Development certification

Fully refunded LEED for Neighborhood Development project registration fee by GBCI

- Complimentary LEED for Neighborhood Development Reference Guide
- Registration for an online LEED for Neighborhood Development webinar
- Registration for a LEED for Neighborhood Development workshop
- \$300 discount on USGBC national membership
- Access to USGBC technical assistance and monthly conference calls
- One registration for the National Affordable Green Homes & Sustainable Communities Summit during the [Greenbuild International Conference & Expo](#) in San Francisco, CA

Are you involved in a project pursuing LEED for Neighborhood Development that incorporates affordable housing? Are you interested in pursuing LEED but would benefit from grant funding? Then please consider applying for the Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program. **Applications are due August 10, 2012 by 5 p.m. PT.** [Learn more about the Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program](#) » [Dive in to the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system](#) »

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