

Highlighting Green Homes by Greening the MLS

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In recent years, there has been a boom in the construction industry and demand for green homes even while the real estate market continues to struggle. This is a clear sign that prospective buyers find value in green homes. Studies show that [green home construction is growing](#), and more and more home buyers are [listing green attributes](#) like energy efficiency as a top priority when looking to buy a home. And when homes do sell, [green homes sell for more](#).

But while this trend is very positive, the reality is that most buyers have trouble finding certified efficient, green homes in their area because the real estate infrastructure used by the industry doesn't allow this information to be shared. The Multiple Listing Service (MLS), the primary platform for listing and selling a home through a realtor, lags far behind the market in most regions in reflecting the energy efficiency and green building information those prospective buyers want to see. Of the 860 MLSs nationwide, less than 100 include searchable green data fields. Such fields include information on things like third party certification standards like LEED for Homes certifications or HERS Index scores.

To address this lack of communication, USGBC launched the [Highlighting Green Homes by Greening the MLS](#) campaign with the simple goal of making sure all MLS platforms reflect the leadership of the best home builders in the country through searchable green data fields. We are happy to join other organizations that share this goal like the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Homebuilders.

This campaign is about finding solutions by bringing people together and including players in the market. It's not an issue that has a legislative fix, though [government involvement certainly can help](#). To green the MLS, advocates must find consensus and build a winning coalition that develops solutions to better highlight green homes in their local residential listings.

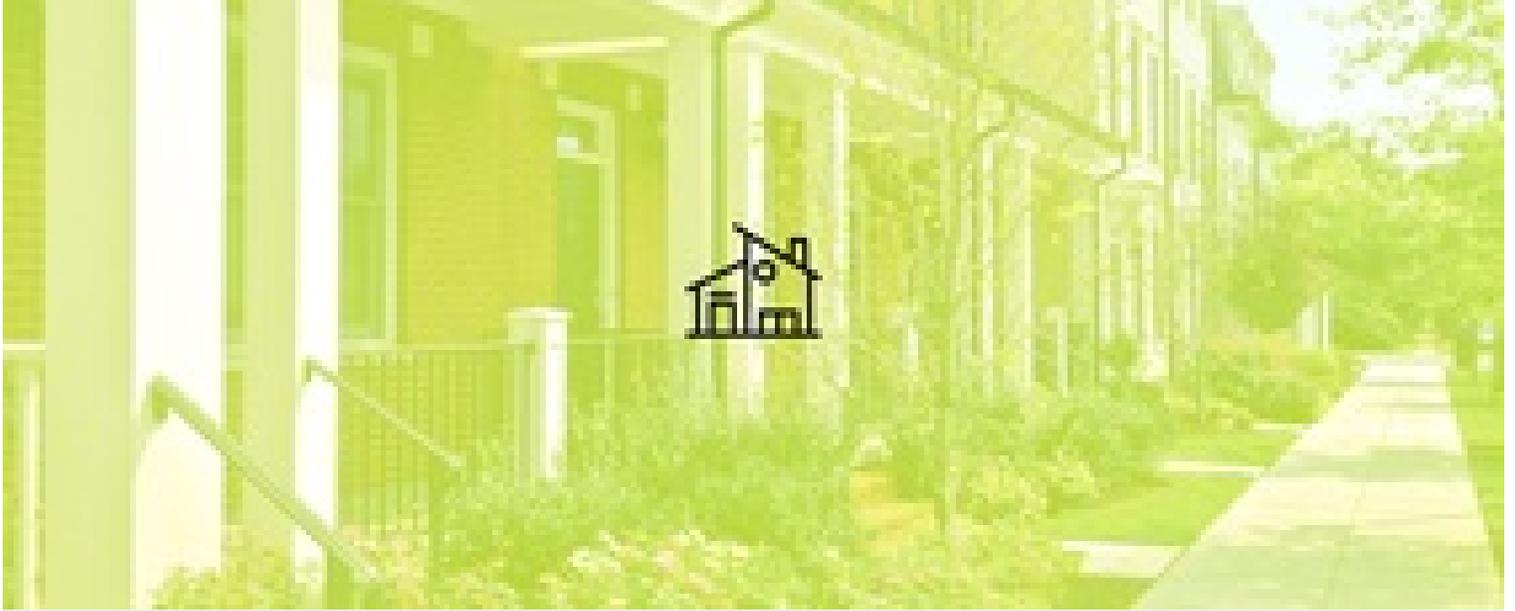
Fortunately, several green MLS initiatives have produced a wealth of material to work off. USGBC Colorado, with the help of the Colorado Governor's Energy Office, successfully [led an effort](#) to green many of the state's listing services. And LEED for Homes, in conjunction with [National Association of Realtors](#) and the [National Association of Home Builders](#), produced up a step-by-step tool kit to [Greening the MLS](#). Both resources were the inspirations for USGBC's Highlighting Green Homes Campaign.

While there may seem to be many moving pieces to this campaign, it's a challenge worth taking. By the feedback received on our [campaign introductory call](#), the USGBC advocacy community seems up to the task. There is no better way to drive home the benefits of green buildings in the residential market than through an MLS that contains searchable green data, third party certification fields, and accurately conveys green home leadership to brokers, appraisers, realtors and to buyers from sellers.

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