



Ulster County 2021 Climate Smart Communities Recertification Documentation

PE3 Action: Green Building Standard for Government Buildings

Background: On November 8, 2006, Ulster County adopted Resolution No. 383 of 2006: Establishing High Performance Green Building Standards for County of Ulster New Construction Projects. The resolution establishes a policy that all Ulster County funded new construction of public buildings be designed and built to a minimum rating of LEED Silver.

Documentation:

- Resolution No. 383, November 8, 2006: Establishing High Performance Green Building Standards for County of Ulster New Construction Projects

Available here: <https://legislature.ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/383-06.pdf>

Establishing High Performance Green Building Standards For County Of Ulster New Construction Projects

Legislators Bartels, Donaldson, Gregorius, Kraft, Loughran, R.S. Parete, Provenzano, Sheeley, Terpening and Zimet, the Efficiency, Reform and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee (Chairman Bischoff and Legislators Liepmann, Rodriguez, Shapiro, Busick and Cummings), the Environmental Committee (Chairman Shapiro and Legislators Distel, R.A. Parete, Rodriguez, Fabiano and McAfee) and the Public Works Committee (Chairman Berardi and Legislators Bischoff, Cahill, Dart, Lomita, Stoeckeler, Fabiano, Felicello and McAfee) offer the following:

WHEREAS, development and construction practices are significant contributors to the depletion of natural resources and a major cause of air and water pollution, solid waste, deforestation, toxic wastes, health hazards, global warming and other negative consequences, and

WHEREAS, buildings use one-quarter of all the world's wood harvest, consume two-fifths of all materials and energy flows, and account for more than one-third of CO2 emissions, and

WHEREAS, Ulster County spends in excess of \$1,375,000.00 annually on combined fuel costs for its conventionally constructed public buildings, and

WHEREAS, construction of public buildings to high performance green building standards will reduce energy use, conserve water, reduce waste, increase the use of recycled materials, improve the health and satisfaction of Ulster County employees and citizens and empower economic development of businesses involved in green building and materials, and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government, states and municipalities across the U.S. have adopted high performance green building principles by incorporating the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system into their building projects, and

WHEREAS, comprehensive studies have been completed concluding that LEED Silver rating can be achieved with little increase in construction costs (0-3%) and that the economic benefits of green design are approximately 10 times the initial investment, and

WHEREAS, construction costs represent only 20-30 percent of the building's entire costs over its 30 to 40 year life, emphasis should be placed on the life cycle costs of a public building. High performance green buildings have reduced lifecycle costs, and

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WHEREAS, the construction industry in the County of Ulster represents a significant portion of our economy through Capital Improvement Projects and proposed development, and as a significant portion of the building industry is represented by small business, an increase in sustainable building practices will encourage and promote new and innovative small business development throughout New York, and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of members voting approval, and

WHEREAS, the Efficiency, Reform and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval, and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of members voting approval, and

WHEREAS, the Ways and Means Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval.

RESOLVED, that before taking on any County funded construction projects, including major renovations, representatives of Ulster County will meet with NYSERDA to inform themselves of any relevant programs and/or incentives, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will request a NYSERDA audit before any capital project, renovation or new construction, that requires a bid, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that all Ulster County funded new construction of public buildings be designed and built to a minimum rating of "LEED™ Silver" using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED-NC™ rating system *except as set forth below*, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, if another agency is funding part of a construction project, the project is not required to be LEED certified unless mutually agreed to by the agency and Ulster County, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that *in the event that* certain new building types may not be appropriate for LEED certification for reasons other than those financial, *then*, in *such* situations the *Ulster County* Department of Buildings and Grounds *shall* provide a report to the *Ulster County* Public Works Committee *setting forth*

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the reasons why such LEED certification is not appropriate, at which time the report shall be forwarded to the full Legislature for its determination, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, County agencies are encouraged to work cooperatively with one another to achieve the goals outlined in this resolution, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that requests for proposals and bids for County funded construction projects shall explain the requirement for LEED certification, and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 30 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislators Alfonso, Every and
Felicello)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
PROJECTED SAVINGS

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2 Points

3 Points

5 Points

A. Why is this action important?

Numerous local governments throughout the country have adopted green building standards for new construction of local government buildings. The construction of new buildings presents a significant opportunity to design with energy efficiency and resource conservation in mind. Adopting a green building standard for new construction will make green design consistent among all newly constructed buildings, reduce the local government's environmental impact, and demonstrate leadership by example to the rest of the community. This action is also in line with the New York State Green Building Construction Act passed in 2009 requiring all new state buildings meet green building standards. While not all local governments are constructing new buildings, all have existing properties. Green building standards can also be established for the operation and maintenance or retrofit of existing facilities. Significant energy savings and associated greenhouse (GHG) emissions reductions can come from improvements to existing buildings.

B. How to implement this action

New Construction

Green building standards such as the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or Green Globes are now used widely to provide guidelines for the design of new buildings. The local government should adopt a clear policy that requires new construction be designed to a set of specific criteria or a green performance threshold. The local government may choose to reference existing standards such as [LEED](#), [ENERGY STAR](#), [ICC-IGCC 2012](#) or [ASHRAE Standard 189.1](#). Alternatively, a local government may choose to establish its own standards, but those standards should go substantially beyond minimum code requirements. If referencing an existing standard such as LEED, it is important to note that it is not necessary to require buildings to be officially certified, as that is often cost prohibitive. Instead, the policy can reference that the guidelines be met and that official certification by a third party is optional. [NYSERDA's New Construction Program](#) may be able to help offset the cost of incorporating energy efficiency measures into new buildings and achieving LEED certification.

Existing Buildings and Facilities

FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SHOULD ADOPT A CLEAR POLICY THAT REQUIRES ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Proactively upgrade existing buildings to a specific set of green building standards by a certain date
- Incorporation of green building standards when facilities are to be upgraded
- Apply green building standards to existing operation and maintenance programs

As with new construction, the local government can reference existing green building design guidelines such as LEED for Existing Buildings or LEED Operations and Maintenance, or may establish its own standards. If referencing an existing standard, it is not necessary to require buildings to be certified under the referenced program, as costs for certification can be cost prohibitive. Policies can instead require that buildings be certifiable under the guidelines. It is recommended that the adopted standards or policy specify the size and age of buildings to which the standards would be applicable.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

Adoption of the policy itself can be completed in the standard time for the local government to adopt any internal policy. Staff resources required to fulfill this task will depend on in-house expertise. Consultants could assist as needed. Implementation of the existing buildings policy will require significant staff time and resources to evaluate all existing buildings and implement improvements wherever necessary to meet the adopted standards.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is applicable to any local government. The policy would likely be developed in coordination with numerous staff involved with capital planning, facilities management, and construction of new government buildings and would require approval and official adoption by the local government's highest ranking official(s).

E. How to obtain points for this action

Points can be obtained for this action by adopting a green building standard for new construction (2 points), adopting a green building standard for existing local government buildings and facilities (3 points) or both (5 points).

F. What to submit

Documentation of the written policy as well as signed documentation of its adoption and enactment by the government official or body authorized to enact such policies. Additionally, local governments should submit a memorandum outlining how the policy has incorporated an existing green building standard directly or incorporated aspects of the standard into the policy. The policy may have been adopted at any time prior to the application date to receive points for this action.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

G. Links to additional resources or best practices

- [NYSERDA Commercial New Construction Program](#)
- [LEED Green Building Standard](#)
- [US EPA ENERGY STAR](#)
- [ASHRAE Standard 189.1 for the Design of High-Performance, Green Buildings](#)
- [2012 International Green Construction Code \(IGCC\)](#)
- [Syracuse, NY Green Building Ordinance \(2007\)](#)

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.