SDCI DIRECTOR'S RULE 2-2025

Applicant:

City of Seattle
Department of Construction and Inspections

Supersedes: 4-2021
Effective: May 16, 2025
Publication Date: March 27, 2025

Subject:

Green Building Standard

Code and Section Reference:
Index: **SMC 23.58D and 23.84A.014 "G"**

Type of Rule: Code Interpretation and Procedural
Ordinance Authority: SMC 3.06.040

Approved

(signature on file)
Nathan Torgelson, Director, SDCI Date

Purpose:

The purpose of this Rule is to describe the requirements and procedures to meet the Green Building Standard. It is organized into four sections.

A. Green Building Standard Requirements
B. The procedures to demonstrate compliance during permit review and construction.
C. The procedure to use a substantially equivalent or superior Green Building Standard to those in this Rule.
D. Approved Green Building Certification Programs

Background:

The Land Use Code requires compliance with the Green Building Standard, as described in this Rule when a development chooses to exceed a minimum floor area or uses incentive zoning to gain extra floor area or height. To determine whether your project triggers the Green Building Standard and which zones are included, please reference the Green Building Standard summary.

As defined in the Land Use Code SMC 23.84A.014, *Green building standard means a performance-based standard adopted by the Director by rule that is equivalent or superior to standards accepted in the building industry for high-level development strategies and practices that apply to a range of structure types, save resources, and promote renewable, clean energy.*

High-level development strategies and requirements accepted by the building industry are reflected in this rule. For instance, Built Green requires carbon reductions similar to the embodied carbon reduction strategies reference in this rule.

Rule:

A. Green Building Standard Requirements.

When a commitment to meet the green building standard is required, the owner shall:

1. Obtain a green building certification at the specified level through one of the approved green building certification programs listed in Section D.

2. Do not use fossil fuel-fired equipment or appliances, including but not limited to residential cooking appliances, clothes dryers, indoor fireplaces, indoor fire tables, outdoor radiant heaters, space heating appliances and service water heating appliances. Fossil fuels are permitted to be used for emergency and standby power generators, and cooking appliances in commercial kitchens. Barbecues, fireplaces, fire tables or fire pits are allowed only if located outdoors and equipped with a listed gas timer rated for the pressure and capacity of the gas serving the appliance and installed downstream of the appliance shutoff valve to prevent unintentional continuous operation.
3. Reduce Embodied Carbon. Embodied Carbon refers to the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the building materials required for a project. Use one of the following strategies to reduce the emissions associated with your new construction project. The following strategies benefit a project in achieving one of the approved certifications listed in Section D, please reference the specific rating system resources for details.
    i) Retain an existing principal structure on the proposed development site.
    ii) Relocate an existing principal structure to another site within the city limits or outside the city limits.
    iii) Deconstruct or partially deconstruct existing structure(s) to remove a minimum 1,000 board feet of wood material for reuse. Material may be reused on site, donated, or sold for reuse.
    iv) Use salvaged wood in the proposed new construction[1]
        a. For residential structures with one to four units, 200 Board Feet (BF) per unit
        b. For residential structures with five or more units, 800 BF total
        c. For structures containing no residential units, 800 BF total
    v) Reduce the embodied carbon of all concrete by procuring concrete mixes that have a cradle-to-gate Global Warming Potential (GWP) at least 10% lower than National Ready Mixed Concrete Association's (NRMCA's) regional benchmarks for the Pacific Northwest (page 80) as demonstrated by product-specific Type III Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for the concrete mixes used in the project's structure, enclosure, and hardscape. A weighted-average approach can be used to calculate average embodied carbon intensity values.[1]

vi) Conduct a cradle-to-grave whole building life-cycle assessment of the project's structure, enclosure, and hardscape materials. Compare results to a baseline developed for the project and demonstrate a 10% reduction in GWP.[1,2]

vii) For residential projects three (3) stories or less: Conduct a cradle to gate whole building life-cycle assessment of the project's major structural, enclosure and partition materials (foundations, walls, floors, roofs, windows, and cladding material). Compare results to a baseline developed for the project and demonstrate a 10% reduction in GWP.[1]

[1]see Built Green SF and MF 2024 checklists, Section 7: Carbon Reduction
[2]based on Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) BD+C New Construction, v5 Materials and Resources, Reduce Embodied Carbon

B. Procedures to document a commitment to meet the Green Building Standard (SMC 23.58D.004)

1. When a Master Use Permit (MUP) is required.
   i) The owner must complete a Green Building Standard Commitment Form. The completed commitment form must be uploaded as a required submittal document and be embedded in the approved Master Use Permit plan set.
2. Before issuance of building permit, and demolition permit if deconstructing an existing building.
   i) The owner or financially responsible party must complete a Green Building Standard Commitment Form. The completed form must be uploaded as a required submittal document and embedded in the approved permit plan set.
3. Before the issuance of the first building permit that includes structural frame.
   i) The owner or financially responsible party must appoint a Green Building Inspector by completing a Green Building Inspection Form. The form must be uploaded before permit issuance and embedded in the approved permit plan set. Raters, verifiers, or consultants are considered the Green Building Inspectors.

4. Before the certificate of occupancy or before the final inspection (if no certificate of occupancy is required) the selected Green Building Inspector must upload a Green Building Final Report. The Final Report will be reviewed by SDCI before issuance of the certificate of occupancy or final inspection. The Final Report must be completed by a company and person approved by the certification organization, or a substantially equivalent certification approved by SDCI and include.
    i) A summary with dates provided of the site inspections performed during construction.
    ii) Test results for infiltration, and commissioning results for ventilation systems.
    iii) Evidence to demonstrate compliance with the embodied carbon reduction strategies.
        a. Use of salvage wood in the project. Provide receipts with board feet quantities at or greater than the required quantity, how the wood was used, and photo examples.
        b. Provide Environmental Product Declarations for concrete mixes used in the project's structure, enclosure and hardscape evidencing at least 10% lower GWP than referenced in the NRMCA regional benchmarks for the Pacific Northwest.
        c. Provide a whole building life cycle assessment demonstrating at least a 10% reduction in GWP.
    iv) Acknowledge that most of the documentation, testing results and other information has been collected to meet the certification level required.
    v) Confirmation that no fossil fuel equipment or appliances were installed per Director's Rule 2-2025.

5. Within 180 days of final certificate of occupancy or final inspection, to demonstrate compliance to SMC 23.58D.004.B, upload evidence of certification from an independent third party under the primary construction permit via the Seattle Services Portal (https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/portal/) or to SCIpriioritygreen@seattle.gov. The report must demonstrate the required certification was achieved from one of the approved Green Building Certification Programs listed in Section D.

C. Demonstrating a substantially equivalent or superior Green Building Standard.

An applicant may request consideration of a Green Building Standard that is substantially equivalent or superior to the existing standards. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The applicant will be responsible for the costs associated with preparing the analysis. The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections will review this analysis at the applicable land use hourly rate.

To request a substantially equivalent or superior Green Building Standard, the following must be provided:

1. The Director may approve a substantially equivalent Green Building Standard if the applicant submits a written request, signed by the owner or financially responsible party to sciprioritygreen@seattle.gov. The request must include:
   i) Documentation demonstrating to the Director how the proposed standard is equivalent or superior to the standards of one or more of the building industry certification programs listed in Section D or embodied carbon reduction strategies listed in this Rule and
   ii) Identification of an independent third-party organization to evaluate compliance with the proposed standard.

2. A request to meet a substantially equivalent or superior Green Building Standard must include a comparative analysis between an approved Green Building Standard in Section D, and the proposed equivalent Green Building Standard including certification by an independent third-party organization.

3. A request to use an equivalent or superior strategy for reducing embodied carbon not in this Rule can be made by providing a comparative analysis between the strategies in the Rule and the proposed strategies.

D. Approved Green Building Certification Programs

Certification Organization	Rating System	Certification Level	Certification Agency if different	Version	Building Type
Built Green	Single Family/Townhouse New Construction checklist	4-Star or better	Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties	2024 Checklist (2021 WSEC) or 2021 Checklist (2018 WSEC)[1]	Residential
Built Green	Multifamily Checklist	4-Star or better	Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties	2024 Checklist (2021 WSEC) or 2021 Checklist (2018 WSEC)[1]	Residential
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)	New Construction	Gold	Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI)	V4.0,4.1 or 5	Nonresidential
LEED	New Construction	[2]Platinum	GBCI	V4.0 or 4.1	Residential
LEED	Core and shell	Gold	GBCI	V4.0, 4.1 or 5	Nonresidential
LEED	Residential Single-Family Homes	[2]Platinum	GBCI	V4.0 or 4.1	Attached or detached residential up to 4 units
LEED	Residential Multifamily Homes	[2]Platinum	GBCI	V4.0 or 4.1	Two or more residential units any number of stories
LEED	Residential Multifamily Homes Core and Shell	[2]Platinum	GBCI	V4.0 or 4.1	Two or more residential units any number of stories-interior fit out not completed

Certification Organization	Rating System	Certification Level	Certification Agency if different	Version	Building Type
Living Building Challenge (LBC)	LBC Living Certification	LBC Living Certification	Living Future	V4.1	Nonresidential or residential
LBC	LBC Petal Certification	LBC Petal Certification	Living Future	V4.1	Nonresidential or residential
LBC	Zero Energy Standard	Zero Energy Standard	Living Future	V1.1	Nonresidential or residential
LBC	LBC Core	LBC Core Certification	Living Future	V4.1	Nonresidential or residential
Phius	Phius +2018 or Phius 2021	Core/Zero	Phius	+2018/+2021	Nonresidential and residential
Phius	Phius 2024	Prescriptive/ Core/Zero	Phius	Phius 2024	Nonresidential and residential
Washington State Department of Commerce, Housing Trust Fund	Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard	NA	Housing Trust Fund Contract Manager for the State of Washington	4.0 or 4.1	Only for residential receiving financing from the Seattle Office of Housing and/or State Housing Trust Fund

[1]For Built Green, use the checklist version that matches the applicable building permit code version

[2]For LEED, building permits subject to 2018 Seattle Energy Code or earlier satisfy the Green Building Standard at Gold or better.

This document is available in electronic format at Green Building Standard - Applications - SDCI | seattle.gov

Green Building Standard Commitment Form

SDCI Project Number	
Project Address	
Property Owner or Financially Responsible Party - Name	
Property Owner or Financially Responsible Party - Business Name	
Address	
City/State/Zip	
Email	

I am responsible for the associated project and agree to meet the Green Building Standard pursuant to Director's Rule 2-2025

1. Select one Green Building Certification and provide registration or enrollment number (only required for Construction Permit):
    - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
    - Built Green
    - Phius
    - Living Building Challenge (LBC)
    - Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard (ESDS)
2. Do not use fossil fuel-fired equipment or appliances, including but not limited to residential cooking appliances, clothes dryers, indoor fireplaces, indoor fire tables, outdoor radiant heaters, space heating appliances and service water heating appliances. Fossil fuels are permitted to be used for emergency and standby power generators, and cooking appliances in commercial kitchens. Barbecues, fireplaces, fire tables or fire pits are allowed only if located outdoors and equipped with a listed gas timer rated for the pressure and capacity of the gas serving the appliance and installed downstream of the appliance shutoff valve to prevent unintentional continuous operation.

3. Select one strategy to reduce embodied carbon
    - Retain an existing principal structure on the proposed development site.
    - Relocate an existing principal structure to another site within the city limits or outside the city limits.
    - Deconstruct or partially deconstruct existing structure(s) to remove a minimum 1,000 board feet of wood material for reuse. Material may be reused on site, donated, or sold for reuse.
    - Use salvaged wood in the proposed new construction
        i. For residential structures with one to four units, 200 Board Feet (BF) per unit
        ii. For residential structures with five or more units, 800 BF total
        iii. For structures containing no residential units, 800 BF total
    - Reduce the embodied carbon of concrete by procuring concrete mixes that have a cradle-to-gate Global Warming Potential (GWP) at least 10% lower than (NRMCA's) regional benchmarks for the Pacific Northwest regional benchmarks for the Pacific Northwest as demonstrated by product-specific Type III Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for the concrete mixes used in the project's structure, enclosure, and hardscape. A weighted-average approach can be used to calculate average embodied carbon intensity values.
    - Conduct a cradle-to-grave whole building life-cycle assessment of the project's structure, enclosure, and hardscape materials. Compare results to a baseline developed for the project and demonstrate a 10% reduction in GWP.
    - For residential projects three (3) stories or less: Conduct a cradle to grave whole building life-cycle assessment of the project's major structural, enclosure and partition materials (foundations, walls, floors, roofs, windows, and cladding material). Compare results to a baseline developed for the project and demonstrate a 10% reduction in GWP.
4. Before certificate of occupancy or before final inspection if no certificate of occupancy is required, the selected Green Building Inspector must upload a Green Building Final Report. The Final Reports will be reviewed by SDCI before final inspection or issuance of certificate of occupancy. Final reports must be completed by a company and person approved by the certification organization, or a substantially equivalent certification approved by SDCI.

5. Within 180 days of final certificate of occupancy or final inspection, to demonstrate compliance to SMC 23.58D.004.B, upload evidence of certification from an independent third party under the primary construction permit via the Seattle Services Portal (https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/portal/) or to SCIpriioritygreen@seattle.gov. The report must demonstrate the required certification was achieved from one of the approved Green Building Certification Programs listed in Section D.

I am the owner and commit that the proposed development will meet the green building standard, or a substantially equivalent or superior standard, and shall demonstrate compliance with that commitment in accordance with the provisions of Section 23.58D.004 and this rule. Failure to submit the certification report within 180 days, or by such later date as may be allowed by the director, shall result in penalties of $500 per day and up to a maximum penalty of 2 percent of construction value.

Signature Date

This document is available in electronic format at Green Building Standard - Applications - SDCI | seattle.gov

Green Building Inspection Form

Before issuance of a building permit, the owner or financially responsible party shall appoint a Green Building Inspector to verify means and methods are utilized to achieve certification.

Property Owner or Financially Responsible Party Signature

I hereby certify that the Green Building Inspector named below has been hired to perform the services outlined below. It is the responsibility of the owner or the owner's designee to notify the professional in a timely manner when the services are required.

Signature_____ Print Name_____ Date_____ Email_____

Green Building Inspector

I hereby certify that I have been hired to perform the Green Building Inspections outlined below and I am an approved consultant for the selected green building certification program.

Signature_____ Print Name_____ Date_____ Email_____

Firm Name_____ Firm Phone_____

Inspection Timing/Descriptions

The Final Report shall be uploaded promptly via the Seattle Services Portal (https://cosaccela.seattle.gov/portal/) to the special inspection record. All reports will be reviewed by the Green Building Team before inspection and must be on letterhead from the Green Building Inspector appointed above.

Final Report: before certificate of occupancy or before final inspection if no certificate of occupancy is required, Final Report shall include:

1. A summary of the site inspections performed during construction.
2. Test results for air infiltration and commissioning results for ventilation systems.
3. Evidence to demonstrate compliance with one of the embodied carbon reduction strategies.
    a. Use of salvage wood in the project. Provide receipts with board feet quantities at or greater than the required quantity, how the wood was used, and photo examples.
    b. Provide Environmental Product Declarations for concrete mixes used in the project's structure, enclosure and hardscape evidencing at least 10% lower Global Warming Potential than NRMCA's regional benchmarks for the Pacific Northwest.
    c. Provide a whole building life cycle assessment demonstrating at least a 10% reduction in GWP.
    d. Acknowledge that most of the documentation, testing results and other information has been collected to meet the certification level required.
    e. Confirmation that no fossil fuel equipment or appliances were installed per Director's Rule 2-2025.
4. Acknowledge that most of the documentation, testing results and other information has been collected to meet the certification level required.