



Summary of Government LEED® Incentives – December, 2007 (updated quarterly)

This document summarizes efforts on the state and local level to build incentive-based programs for the development of green buildings, with a focus on USGBC’s LEED Rating System. Government incentives are categorized as either emanating from the state level or the local level.

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See www.usgbc.org – Resources – Government for the most current list.

Quick jump to: [Counties, Cities & Towns - States](#)

LEED INCENTIVES IN

COUNTIES, CITIES & TOWNS

ACTON, MA

density bonus

On April 5, 2004, the Town of Acton adopted a [zoning by-law](#) (section 5.5B.2.2.d) allowing for a density bonus for buildings achieving LEED certification in the East Acton Village District.

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA

density bonus

expedited permitting

Arlington County’s [Green Building Incentive Program](#), adopted in 1999 and expanded in 2003, allows commercial projects and private developments earning LEED Silver certification to develop sites at a higher density than conventional projects.

All site plan applications for commercial projects are required to include a LEED Scorecard and have a LEED Accredited Professional on the project team regardless of whether or not the project intends to seek LEED certification.

All projects must contribute to a green building fund for county-wide education and outreach activities. The contribution is refunded if projects earn LEED certification.

Arlington sponsors a voluntary green home program that encourages builders of new single-family homes to incorporate energy efficient and other green building components in their projects. The County offers "front-of-the-line" plan review, site signs, and publicity to program participants who achieve a given number of points as outlined by Arlington's Green Home Choice program.

BABYLON, NY

fee reduction/ waiver

On November 29, 2006, the Town of Babylon passed a [resolution](#) adopting a local law that requires LEED certification for any new construction of commercial buildings, office buildings, industrial buildings, multiple residence, or senior citizen multiple residence over 4,000 square feet. If certification is achieved, the Town will refund the certification fees paid to USGBC by the developer.



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- BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD** On June 5, 2006, the County Council passed [bill # 85-06](#) that gives a county property tax credit to any commercial building that achieves LEED-NC Silver certification. The duration of the tax credit is for ten consecutive years.
- tax break*
- BAR HARBOR, ME** On June 13, 2006, Bar Harbor amended its [municipal codes](#) to award a density bonus of an additional market-rate dwelling unit for construction projects in which all dwelling units meet LEED standards. This bonus applies to projects within a Planned Unit Development and compliance is determined by either application or by affidavit for adherence during construction.
- density bonus*
- CALGARY, AB** The City Council passed a Sustainable Building Policy (#CE001) on September 13, 2004 that requires new or significant renovations over 500m² to achieve LEED Silver certification or higher. In the spring of 2007, the City Council passed the Calgary Building Permit Bylaw ([64M94](#) page 17) allowing for a fee reduction for all private projects pursuing LEED or Build Green certification.
- fee reduction/ waiver*
- CHATHAM COUNTY, GA** In May, 2006, the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County passed an [ordinance](#) amending Chapter 7 of the county code that gives full property state and county tax abatement for commercial buildings achieving LEED Gold certification for the first five years, then tapering off by 20% each year until the tenth year. Qualifying projects are new or expanding businesses in an enterprise zone that increase employment opportunities. (See pages 79-85)
- tax break*
- CINCINNATI, OH** On May 9, 2007, the City of Cincinnati [amended legislation](#) that established and defined The City of Cincinnati Community Reinvestment Area, adding an automatic 100% property tax exemption for developments that meet a minimum of LEED Certified for newly constructed or rehabilitated commercial or residential buildings. For buildings that meet LEED Certified, Silver and Gold, the maximum amount of abatement per dwelling unit is \$500,000 over 15 years for new construction or over 10 years for renovation/ remodel. There is no maximum for LEED Platinum.
- tax break*
- Previous legislation - Ordinance #274-2006 and Ordinance #342-2002 – offered the tax exemption at a maximum of 10 years and capped the maximum tax abatement amount lower than that of 2007. The latest 2007 legislation supersedes both the older 2006 and 2002 ordinances.
- COSTA MESA, CA** On September 4, 2007, the Costa Mesa City Council approved a resolution that established a green building incentive program for private development, effective September 5, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The program encourages green building practices through various incentives, including priority permitting and fee waivers for all green installations and fee reductions to cover the cost of LEED certification.
- fast-track permitting*
fee reduction/ waiver
- CRANFORD, NJ** On November 15, 2005, the Township of Cranford adopted [Ordinance No. 2005-46](#), establishing a Green Building Density Incentive program



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<i>density bonus</i>	whereby redevelopers who achieve LEED certification and comply with the specific program requirements may earn a development density bonus from the Township.
GAINESVILLE, FL	The city passed Ordinance # 1835 (Chapter 6, Article I.5) requiring government county buildings be LEED certified. Additionally, the county is providing a fast-track building permit incentive and a 50% reduction in the cost of building permit fees for private contractors who use LEED.
<i>fast-track permitting</i>	
<i>fee reduction/ waiver</i>	
HILLSBOROUGH CO., FL	On May 14, 2007, Hillsborough County Manager Allgire approved the Residential Green Homes Policy, offering expedited permitting to home builders with a completed scorecard from either the LEED for Homes program or the Florida Green Home Standard Checklist. Scorecards must be supplied by a LEED for Homes provider or a qualified, third party green home certifier.
<i>expedited permitting</i>	
	On October 9, 2007, the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners updated its Development Review Procedures Manual, allowing for expediting plan reviews for projects with a completed scorecard from either the U.S. Green Building Council or the Florida Green Building Coalition. The policy is effective January 1, 2008.
HONOLULU, HI	In February, 2006, the City and County of Honolulu passed Ordinance #06-06 requiring new city facilities over 5,000 square feet to be LEED Silver beginning in FY2008.
<i>tax break</i>	
	A 2004 ordinance provides an exemption from real property taxes on the building improvements for a period of one year on all new commercial, resort, hotel and industrial construction that achieves LEED Certification.
HOWARD COUNTY, MD	On July 30, 2007, as part of the county's green building policy package, Bill #49-2007 established a five-year property tax credit for projects that achieve LEED-NC and LEED-CS. The credit increases depending on the level of certification: 25% for LEED Silver, 50% for LEED Gold and 75% for LEED Platinum. County tax credits for buildings certified under LEED for Existing Buildings extend for three years: 10% for LEED Silver, 25% for LEED Gold and 50% for LEED Platinum. These tax credits will be available for tax years beginning after June 30, 2008.
<i>expedited permitting</i>	
<i>tax credit</i>	
ISSAQUAH, WA	The City of Issaquah passed Resolution #2004-11 in December, 2004, adopting a sustainable building and infrastructure policy . Developers intending to use LEED may receive free professional consultation and projects achieving LEED certification are placed at the head of the building permit review line.
<i>expedited permitting</i>	
KING COUNTY, WA	King County Council established a Green Building Grants Program that offers from \$15,000 to \$25,000 in grant funding to building owners who meet a minimum of LEED Silver for new construction or major renovation in the county, but outside the City of Seattle.
<i>grant</i>	



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LOS ANGELES, CA

expedited permitting

In July, 2007, Mayor Villaraigosa announced the City's new private sector green initiative that, among certain large commercial project requirements, will offer expedited permitting to all projects meeting or exceeding LEED Silver.

grant

On March 14, 2007, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Board of Commissioners, who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council, approved a policy to expedite water and electrical connections for buildings that meet LEED Silver. LADWP has also adopted a policy to require that its construction projects meet LEED Silver. In addition, builders and developers can take advantage of the [LADWP Green Building Incentive](#) that offers up to \$250,000 in financial incentives to assist a building in becoming more green and meeting LEED standards.

MONROE COUNTY, NY

tax credit

On June 14, 2007, Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks launched an [initiative](#) that requires adherence to LEED standards for new county buildings and major renovations of greater than 5,000 gsf. The initiative also directs the County of Monroe Industrial Development Agency to extend tax abatements from 10 to 14 years and adopt any further green building incentives to encourage the private sector to implement LEED.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NC

fee reduction/ waiver

On December 18, 2007 the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners approved an amendment to the County Fee Ordinance to include the Green Building Rebate Program, offering permit fee rebates to projects with proof of LEED certification. Rebates increase proportionate to the level of certification achieved: 10% reductions for LEED Certified, 15% for LEED Silver, 20% for LEED Gold and 25% for LEED Platinum. Projects with proof of Green Globes certification are also eligible.

MIAMI LAKES, FL

expedited permitting

fee reduction/ waiver

On July 10, 2007, the Miami Lakes Town Council adopted [Ordinance #07-92](#), establishing a Green Building Program that requires all future buildings built by the town to meet at least 50 percent of LEED requirements. The program also allows for expedited permitting and possible fee reductions or rebates for private developers who build to the Green Building Program's standard.

NASHVILLE, TN

density bonus

On Feb. 22, 2007, the Nashville Planning Commission approved a density bonus for applying LEED to construction projects in certain neighborhood districts. In the downtown area, development in the Central Business District is eligible to increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) cap from 15 to 17 if the project achieves LEED Silver. Projects in this district benefit from a FAR of 19 if the project achieves LEED Gold.

In the SoBro neighborhoods, developments are eligible to increase the FAR cap from 5 to 7 if the project achieves LEED Silver. Projects in these neighborhoods benefit from a FAR cap of 9 if LEED Gold is achieved. Read the [report](#).



Summary of Government LEED® Incentives – December, 2007 (updated quarterly)

OAKLAND, CA <i>free consultation/ promotional services</i>	Oakland’s 2005 Ordinance also promotes the use of green building strategies in private sector development by offering free technical assistance, green building guidelines and public promotion for qualified projects.
PASADENA, CA <i>grant</i> <i>free technical assistance</i>	Developers who exceed the minimum certification will qualify for a rebate from Pasadena Water and Power. The PWP High-Performance Building Program matches one month’s electricity savings for each percent efficiency better than code that the building performs (capped at \$100,000). Additionally, developers who include affordable housing will earn a construction tax rebate of \$1000 per unit. PWP’s Pasadena LEED Certification Program offers \$15,000 grants for applicants who achieve LEED Certified (\$20,000 for Silver, \$25,000 for Gold and \$30,000 for Platinum). \$1000 per unit. PWP’s Pasadena LEED Certification Program offers \$15,000 grants for applicants who achieve LEED Certified (\$20,000 for Silver, \$25,000 for Gold and \$30,000 for Platinum).
PITTSBURGH, PA <i>density bonus</i>	On November 26, 2007, the Pittsburgh City Council approved an amendment to The Pittsburgh Code entitled “ Sustainable Development Bonuses ,” granting a density bonus of an additional 20% Floor Area Ratio and an additional variance of 20% of the permitted height for all projects that earn LEED for New Construction or LEED for Core and Shell certification. The bonus is available in all nonresidential zoning districts.
PORTSMOUTH, NH <i>density bonus</i>	Through an update in its zoning ordinance on April 4, 2007, the City Council of Portsmouth adopted a density bonus (see page 90) for private projects that use LEED. In Central Business [district] A, projects benefit from a 0.5 increase in Floor Area Ratio that meet appropriate open space requirements and that also build to a minimum of LEED Certified.
SAN DIEGO, CA <i>expedited permitting</i> <i>free technical assistance</i>	In addition to its public sector adoptions, in 2002 San Diego developed the Sustainable Building Expedite Program that uses LEED criteria and provides significant plan review and construction incentives. Private sector buildings registering for LEED certification may be eligible to receive technical green building training, support, and education. Commercial projects achieving LEED Silver certification will benefit from expedited discretionary processes.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA <i>expedited permitting</i>	On September 28, 2006, the Director of the San Francisco Planning Department issued Director’s Bulletin 2006-02 giving priority permit review to all new and renovated buildings that achieve LEED Gold certification.
SANTA MONICA, CA <i>grant</i>	In April 2004, the city launched the Santa Monica Green Building LEED Grant Program that provides a financial incentive for private developers who achieve LEED certification.



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<i>expedited permitting</i>	<p>In August 2005, the city passed an ordinance allowing LEED registered projects to receive expedited permitting. This includes all LEED for New Construction, Homes, Core and Shell.</p> <p>See Santa Monica's Green Building Program website for a comprehensive overview of the City's green building initiatives.</p>
SEATTLE, WA	
<i>grant</i>	<p>As of 2002, the city of Seattle encourages the private sector to incorporate LEED design standards into new and existing buildings by providing grants for qualifying projects.</p>
<i>density bonus</i>	<p>On April 12, 2006, Mayor Nickels signed zoning legislation that gives a height or density bonus to commercial or residential projects that achieve at least LEED Silver certification and contribute to affordable housing.</p>
SAN ANTONIO, TX	
<i>fee reduction/ waiver</i>	<p>On June 15, 2006, the San Antonio City Council adopted Ordinance #2006-06-15-0722 that approves Phase II of the City's Incentive Scorecard System and authorizes administrative waiver or reduction of certain development fees for projects reaching specified scores from the scorecard. Points are awarded for projects achieving LEED-NC or LEED for Homes certification.</p>
SARASOTA COUNTY, FL	
<i>fee reduction</i>	<p>On March 18, 2005 the county passed a resolution mandating that all government county buildings be LEED certified. Additionally, the county is providing a fast-track building permit incentive and a 50% reduction in the cost of building permit fees for private contractors who use LEED.</p>
<i>expedited permitting</i>	
<i>fast-track permitting</i>	<p>On August 22, 2006, the county approved a Green Development Incentive Resolution (#2006-174) that provides fast-track permitting for residential and commercial green developments. Incentives apply to projects pursuing LEED for Neighborhood Developments (ND) or FGBC Green Development Standards.</p>
SUNNYVALE, CA	
<i>density bonus</i>	<p>On January 26, 2004, the City of Sunnyvale adopted Ordinance #2002-0076, updating the city's building codes in areas zoned for industrial use to allow a density bonus of 5% FAR for buildings that achieve a minimum of LEED Certified. The municipal code improvement can be found under Title 19.32.075 of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code.</p>
WASHINGTON, DC	
<i>grant</i>	<p>On December 5, 2006, Bill #B16-0515 called on the mayor to establish an incentive program for private residential and commercial buildings. Incentives will include an expedited permit review and may also include grants.</p>
<i>expedited permitting</i>	
<i>free technical assistance</i>	<p>The mayor will also establish a Green Building Fund for technical assistance and monitoring of green buildings, education, and incentive funding for private buildings.</p>
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA	
	<p>On July 16, 2007, the City Council of West Hollywood passed the Green Building Requirements and Incentives for Private Development</p>



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free technical assistance

with an ordinance requiring residential and commercial projects to meet minimum energy conservation and renewable energy requirements. The Ordinance also calls for the establishment of a Green Buildings Resource Center at West Hollywood City Hall.

LEED INCENTIVES IN

STATES

HAWAII

expedited permitting

The Hawaii state legislature amended its provisions to Hawaiian counties with [HRS 46 19.6](#), requiring priority processing for all construction or development permits for projects that achieve LEED Silver or equivalent.

ILLINOIS

grant

On August 24, 2007, the Illinois State Senate amended the School Construction Law ([Public Act #95-0416](#)) with the governor's approval, directing the Capital Development Board to only issue grants to school projects with LEED for Schools or comparable rating system certification, or to projects that meet the standards set forth by the Capital Development Board's Green Building Advisory Committee.

KENTUCKY

financial incentives

On August 30, 2007, Governor Fletcher signed [HB1](#) into law, a bill that included an addition to KRS 56.776 that would instruct the Finance and Administration Cabinet to use LEED or other rating systems to develop green building incentives for private development in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

MARYLAND

tax credit

In October 2001, Maryland's governor issued an Executive Order calling for all capital projects greater than 5,000 square feet to earn LEED certification.

In April 2005, the Maryland House and Senate passed legislation requiring that a green building standard, such as LEED (Silver), be used for state capital projects. The state also approved a [green building tax credit](#) for commercial developers.

MINNESOTA

free technical assistance

On May 25, 2007, Governor Pawlenty signed into law the [Next Generation Energy Act of 2007](#) setting a roadmap towards a smarter energy future and requiring utilities provide technical assistance for commercial or residential projects that incorporate green building principles in their construction. By December 31, 2010, the Act established a goal of 100 commercial buildings achieving LEED certification, or equivalent, by December 31, 2010.

NEW YORK

tax credit

low interest loans

In June 2001, New York Governor Pataki issued Executive Order #111 encouraging state projects to seek LEED Certification. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority will be offering an incentive for design teams of any New York State building that achieves a LEED rating.



Summary of Government LEED® Incentives – December, 2007 (updated quarterly)

NYSERDA's New Construction Program offers a 10% increase on incentives for energy efficiency measures that reduce the use of electricity. NYSERDA provides low interest loans (4% below market rate) for energy efficiency measures and building materials that meet LEED or other generally accepted green building standards. The New York State [Green Building Tax Credit Program](#) provides a tax incentive to commercial developments incorporating specific green strategies informed by LEED.

NORTH CAROLINA

fee reduction/ waiver

On August 2, 2007, the State of North Carolina enacted [Senate Bill 581](#), formally granting permission to cities and counties to encourage green building practices in their jurisdictions through the use of reduced permitting fees or partial rebates for construction projects that achieve LEED certification or certification from other rating systems.

OREGON

tax credit

Oregon's LEED [Business Energy Tax Credit](#) (BETC), administered by the state Office of Energy, is tied to the level of LEED certification achieved. LEED for New Construction, Core and Shell, or Commercial Interiors projects achieving a minimum Silver certification will be eligible. Projects must also meet certain [technical requirements](#).

PENNSYLVANIA

grants

Four state funds including the \$20 million Sustainable Energy Fund provide grants, loans and "near-equity" investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in Pennsylvania.

In July 2005, the Pennsylvania State legislature passed [House Bill 628](#), amending the Public School Code to provide a financial incentive to public school districts that achieve LEED Silver certification.