



PRESS RELEASE

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Bank of America Launches Affordable Green Housing Grant Program for LEED for Neighborhood Development Projects

Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program Provides Funding & Educational Resources for Developers and Public Agencies

Washington, DC – July 6, 2010 – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation have announced the Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program. The program awards financial and educational resources to help remove barriers towards the pursuit of LEED for Neighborhood Development projects which include affordable green housing components in their neighborhood plans. The grant program is open to developers and related public agencies that choose to pursue LEED for Neighborhood Development certification and demonstrate a commitment toward strengthening existing communities by providing affordable green housing to citizens with a range of income levels.

USGBC's LEED for Neighborhood Development program recognizes development projects that successfully protect and enhance the overall health, natural environment and quality of life in its community. The program encourages smart growth by promoting the creation of neighborhoods where jobs and services are accessible by foot or public transit, reducing driving miles as well as an array of green building and infrastructure practices such as energy efficiency, resource conservation and reduced water use—especially important in areas where infrastructure is often overtaxed.

As affordable housing remains a critical issue in metropolitan areas throughout the country, green homes offer reduced energy use, are healthier for the families living inside them and typically have lower utility bills. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, over 6.5 million low-income families spend more than 50% of their income on housing and utility costs. Factor in the rising costs of transportation, particularly when commuting from outlying areas with lower housing costs, but often a great distance from city centers; the cost of living becomes a burden to many families.

“In our current economic state, developers are being called upon to expand housing options to a variety of family income levels. Through the LEED program, USGBC has highlighted the financial benefits of green buildings, which are high-performing and energy and resource efficient – families have less of a burden with lower utility and maintenance costs, providing more them with more financial opportunities,”

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said Scot Horst, senior vice president of LEED, USGBC. "By partnering with the Bank of America, which has so generously helped fund these projects, we can encourage more developers to consider green communities and green affordable homes through the LEED for Neighborhood Development program."

"As both a community development and environmental leader, Bank of America's partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council to grow its LEED for Neighborhood Development program brings together the combined goals of our two organizations in a way that can dramatically impact the health and vitality of communities across the country," said Kerry Sullivan, president, Bank of America Charitable Foundation. "The ripple effect created by offsetting the costs of LEED for Neighborhood Development training and certification will help create more green affordable housing, while advancing the sustainability of entire neighborhoods."

The application period for the Affordable Green Homes Grant Program is open until September 9, 2010. Applicants will be notified of their status in October, and will receive their awards throughout late fall and early winter.

A review committee of industry leaders will award a group of projects with the grant. The grant includes:

- A cash reward of \$20,000 which may be used to pursue LEED for Neighborhood Development certification
- A complimentary LEED for Neighborhood Development Reference Guide
- Registration for an online LEED for Neighborhood Development webinar
- Registration for two LEED for Neighborhood Development workshops
- A discounted membership for the U.S. Green Building Council
- Waived registration and exam fees for one employee to pursue the LEED Accredited Professional with Neighborhood Development specialty credential

To learn more about the Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program and/or to apply, [please click here](#).

For more information on LEED for Neighborhood Development, [click here](#).

U.S. Green Building Council

The USGBC community is transforming the way we build, design and operate our buildings for healthier places that save precious resources for people to live, work, learn and play in. USGBC is helping create buildings and communities that regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Council is the driving force of the green building industry, which is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product by 2013. USGBC leads a diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials, concerned citizens, teachers and students. The USGBC community comprises 80 local chapters, 17,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 150,000 individuals who have earned LEED Professional Credentials. Visit www.usgbc.org for more information.