

Minnesota Overlay to the Green Communities Criteria

February 2008

Single Family

For use with the 2007 Green Communities Criteria



How to use this document

Single-family, owner-occupied new construction proposals submitted under the Community Revitalization Fund (CRV) Request for Proposal (RFP) are required to comply with the national Green Communities mandatory criteria as modified by this Minnesota Overlay to the national Green Communities Criteria. This document is to be used in conjunction with the national Green Communities Criteria available in .pdf format here:

http://www.mnhousing.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/document/mhfa_004046.pdf

Unless a waiver is granted (see "Exemptions and Waivers" below), conformance to all of the mandatory national Green Communities Criteria as modified in the following pages is required. All mandatory criteria referenced in the national Green Communities Criteria document, if not specifically modified within this overlay document, are applicable as written.

The mandatory criteria referenced in this document are based on the national Green Communities Criteria as of April 13, 2007. Any revisions or updates to the national Green Communities Criteria will not apply locally until adopted by Minnesota Green Communities and Minnesota Housing and until revisions are specifically referenced within this document. Units built under Minnesota Housing's single-family RFP are not subject to the point system, home scale size limit or income limits listed on page 4 of the national Green Communities Criteria. RFP applicants are encouraged to pursue leverage from other sources, including Green Communities national funds from Enterprise, if applicable, and should note that eligibility and funding criteria may differ between these and other green building standards.

Exemptions and Waivers

Compliance with specific criteria may be waived if the CRV administrator/developer can demonstrate that compliance creates a tangible hardship or is inadvisable for a specific development. Alternate means of meeting the intent of specific criteria will also be considered when necessary.

Other resources

As you plan your green project, this web page may be a helpful resource:

www.greencommunitiesonline.com/tools/resources/

Neighborhood Design

In addition to the criteria outlined in the Overlay, Minnesota Housing encourages the use of good neighborhood design and planning principles such as site design that preserves and enhances natural amenities and integrates neighborhood development with the surrounding area, sustainable landscape systems, homes designed to minimize the impact of the garage on the surrounding streetscape, smaller lot sizes and streets, and the use of covenants and an architectural review committee to set and maintain design standards. For developments located in greater Minnesota, developers are encouraged to contact the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund

to learn more about the Building Better Neighborhoods (BBN) program that incorporates good neighborhood design principles in the creation of safe, decent and affordable housing in well-planned and economically balanced neighborhoods. The BBN program offers a number of planning tools, including home designs that incorporate green building principles and technical assistance available to developers and builders.

Section 1: Integrated Design Criteria

1-1	Green Development Plan
	MANDATORY

How:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria add:

The CRV Administrator, Contractor, and/or Architect (if applicable) are required to certify in writing at various stages of the development process their intention to comply, and actual compliance with all of the **MANDATORY** national Green Communities Criteria, as amended via the Minnesota Single Family Overlay to the Green Communities Criteria. These certifications include:

- **Certification of Intent to Comply at time of initial application – signed by CRV Contract Administrator (minimum requirement) and Architect (if applicable); and**
- **Certification of Compliance at end of construction – signed by the CRV Contract Administrator, Architect (if applicable), and General Contractor (if applicable). Please note that final certification is required by the entity that pulled the building permit in addition to the CRV Contract Administrator.**

Things to Consider:

For more information on putting together your Green Development Plan, see also:

www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/18-11-02.pdf

<http://www.hok.com/sustainable/>

www.rmi.org/sitepages/pid107.php

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

Section 2: Site, Location, and Neighborhood Fabric

2-1b	Smart Site Location: Protecting Environmental Resources
	MANDATORY Except for Infill or Rehabilitation Projects

Things to Consider:

In addition to the definitions detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, see the following sources for additional information on environmental protection:

- **Wetlands protection information via the National Wetlands Inventory:**
<http://wetlandsfws.er.usgs.gov/wtlnds/launch.html>
- **Farmland protection can be verified by finding a map or other documentation that shows that the parcel is not designated, for example, as prime agricultural land:**
<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>
- **Minnesota Endangered Species habitat information at:**
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/rare.html>
- **Federal Endangered Species habitat information at:**
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/lists/minnesot-spp.html>

2-1c	Smart Site Location: Proximity to Services
	MANDATORY Except for Infill or Rehabilitation Projects

How:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, add these eligible facilities:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arts or entertainment center ▪ Bank ▪ Police station ▪ Fire station ▪ Fitness center/gym | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical or dental facilities ▪ Restaurant ▪ Neighborhood-serving retail ▪ Office building or major employment center |
|--|---|

Development location	Proximity needed to meet criteria		
Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)	Two facilities within one-quarter mile	OR	Four facilities within one-half mile
All other locations	Two facilities within one mile		

2-2	Compact Development: New Construction
	MANDATORY Except for Infill or Rehabilitation Projects

How:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, the density calculation is modified as follows:

Density is measured by taking the total dwelling units after construction, divided by the acreage of the entire tract down to one decimal point, minus dedicated acreage of public street rights of way, buffered wetlands, open space that has been dedicated through a conservation program, **and any non-buildable area.**

Some examples of non-buildable areas include land that is not economically feasible to be developed, such as easements, utility fall zones, unsuitable soil, steep grades, water features, wetlands, nature preserves, etc. Density calculations do not include land that is set aside for future building phases or development.

Compact development density requirements are modified depending on the location of the development in Minnesota:

Development location	Density Required*		
	Single-Family Detached	Townhome	Apartment (e.g., condominiums)
Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)	5 units/acre	10 units/acre	15 units/acre
All other locations	5 units/acre		

*For new construction on lots platted before January 1, 2008, with connection to infrastructure (water, sewer, streets) completed, the density requirement is exempt if:

- Constructing 4 or fewer units on contiguous lots
- Constructing units on scattered sites

If constructing five or more units on contiguous lots, the density requirement applies.

Things to Consider:

Optimize infrastructure cost savings through minimizing lot frontage. Lot widths of 40'-65' are encouraged for single-family detached homes.

Narrowing street width can increase gross density while decreasing development costs and long-term maintenance costs. Narrow streets reduce storm water runoff, reduce traffic speed, and allow more room for sidewalks and landscaping.

2-3	Walkable Neighborhoods – Sidewalks and Pathways
	MANDATORY

How:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, add:

The actual construction of sidewalks and pathways may be waived for seemingly isolated developments that are not subdivisions, provided that right-of-ways are reserved for future sidewalks or pathways.

A subdivision is hereby defined as a tract of land divided into five or more lots or parcels.

Things to Consider:

Minimizing the visual impact of garages can be achieved by placing the garage in the rear or on the side of a home that will provide a more traditional residential streetscape, encourage pedestrian activity and improve safety.

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

Section 3: Site Improvements

3-1	Environmental Remediation
	MANDATORY

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

Conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for sites with five or more units where there has been a change in land use from industrial, commercial, institutional or agricultural to residential; or for each individual residence where the unit is not connected to a city water supply.

Developments of five or more new units on previous residential land uses connected to a city water supply are exempt from this Phase I requirement.

Coordinate this requirement with 2.1a - Smart Site Location, Proximity to Existing Development.

Section 5: Energy Efficiency

5-1a	Efficient Energy Use: New Construction
	MANDATORY

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

For each new construction proposal, all homes must demonstrate energy efficiency by meeting or exceeding one of the following:

- 1.) Energy Star standards, including the Builder Option Package for the appropriate climate zone in Minnesota, OR**
- 2.) Home Energy Rating Systems (HERS) Index of 80.**

All new construction projects are subject to participation in an energy efficiency technical assistance and verification program, as administered by Minnesota Housing, in which a representative number of units will be subject to third party energy efficiency and ventilation testing and verification.

Things to Consider:

For more information on the Energy Star Builder Option Package for Minnesota, see:
www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=bop.pt_bop_minnesota.

For information on the HERS Index see:
www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=bldrs_lenders_raters.nh_HERS.

5-3a	Efficient Lighting: Interior
	MANDATORY

Things to Consider:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, add:

The Energy Star Advanced Lighting Package includes “lighting packages that consist of a minimum of 60% ENERGY STAR qualified hard-wired fixtures.” Additional guidance for Energy Star Homes can be found at:

www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new_homes.nh_features

The use of large windows will increase the use of daylight in the home, decrease the usage of electrical lighting and provide greater visual connections to outdoor space and neighborhood streetscape.

Section 7: Healthy Living Environment

7-2	Low / No VOC Adhesives and Sealants
	MANDATORY

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

Unless low/no VOC adhesives and/or sealants will void/invalidate a warranty, specify that all adhesives must comply with Rule 1168 of the South Coast Air Quality Management District. All caulks and sealants must comply with regulation 8, rule 51, of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. **If a warranty will be voided or invalidated as the result of use of low or no VOC adhesives and/or sealants, use the waiver process on the intent to comply form to identify the specific reason for warranty invalidation.**

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

7-4	Green Label Certified Floor Covering
	MANDATORY if providing floor coverings

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

SUSTAINABLE FLOOR COVERINGS

Do not install carpets in basements (**including the lower level of a split-entry**), entryways, laundry rooms, bathrooms or kitchens. If using carpet, use the Carpet and Rug Institute’s Green Label certified carpet and pad.

Throughout the home, consider non-vinyl, non-carpet flooring alternatives such as natural linoleum, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified or salvaged hardwoods, cork, bamboo, ceramic or stone tile, laminate flooring, or sealed concrete. If vinyl is to be used, specify Vinyl Composition Tile (VCT).

7-5a	Exhaust Fans – Bathroom: New Construction
	MANDATORY

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

Install **low-sones (<1.5 sones)** Energy Star-labeled bathroom fans that exhaust to the outdoors and are equipped with a humidistat sensor or timer, **operate while light is turned on**, or operate continuously.

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

7-5b	Exhaust Fans – Kitchen: New Construction
	MANDATORY Except for Moderate Rehabilitation

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

Install Energy Star-labeled power vented fans or Energy Star-labeled range hoods. All fans/hoods shall exhaust to the exterior. For multi unit developments (e.g., condominiums), the kitchen exhaust fan may be non-ducted only if the project’s mechanical engineer determines it is infeasible to do so and there is at least one continuously operating bathroom exhaust fan in the unit.

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

7-6	Ventilation
	MANDATORY Except for Moderate Rehabilitation

Things to Consider:

Compliance with the Minnesota Building Code is required to ensure adequate ventilation.

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

7-12	Water Drainage
	MANDATORY

How:

In addition to everything detailed under this item in the national Green Communities Criteria, add:

Where a high water table is anticipated or observed, or has been documented in a soil boring report, or where specifically recommended by a Geotechnical Engineer in a geotechnical/soil boring report, provide subsurface drain tile or other drainage system in strict accordance with the Geotechnical Engineer's recommendations to divert underground water away from the structure.

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

7-14	Clothes-Dryer Exhaust
	MANDATORY

How:

The national Green Communities Criteria are modified as follows:

Clothes dryers must be exhausted directly to the outdoors **with a rigid type vent.**

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.

Section 8: Operations and Maintenance

8-1	Owner's / Occupant's Manual
	MANDATORY

Things to Consider:

For an example of an Owner's / Occupant Manual template, see:

<http://www.mnhousing.gov/resources/apply/rfp/index.aspx>

See national Green Communities Criteria for additional background on intent and things to consider.