

Iowa Green Streets Criteria FAQ – November 17, 2022

UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Here is the Iowa Economic Development Authority's policy regarding universal design for disaster recovery housing projects.

- All disaster recovery housing projects are to implement the universal design best practices included in Division I of Iowa Green Street Criteria [Appendix M, Universal Design Checklist](#). Projects implementing the Division I universal design best practices will score more competitively in the funding round, as the derecho new housing program will need to meet federal accessibility requirements. Some requirements may be waived when necessary. Please consult with IEDA for questions.
- For developments of 5 units or more, at least 5% of the units shall meet federal accessibility [standards](#) for persons with mobility disabilities. An additional 2% of the units shall meet federal accessibility requirements for persons with communication disabilities. Incorporating Green Streets' Universal Design will assist your project in complying with federal accessibility requirements.

To request a waiver, an email will need to be sent to steven.stransky@iowaeda.com and jeff.geerts@iowaeda.com. The email must identify the specific baseline universal design requirements in Division I of the Universal Design Checklist (Appendix M) that a waiver is being sought for, along with a narrative describing the justification for requesting the waiver. IEDA will reply either denying, approving, or approving partially the waiver request. If a waiver approval is granted, that email confirmation will need to be submitted as part of the project application.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

SECTION 1 – INTEGRATIVE DESIGN

Question 1

Criterion 1.1 – Integrated Design: Project Priorities Survey: The Opportunity 360 toolkit shows that it's no longer available on the Enterprise Community Partners website. Is there another place to access this, or how should we proceed with completing the Project Priorities Survey without access to it?

Answer

The Opportunity 360 toolkit is no longer available. Project teams can look up their project addresses at [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) to identify critical health data that so often informs outcomes for people. The [Project Priorities Survey](#) is updated with instructions for navigating County Health Rankings app."

Question 2

Criterion 1.1 – Integrated Design: Charrettes and Coordination Meetings: Do we turn in minutes from these meetings? How exhaustive do the notes need to be.

Answer

The meetings and notes are for your use to design and build a better project. You may include meeting minutes/notes in the application, but it is not required. A space is provided at the top of required Appendix A, Green Development Plan and Checklist, for you to describe the planning process and project goals.

Question 3

Criterion 1.8 – Resilient Structures: Does every site need a safe room? Can there be a communal safe room?

Answer

Every project without a basement is required to have a safe room. A communal safe room may be an option depending on the distance of the homes to the communal safe room. Projects should seek to follow the Safe Room design guidance provided by FEMA at the links included in the Iowa Green Streets Criteria.

SECTION 2 – LOCATION + NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC**Question 1**

Criteria 2.3 and 2.4 – Compact Development: Who calculates the density—applicant or IEDA?

Answer

The applicant calculates the density and includes that information in the strategies field for criteria 2.3 and 2.4 (if applicable) in Appendix A, Green Development Plan and Checklist.

Question 2

Criterion 2.5 – Proximity to Services: Our applications include multiple addresses clustered in certain neighborhoods. Can I create a proximity list based on one address for sites within a block or two of each other or does each address need its own proximity list?

Answer

The proposed approach to document proximity to services is okay. An approach that works well is to provide a map showing the project locations and nearby services within a ½ mile and mile radius from approximately the center of the projects area.

Question 3

Criterion 2.7 - Access to Open Space: Does this exclude parks? We've been trying to figure out if our products would qualify for these points. Since all of our projects are infill developments, we don't have space on site.

Answer

Parks are included under option 1.

Question 4

Criterion 2.8 – Access to Transit: The criterion states “Rides are scheduled for pick up at your door or by the curb from their residence to a location of choice”. I was curious if Uber would qualify. Uber would allow residents to schedule whenever and take you to any desired location. Would this be an acceptable option in order to pursue credit 2.8?

Answer

No. The intent is access to more affordable, typically publicly supported transit such as public transit, paratransit, regional transportation services coordinated by public or nonprofit organizations.

Question 5

Criterion 2.9 – Improving Connectivity to the Community: Could you clarify what is required to qualify for points for Criterion 2.9 improving connectivity to the community? In the Green Streets manual under requirements, it states that 2 points would be required, and in Appendix A it stated that 3 options must be implemented.

Answer

The language regarding 3 options in Appendix A is incorrect. Projects just have to choose options totaling a minimum of 2 points to score any optional points for this criterion. For example, you could choose only one of the options that is worth 2 or more points or you would have to choose at least two options if one of the options is only worth 1 point such as providing accessible outdoor bike racks.

Question 6

Criterion 2.9 – Improving Connectivity to the Community: Would including dedicated hooks or racks in each garage space count as providing secure, accessible bicycle storage space?

Answer

Yes

Question 7

Criterion 2.15b — Access to Broadband Connectivity: We believe all of our sites meet the threshold for these points. Would a screenshot of a map of Mediacom and CenturyLink service areas, and their service speeds be sufficient for getting these optional points?

Answer

Criterion 2.15b requires the broadband service actually be provided to the renter/homeowner. A map showing the service is available, is helpful, but applicants should include in their project narrative and Appendix A, Green Development Plan and Checklist, a statement that broadband service will be provided to the renter/homeowner. NOTE: 2.15b is intended to encourage broadband access in rural/tribal/small towns, so does not apply to projects within or adjacent to metropolitan statistical areas. See the definition of rural/tribal/small towns in Appendix J of the Iowa Green Streets Criteria.

SECTION 3 – SITE IMPROVEMENT

Question 1

Criterion 3.5 – Surface Water Management: Channel Protection Volume: How do we document the rainwater retention? Just based on theoretical calculations?

Answer

Calculations will be based on the Iowa Stormwater Management Manual and calculation checklists provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) Urban Conservation Team. The IDALS Urban Conservationist will review calculations to confirm project is meeting the 1.25” requirement for criterion 3.4 and the channel protection volume amount if a project chooses to pursue criterion 3.5.

SECTION 4 – WATER

Question 1

Criterion 4.2 – Advanced Water Conservation: The calculator for water consumption is the excel file available here, <https://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/water>, correct?

Answer

Correct

Question 2

Criterion 4.7 – Access to Potable Water: Option 2 – does the stored water need to be tanked or can it just be several 5-gallon jugs of water?

Answer

Yes, it could be stored, accessible jugs of water.

SECTION 5 – OPERATING ENERGY

Question 1

Criterion 5.1 – Building Performance Requirements: How do we schedule inspections for these?

Answer

Verification inspections will be scheduled between you and Home Energy Rating System (HERS) rater.

Question 2

Criteria 5.2a – Moving to Zero Energy: Can you clarify if additional points are available for a project using 5.1a for decreasing the HERS score?

Answer

Yes. A HERS Index of 51 would earn 5 additional points. Each point lower for a HERS Index would gain an additional optional point. For example, if a project commits to achieving a HERS Index of 46, the project

will earn 10 optional points (56 minimum required so 51 Index earns 5 points and then 5 more points going from 51 to 46).

Question 3

Criterion 5.2b – Moving to Zero Energy: Near Zero Certification: - For 5.2b, the project will need to be energy star certified. Will the program rater be able to certify the project as Energy Star certified and DOE ZERH certified? Also, will the program rater be able to provide 45L tax credit documentation?

Answer

The program’s HERS rater will be able to certify the project as ENERGY STAR certified as part of the IEDA provided HERS rater services. The HERS rater may be able to provide project developers DOE Zero Energy Ready Home (ZERH) certification and 45L tax credit documentation. Arrangements for those services are between the project developer and the HERS rater.

Question 4

Criterion 5.5b – Moving to Zero-Carbon all Electric: If the project is all-electric and no combustion equipment is installed in the project, can the home still be “gas ready” with gas meter and gas line for future in case an owner should decide to add something at a later date that requires gas?

Answer

Yes

Question 5

Criterion 5.5b – Moving to Zero Carbon: All Electric: Our projects will be all electric (5.5b) and certified as DOE Net Zero Energy Ready (5.2b). The application has additional funding requests for 5.3 moving to zero energy and 5.4 achieving zero energy. Is additional funding available for 5.5b or 5.2b or is it necessary to install renewables to receive additional funding? If this is the case and we apply for additional funding under 5.3 may some of this additional funding cover the extra costs of achieving DOE certification or is all of the additional funds for the renewable energy?

Answer

5.2b is eligible for requesting the additional mitigation incentive. 5.5b is not eligible for the additional mitigation incentive funding but depending on where projects are located, the utility serving that location may have higher incentives encouraging electrification. See table at end of this FAQ document for criteria eligible to request an additional mitigation incentive.

Question 6

5.7 – ENERGY STAR Appliances: Who verifies the ENERGY STAR appliances? Do we need the exact make and model for the application?

Answer

Exact make and model information is not required for the application. The HERS rater will verify the ENERGY STAR appliances are installed.

Question 7

Criterion 5.8 – Lighting: Please define a high - efficient lighting requirement , would Edison base light fixtures be in compliance? LED, right? I would like to say LED and 3,000 Kelvin.

Answer

ENERGY STAR LED light fixtures meet the requirement. 3,000 Kelvin or lower is only a requirement for exterior lighting.

Question 8

Criterion 5.8 – Lighting: Will switched outdoor lighting, dusk to dawn exterior lighting controls comply with appendix "M" or just lights with motion sensor?

Answer

See Green Streets 5.8. All exterior lighting shall meet the following specifications and have either motion sensor controls, integrative PV cells, photosensors, or astronomic time-clock operation to limit lighting when there is adequate daylight.

Question 9

Criterion 5.10 – Resilient Energy System: Critical Loads: Are single-family home projects eligible for the mitigation incentive for criterion 5.10?

Answer

Iowa Green Streets Criterion, 5.10, Resilient Energy Systems: Critical Loads, is eligible for mitigation incentive funding requests. While more geared towards larger multifamily projects, criterion 5.10 provides two options for satisfying the criterion. Option 1: Islandable PV system with battery storage and a system to switch to battery backup when the electric grid goes down. Option 2: Efficient generator that will offer reliable electricity for critical circuits during power outages. **NOTE:** this could be a generator with the ability to connect to and be fueled by on-site infrastructure or could be a generator that is supplied with fuel brought to the site. The generator would need to be fixed to the site to limit portability.

SECTION 6 – MATERIALS**Question 1**

Is vinyl siding allowed under the CDBG derecho program?

Answer

IEDA would prefer not to see vinyl siding and materials, as they do not hold up as strongly during disaster events; however, given the supply chain issues and inflationary pressures, they will be allowed. Projects are strongly encouraged to adopt the FORTIFIED building methods as that will make the structures much more resilient, less damage prone, and lost costly to repair and insure.

Question 2

Are vinyl windows allowed under the CDBG derecho program?

Answer

IEDA would prefer not to see vinyl siding and materials, as they do not hold up as strongly during disaster events; however, given the supply chain issues and inflationary pressures, they will be allowed. Projects are strongly encouraged to adopt the FORTIFIED building methods as that will make the structures much more resilient, less damage prone, and lost costly to repair and insure.

Question 3

Are other vinyl products – soffit, fascia, and gutters allowed under the CDBG derecho program (these are not common but some may target to reduce cost)?

Answer

IEDA would prefer not to see vinyl siding and materials, as they do not hold up as strongly during disaster events; however, given the supply chain issues and inflationary pressures, they will be allowed. Projects are strongly encouraged to adopt the FORTIFIED building methods as that will make the structures much more resilient, less damage prone, and lost costly to repair and insure.

Question 4

Criteria 6.7 – Regional Materials: Can you define what is considered regional for materials?

Answer

Flexibility is provided here. Applicants make the case to IEDA in your application as to why you are considering materials to be regional.

Question 5

Criterion 6.7 - Regional Materials: Please define “region” (i.e., southwest Iowa, Midwest, United States, etc.)? Also, when it states, “every two compliant products can qualify for 1 point”, does that mean that if we get all exterior materials and frame materials “regional”, then that’s one point?

Answer

Regional is purposefully left undefined for flexibility. Applicants can make their case in the application process for a material to be considered regional. One point can be earned for every two materials, so one framing material plus one exterior material would earn one point or you could earn one point if for example two regional exterior products were sourced such as siding and roofing

Question 6

Criterion 6.9 – Managing Moisture Roof and Wall Systems: Is taped foam board an acceptable water management practice or is house wrap needed as well?

Answer

No – tapes may not be installed properly, impacting long-term performance.

SECTION 7 – HEALTHY LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Question 1

Criterion 7.8 – Dehumidification: Can the dehumidification system be as simple as a portable dehumidifier or does it need to be a whole house unit

Answer

No, a portable dehumidifier is not acceptable.

Question 2

Criterion 7.11 – Active Design: Promoting Physical Activity: As we are building a single-family residential space, would the staircase from the main living space to the unfinished or finished basement qualify to encourage everyday stair usage?

Answer

No

Question 3

Criteria 7.13: Is the criteria listed under the baseline items in the spreadsheet, correct? It references different criteria content that what is in the manual. The optional 7.13 criterion seems to be correct.

Answer

The optional 7.13 criterion is correct. The spreadsheet has been corrected.

APPENDIX M – UNIVERSAL DESIGN CHECKLIST

Question 1

Item 1.1: Appendix M, division 1 requires one stepless entrance. “If only one, not through a garage or from a patio or raised deck.” Define patio? Our projects, like many have “walkout basement” levels. Can the “walkout basement” be the stepless entrance?

Answer

The intent is for the stepless entrance to access the main living area of the home with an accessible kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. For a single-family home, that typically means the front door should be the stepless entrance.

Question 2

For an owner-occupied unit is it mandatory in a two story that there is a bedroom on the main level?

Answer

All disaster recovery housing projects are to implement the universal design best practices in Division I of Iowa Green Streets Criteria [Appendix M, Universal Design Checklist](#). Projects implementing the

Division I best practices will score more competitively in the funding round. Some requirements may be waived when necessary.

Question 3

Item 1.3: Does Universal Design checklist item 1.3 require an intercom system? Is a portable telephone link required or a hard-wired intercom? Do you see people using a Ring type doorbell?

Answer

A lighted doorbell at a reachable height, intercom with portable telephone link, and/or hardwired intercom are all options. Video doorbells are an option.

Question 4

Item 2.1: Do all bathrooms need to include room for a 60" turning radius?

Answer

At least one accessible kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom should be available whenever possible on an accessible floor. The more accessible units a project contains, the better the project application will score in review.

Question 5

Item 4.1: For the mandatory 48" minimum, is that the cabinet width or depth or space between end of cabinet and next interior wall?

Answer

Space between cabinet faces or a cabinet face and a wall. For example, the space between an exterior wall cabinet and a cabinet in a kitchen island. Intent is to provide space to be able to maneuver and access all cabinets.

Question 6

Item 5.1: Do the height requirements in Universal Design checklist item 5.1 include kitchen counters and bathroom vanities? (i.e., switches at 36" & 44" max)?

Answer

Yes, try to implement as much as possible.

Question 7

Item 5.1: For Universal Design item 5.1, are decora style devices required for all outlets (i.e. receptacles and switches) or can we use easy-touch rocker switches?

Answer

Easy touch rocker or hands-free switches meet the requirements.

Question 8

Item 5.1: For Universal Design item 5.1, requiring light switches to be located, 36" - 44" maximum above the floor, is it okay to locate them at 44" to bottom plate?

Answer

Some universal design guidance suggests lower as better for rocker light switch height, but 44" at bottom of plate is acceptable and within the Fair Housing Act Design Guide recommendations.

Question 9

Item 5.2: What is the receptacle height requirement 18" or 20"? appendix "M" states 20" from floor, contractor checklist states 18" from floor.

Answer

18" is minimum, 20" is acceptable and more user accessible.

Question 10

Universal Design Checklist 5.4: We would like to see the thermostats at 54" height and is that acceptable instead of 48"?

Answer

Function should take precedence over looks and 48" is preferred. 48" is more accessible when approached straight on from a wheelchair. At 54", a person in a wheelchair would need to be able to approach the thermostat from the side. If there is readily available an option to easily adjust the thermostat remotely, the thermostat may be mounted at a maximum of 54".

Question 11

Item 7.1: Are motion sensing switches required anywhere? Any remote-controlled lighting requirements?

Answer

Briefly discussed in Appendix M, 7.1, but only for select lights where you think it makes sense.

Question 12

Item 7.1: Does item 7.1 require motion sensing lights in basement if basement is unfinished?

Answer

Yes

Question 13

Item 7.1 and 1.3: Is hands free light switching required, or motion sensing light fixtures?

Answer

Motion sensing required for basement, closets, and utility room. See Green Streets 5.8, “All exterior lighting shall meet the following specifications and have either motion sensor controls, integrative PV cells, photosensors, or astronomic time-clock operation to limit lighting when there is adequate daylight.”

MITIGATION INCENTIVE ELIGIBLE CRITERIA

Green Streets Criteria Number	Description	Disaster Mitigation	County Eligibility
1.8	Resilient Structures	Thunderstorm, lightning, & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
3.4	Surface Water Management (1.25" rainfall)	Flood, Flash Flood, Drought	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
3.5	Surface Water Management (2.5" rainfall)	Flood, Flash Flood, Drought	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
5.2a, 5.2b, 5.3a, 5.3b	Moving to Zero Energy	Extreme heat, severe winter storm, thunderstorm, lightning & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
5.4	Achieving Zero Energy	Extreme heat, severe winter storm, thunderstorm, lightning & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
5.9	Resilient Energy Systems: Floodproofing	Flood	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
5.10	Resilient Energy System: Critical Loads	Extreme heat, severe winter storm, thunderstorm, lightning & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
Fortified® Roof	Fortified® Roof	Thunderstorm, lightning, & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
Fortified® Silver	Fortified® Silver	Thunderstorm, lightning, & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton
Fortified® Gold	Fortified® Gold	Thunderstorm, lightning, & hail; tornado & windstorm	Linn, Marshall, Tama, Benton

If requesting an additional mitigation item not listed in the table above, reach out to Jared Morford (Jared.Morford@IowaEDA.com) at IEDA prior to submission. Email confirmation of the request’s eligibility must be included in the application.

If mitigation reimbursable project costs are less than the requested funding amounts, IEDA will allow subrecipients to redirect those funds into other housing and infrastructure aspects of the awarded project.