FGBC Green Local Government FAQs

What are the benefits of the FGBC Green Local Government certification program?
The FGBC Green Local Government Standard is a proven goal setting tool with achievement recognition that provides employee and community satisfaction in Florida's Cities, Towns and Counties. The FGBC program provides tools to assist in reduction of energy consumption, water consumption and garbage generation. It provides tools to track progress, reward successful programs, policies and practices, to identify opportunities, and set and achieve short and long term sustainability goals. The standard spans across all local government departments to determine what is currently being done, what the needs/desires are, and what remains to be done in order to qualify. This process improves communication between departments, identifies duplicate efforts and areas of potential cooperation to better achieve common goals.

Where can I find a list of certified FGBC Green Local Governments, their scores, and their green achievements?
All FGBC certified projects are listed on the FGBC website under the SEARCH tab. Click on PROJECT SEARCH.
http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org/index.cfm/go/public.certifiedProjects

Profiles of many certified governments are also spotlighted under the SEARCH tab in the LOCAL GOVERNMENT section.
http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org/local-government-certifications

How does a local government start the certification process?
The FGBC website lists the "Steps to Becoming a Florida Green Local Government" under the CERTIFICATION tab, click on LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. This page also includes other resources and the FGBC Green Local Government Standard official documents.
http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org/local-governments

How do we apply?
Complete the Registration form located within the checklist or contact FGBC.
http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org/contact-us

Can we upgrade our certification level later?
Yes! Once certified, a local government can use the certification upgrade process to submit additional credits to earn a higher certification level. FGBC encourages local governments to pursue their ongoing goals. The policies for upgrade are explained in the "Standards & Policies" document, while the application form is located in the "Application Toolkit" Excel file.

Who can we pose questions to regarding clarification of the standard or submittal process?
Contact FGBC or your assigned FGBC Project Evaluator for help navigating the certification process or for clarifying requirements within the Standard.

What is a Project Evaluator?
Upon registration by the local government, FGBC will assign an FGBC Project Evaluator to help clarify credits, answer your questions about the standard, and review your project documents at

the time of final submittal. The Project Evaluator does not help prepare your documentation. The Project Evaluator determines your score during the review process.

Are there any consultants that can help us assemble our submittal package?
Some local governments have hired consultants to assist in preparing the submittal documentation. However, FGBC does not endorse products or services. FGBC encourages the local government coordinator to stay closely involved in the FGBC Green Local Government certification process, as there is value in navigating the process.

What version of the standard do we use?
For new registrations or recertifications, use the most current version of the Standard that is in effect at the time of registration. Registration "locks" you in to that version of the standard, even if a newer version is released after you register. However, when you submit the Final Application, you may elect to submit under the newer version, if you prefer.

For Certification Upgrades, submit the additional points using the version of the standard under which your local government was certified.

How is my score determined and what do the checkbox columns represent in the Checklist Excel file?
The MPP (Maximum Points Possible) column represents the total points available for each sustainability effort (criteria) within the Standard. The MAP (Maximum Applicable Points) column represents those criteria that are applicable to your particular local government. MAP is based on whether or not that criteria falls within the scope of the local government. For instance, if a local government does not provide utility services, then those criteria would not be applicable. The CPA (Credit Points Achieved) column are the points that the local government is requesting be earned and for which it is submitting appropriate documentation. The Final Score is the ratio of total CPA to total MAP (Divide CPA by MAP). The Excel file performs this function automatically.

Can you clarify in more detail what "Applicable" means?
The Green Local Government Standard is designed to be comprehensive and include goals for cities and counties of all sizes and roles. There may be some credits that do not apply to an applicant. These determinations are made by your evaluator and existing precedent. The general rule of thumb is to ask, "Is this a function or service we COULD provide or play a role in?" FGBC e encourages creating partnerships and cooperation among local governments, businesses, non-profits, and other agencies to accomplish the goals within the standard. (*Also refer to the most common mistakes noted below.*)

What are the most common misunderstandings or mistakes made in preparing the application and documentation?
1. Forgetting to complete all the contact information on the Registration and Final Application forms
2. Forgetting to include an electronic version of the Checklist (Excel tool)
3. Ignoring or not reading the Reference Guide for instructions and more details regarding "Approach, Benefits, Suggested Documentation, and Resources

4. Applicable points – Skipping an entire category. Credit items are sorted by category for convenience, but should be looked at individually.
5. Applicable points – Skipped because "*not one of our goals*" or don't intend to accomplish credit because it is too hard or expensive, etc. It is important to understand the Standard philosophy – It is applicable if you <u>could</u> be responsible for achieving or helping to achieve through partnerships, etc. The only exceptions – jurisdiction or in a scenario where the category/criteria does not apply, such as certification of public marinas, if the local government has no public marinas.
6. Applicable points – Skipped because it is not under the direct control of the local government. Sometimes this will be the case, such as most activities related to Q-School Board will not be applicable for cities, but sustainability efforts could still exist through partnerships, joint activities, financial support, education, and influence that help impact a credit item. For example, contracts for services such as police force, green cleaning, waste management, etc. can have a clause or requirements in the contracts that help achieve the sustainability goal.
7. Category A – Administration. Public data is sometimes submitted under credit 2, but category A refers to a local government's in-house practices.
8. Submitting an ordinance or management plan. These documents are often long and do not explain the goals included within the credit item. Relevant areas should be highlighted or summarized to ensure credit and allow for an expedited review. E.g. – Energy & Waste Mgmt plans: 10% reduction in 5 years, Mitigation – identifying habitats, Open burning – ban recyclables yard waste & household refuse, Disaster recovery – recovery of reusable materials
9. Bi-annual Education. Though confusing, bi-annual (aka: semi-annual) refers to twice a year rather than the often submitted once every two years (biennial). A course summary and/or agenda should be included for at least two related courses.
10. Green Fleet Management. The Fleet Management Module is often ignored because it is a separate document, but 75% of its checklist items C-M are required to obtain credit for items E2a, O3a, P1d & Q3c.
11. Monitor types and amounts of materials entering landfill (R2d). Internal local government operations are often submitted here, when it should encompass the entire city or county's waste stream. The details should also identify specific types (C&D debris, bottles, cans, medical, yard waste, electronics) to be able to determine and target changes in waste management.