2022 Denver Green Code
Explanatory Video Series

Introduction & Overview

Community Planning & Development
Office of Climate Action, Sustainability and Resiliency
Instructional Video Series

Purpose:

- Support the design community’s understanding of the Denver Green Code (DGC), including the new Limited Mandatory Use requirements
- Provide context on how the provisions of the DGC are targeted to support the Denver community’s climate, resilience, and ecosystem goals and priorities
- Outline the design and submittal requirements of each provision
What is the Denver Green Code?

• The Denver Green Code (DGC) addresses both climate change and biodiversity loss through mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency

• First adopted in 2019 as a voluntary code, introducing less familiar and integrated approaches to building design and construction

• The DGC provides guidance for greener buildings through provisions targeting:
  » Energy efficiency
  » Resource conservation
  » Sustainable materials
  » Indoor environmental quality
  » Water safety
  » Ecologically beneficial site development and land use
  » Improved building and landscape performance
Why was the DGC created?

• Taking action both to **mitigate climate change, and to adapt to impacts of a changing climate**, is critical to supporting a bright future for the Denver community

• The Denver Green Code **bridges between conventional design practices and the community’s vision** represented in the Comprehensive Plan 2040
  
  – Embodies a mindset shift, moving from minimizing environmental consequences to creating positive, regenerative outcomes
  
  – Encourages an integrated design process that goes beyond traditional building codes and supports faster advancement of mandatory regulation
  
  – Continues to advance in step with the community’s capacity to succeed
2022 Denver Green Code

• Effective May 1, 2023
• New: Limited Mandatory Use (LMU)
• Commercial development (including multifamily residential) must meet some provisions from this code
• Allows projects flexibility to choose which specific provisions to implement
DGC & Denver’s Green Buildings Ordinance

• Established in 2018, Denver’s Green Buildings Ordinance (GBO) requires project teams to select from a menu of strategies for more sustainable development
  – Applies to buildings 25,000 square feet or larger

• The DGC and GBO are separate, but complementary
  – GBO designed to layer over mandatory codes and regulations
  – Projects must meet the requirements of both, as applicable

• Double dipping not allowed: provisions selected to meet DGC requirements cannot be used to satisfy GBO
Applicable Projects (Commercial)

- The DGC applies to new commercial buildings, their systems and their sites, as well as major renovations
  - Major renovation, commercial: Level 3 alteration per DEBC Section 604, or addition containing greater than 100,000 GSF or 50% of existing GFA, whichever is less
- Limited Mandatory Use requirements apply to commercial (including multifamily residential) projects only
- Commercial (including multifamily residential) project teams interested in providing higher benefits and significant leadership for Denver’s community may voluntarily enroll a project in the Denver Green Code Enhanced Use Program
  - Limited incentives may be offered – interested project teams are encouraged to inquire
Residential Projects

- DGC provisions can be voluntarily applied to new residential projects and residential major renovations submitted under the Denver Residential Code
  - Major renovation, residential: Alteration per DRC Chapter 2 where work exceeds 50% of GFA, or addition containing greater than 750 GSF or 50% of existing GFA, whichever is lesser
- Incentives are not currently being offered for Enhanced Use of the 2022 DGC on residential projects
DGC & Documentation

Construction document submittals associated with projects subject to Limited Mandatory Use must include documentation showing how the minimum requirements are being met:

- Complete and submit the DGC LMU Checklist indicating selected provisions and documentation.
- Depending on the selected provisions, documentation may be required at different phases of the project, from Concept through construction.
- Additional videos in series provide guidance on the submittal requirements for each provision.

Projects enrolled in the Enhanced Use Program must complete the EU checklist and meet all requirements of the selected path.
DGC Checklists

- Checklists for Limited Mandatory Use and Enhanced Use projects are available to download at [Denver.gov/GreenCode](https://Denver.gov/GreenCode)

- Complete all information in tan-shaded cells to indicate the selected provisions and note the location of documentation

- Submit the table within the Construction Documents on drawing page stamped and signed by the Lead Design Professional
Tips for Success

• **Early coordination is key** – it’s never too early to start thinking about the Denver Green Code provisions

• **Adopt an integrated design approach** – considering the interactions of complex site and building systems allows for full optimization and maximum benefits, for the project and the community

• **Consider all the options** – the DGC is not one size fits all. Flexibility allows project teams to choose the provisions that best align with opportunities unique to each property
Better Buildings are a Collaborative Effort

- DGC differs from traditional building codes, serves a unique purpose
- Requires internal and external collaboration to achieve community vision
  - Touches scope overseen by numerous agencies and workgroups within Denver
  - Encourages creative approaches and insights of the design community
Where can I learn more?

Visit [Denvergov.org/GreenCode](Denvergov.org/GreenCode) to:

- Link to the 2022 Denver Green Code
- Watch other videos in this series
- Register for DGC Virtual Office Hours
- Find additional resources for your project