



Green Communities Fund Overview

The Green Communities Fund is a new revolving loan program offered by the Georgia Cities Foundation. Made possible through a grant from the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), the Green Communities Fund will provide low interest financing to business and/or property owners for energy efficient and sustainable improvements to their downtown commercial properties.

As with the Foundation's downtown loan program, the Green Communities Fund program will target downtown buildings. These low interest loans will range in loan size from \$10,000 to \$250,000. With energy efficiency as the objective of the program, the loans will be used for energy efficient improvements to existing businesses, renovations of existing buildings, as well as for improvements to planned new construction.

Loan Structure

Maximum Loan Amount: Varied, depending on the following project costs:

Energy Project Cost	\$12,000 to \$50,000	\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$100,001 - \$250,000	250,001 - \$500,000
Financing Structure (GCF ² – Borrower)	90% - 10%	80% - 20%	70% - 30%	50% - 50%
Maximum GCF ² Loan Amount	Up to \$45,000	Up to \$80,000	Up to \$175,000	Up to \$250,000
Minimum Borrower Equity Participation	10%	10%	10%	10%
Loan Term	5 years	5 years	10 years, with 15 year amortization	10 years, with 15 year amortization

Minimum Loan Amount: \$10,000

Interest Rate: Below market (GCF's downtown revolving loan fund is presently at 3.00%).

Green Communities Fund Application Process

Energy Audit

As a prerequisite for a Green Communities Fund Loan, a comprehensive energy audit of the existing building or an energy model for a new building must be conducted. The audit will identify ways to improve the energy efficiency of the building. Additionally, the audit will predict the best return on investment for each improvement. The audit will identify a list of applicable improvements that may be financed through the Green Communities Fund loan program. The various energy savings investments may include, but are not limited to, the following list:

Examples of Eligible Improvements:

- Insulation
- Lighting Retrofits
- Reflective Roofing
- Weather Sealing
- Duct Sealing
- High Efficiency HVAC
- Occupancy Sensors
- Solar Thermal Hot Water Heaters
- Tankless Water Heaters

Energy Audit Cost

The cost of the energy audit is subsidized by the Georgia Cities Foundation. The cost to the borrower is as follows:

Building Size (Square Feet)

1-10,000 \$ 500

10,001-50,000 \$1,000

50,000+ to be determined on a case by case basis

Minimum Energy Improvements

To be eligible for the Green Communities Fund loan the borrower must either meet a minimum of a 20% energy savings or have a combined return on investment for the work performed of 10 years or better. The energy audit will provide the ability to determine which combination of improvements will meet these standards. Additionally, the Green Communities Fund can finance renewable energy projects, such as solar, once the building has a building that is 20% more energy efficient.

Downtown Development Authority Verification

Under the Green Communities Fund, eligible properties must be located within a Downtown Development Authority's boundaries. While the Georgia Cities Foundation will provide a direct loan to a business or property owner, the city's Downtown Development Authority must verify on the loan application that the project is located within the DDA's boundaries.

Historic Buildings

Loan applications for energy efficient improvements to historic buildings should not negatively impact the character of historic buildings. Additionally, the applicant must show that the desired improvements are compliant with the local Historic Preservation Commission (where present) and meets all local design guidelines.

For More Information, Contact:

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