



U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL
FLORIDA GULF COAST CHAPTER

USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter Branch Operating Guidelines

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Introduction

The U.S. Green Building Council (hereafter referred to as USGBC), founded in 1993, is the nation's foremost coalition of leaders from across the building industry, working to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, healthy and profitable places to live and work.

The USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter (hereafter referred to as Chapter) is registered as a non-profit corporation in the State of Florida with the Secretary of State. The Chapter was approved as an Organizing Group of the USGBC in 2001, a Steering Committee in 2002, and became a Provisional Chapter in 2003. The Chapter Charter and License Agreement was executed by USGBC in 2004, granting license to represent the USGBC across the entire region of FGC. The Chapter status as a publicly funded charity was confirmed by the Internal Revenue Service in April, 2004.

The geographic size and increased population growth and interest in farther reaching areas of the state has prompted the Chapter to establish Branches within its designated territory (see Exhibit A – Chapter territory map).

USGBC Chapters which have (or are in the process of creating) at least one Branch, and serve as models for the FGC in the establishment of Branches include the Cascadia Region, Arizona, and Georgia Chapters.

This guide was liberally adopted from the USGBC's "Chapter Guidelines 2005, 4th Edition." It was created to assist individuals and groups who are interested in becoming leaders of the Chapter, or have an interest in starting a Branch of the FGC Chapter.

The "Guidelines" provide step-by-step instructions for how to organize, operate, and grow a Branch within the FGC Chapter.

You are encouraged to contact any member of the FGC Chapter ("Chapter") Board of Directors ("BOD") with questions about information in this guide. The BOD can be reached through email to the Executive Director: colleenm@tampabay.rr.com .

Glossary of Acronyms

BOD	USGBC-FGC Board of Directors
BSC	Branch Steering Committee
BIG	Branch Interest Group
BGC	Branch Governing Council
DG	Dynamic Governance
EGB	Emerging Green Builders
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CHAPTER	USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter, Inc.
USGBC	U. S. Green Building Council

Definitions

Branch Governing Council (BGC)

The Branch Governing Council is a group of individuals responsible for general operating policy, procedures, and related matters affecting a specific Branch.

Dynamic Governance (DG)

A decision is made by consent instead of consensus, as opposed to traditional winner/loser roles. A proposal is put on the table, and, rather than focusing on whether they are completely "for" the proposal, individuals indicate whether it falls within their range of tolerance for achieving the group aim. All Chapter and Branch leaders are required to participate in Dynamic Governance training offered by USGBC and to utilize DG in the conduct of Chapter and Branch operations.

FGC Board of Directors (BOD)

The Chapter BOD is a group of individuals responsible for general operating policy, procedures, and related matters affecting the Chapter non-profit corporation as a whole.

100.0 The Respective Roles of the USGBC, the Chapter, and a Branch of the Chapter

A. The role of the USGBC Chapter is the focal point for information exchange and advocacy of green buildings across the entire Chapter geographic territory, with support from the USGBC. Both the USGBC and the Chapter have different but equally important roles to play in promoting green building, which is the overall mission of the USGBC. These roles have been carefully designed to ensure the success of the overall organization and the green building movement, and the Chapter is committed to adhering to them. Likewise, a Branch of the Chapter has responsibilities and obligations to the Chapter, and ultimately to the USGBC.

100.1 Key Roles of the USGBC

- A. Set standards for Chapters and programs such as LEED training
- B. Initiate or respond to national public policy issues, i.e., advocacy
- C. Represent the organization to other national groups, such as the American Institute of Architects, AIA's Committee on the Environment, the Urban Land Institute, the Building Owners and Managers Association and the International Interior Design Association
- D. Establish and maintain a positive USGBC and LEED brand, image and identity
- E. Provide opportunities for networking across geographic boundaries or special interest areas
- F. Serve as an information clearinghouse for green building issues

100.2 Key Roles of the Chapter

A. Information Exchange

- 1. Provide regularly scheduled opportunities for members to meet with other people who have similar interests in greening the built environment
- 2. Provide forums for the exchange of ideas and information
- 3. Attract new members
- 4. Retain existing members
- 5. Work to insure *value* in Chapter membership

B. Education and Advocacy

- 1. Raise awareness of green building principles and practices among the design, construction and real estate communities and the general public of Chapter
- 2. Expand members' knowledge of green building principles and practices

3. Promote activities that expand green building practices in the State
4. Encourage adoption of LEED throughout the State

C. Collaboration

1. Partner with other building-related and environmental organizations – such as Planning Commissions, Building Owners and Managers Association, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers – for education and networking
2. Provide a central forum for coordination of green building efforts among territory organizations

D. Other Roles

1. Establish and maintain a positive USGBC image and identity statewide
2. Assist in implementing USGBC priorities, such as LEED training
3. Advocate for members and green building issues statewide and assist/guide Branch advocacy efforts
4. Report member interests to the USGBC's Chapter Steering Committee
5. Develop state leaders of the green building movement

100.3 Key Roles of a Branch of the Chapter

- A. Provide regularly scheduled opportunities for members to meet with other people who have similar interests in greening the built environment
- B. Provide forums for the exchange of ideas and information
 1. Attract new members to the Chapter from within their Branch
 2. Retain existing members of the Chapter from within their Branch
 3. Establish and maintain a positive image and identity for the FGC
 4. Assist in implementing Chapter priorities, such as LEED training and advocacy
 5. Report member interests to the Chapter BOD
 6. Develop local leaders of the green building movement

101.00 Guiding Standards for the Branch

A. This section outlines the standards that a Branch must meet and how to maintain those standards as the Branch develops over time. Be mindful that these Guidelines may be revised from time to time by the BOD to better serve the Branch and the mission of the Chapter or to comply with USGBC requirements.

101.1 Membership

A. Membership in a Branch is through, but neither separate from nor in addition to, membership in the Chapter. Membership in the Chapter is for individuals, whereas membership in the USGBC is for companies, organizations, institutions, etc.

B. Membership categories are defined in the Chapter Bylaws and are updated from time to time as USGBC refines the USGBC membership categories. Membership dues and fees are established by the BOD in accordance with USGBC requirements. Regular Chapter Members and student members enjoy certain benefits offered by the Chapter and may vote in accordance with the Chapter Bylaws as well as have a leadership role in the Chapter. National USGBC Members enjoy additional benefits offered by USGBC. Similar to the way companies join the USGBC, an individual joins the Chapter through the FGCC Website.

C. As with any leadership role in the Chapter (committee chair, director or officer), any individual desiring to have a leadership position in the Branch, must be a Member in good standing of the Chapter. There are certain exceptions requiring USGBC membership that are established by USGBC and the Chapter Bylaws.

101.2 Branch Naming and Marketing

A. The use of the term Chapter is reserved for use by the Chapter. Local/regional groups in areas of FGC shall use the terms Interest Group, Provisional Branch or Branch, depending on the development stage of the group.

101.3 Chapter Logo

A. The Chapter logo may only be used by the Chapter and Branches on Chapter or Branch documents and materials. Branches may create a Branch logo that incorporates the

Chapter logo for use in conjunction with the USGBC logo, subject to approval by the BOD. Members may not use either the Chapter or any Branch Logo. Only national USGBC members may display the USGBC member logo in accordance with national guidelines.

101.4 General Branch Meeting Guidelines

A. Any member of the Chapter may attend meetings of a Branch or the Chapter. A Branch will establish its own schedule of meetings. These meetings may include guest speakers who will address current issues relative to green building and the mission of the Chapter, tours of green buildings, or networking events, joint activities with EGB or Student groups, or joint meetings of the Chapter and Branches, etc.

B. A Branch shall coordinate its meetings and activities with the Chapter and shall not schedule meetings or events on the same day as the Chapter or another Branch. Exceptions may be approved by consent of the Chapter BOD. Written minutes shall be taken at all BGC and Branch meetings. Meeting minutes will be regularly posted to the USGBC Extranet Webpage.

C. Meetings shall be open to the public. Notice will be given if seating is limited at a particular venue or RSVPs are needed for meals or other reasons.

D. The Chapter requires that all meetings, programs and events have minimal environmental impact through careful planning and attention to location, communication, catering, materials, waste, and recycling. The Chapter intends to comply to the fullest extent possible with USGBC Green Meeting Guidelines.

101.5 Notices of Branch Meetings and Events

A. Branch Communications Committees will be responsible for communicating Branch activities, notices and minutes to Branch members.

B. Branch Communications Committees are also responsible for posting all activities, notices and minutes to the USGBC Extranet and copying them to the Chapter Staff (for posting as appropriate to the Chapter listserv) and Chapter Web Administrator (for posting as appropriate to the Chapter website). The Chapter Communications Guidelines shall be used to determine appropriateness of posting information to the Chapter listserv and the Chapter website. This is available on the Extranet.

101.6 Members' List, Potential Members' List and Public List

A. A current list of local Branch Members, including email friends lists, shall be maintained

by the Branch Secretary and Chair of the Branch Membership Committee. Included in the Members' List with the Member's name will be, at a minimum: the company name of the individual, telephone number, mailing address and email address. In addition, the Branch shall maintain a list of Students. Updates of Chapter members can be obtained from the Chapter website.

- B. The Branch, like the Chapter, should maintain two additional lists: a list of Potential Members, particularly the Primary Contacts of local USGBC Member Companies, organizations, institutions, etc. who have not yet joined the Chapter, and the Public who have requested that their email addresses be included on a Distribution List.
- C. The distribution lists are for official Chapter business and are not to be shared with individuals, organizations, etc. or used for any other purpose without advance approval of the Chapter BOD.

101.7 Bylaws

A. The Chapter Bylaws were amended in fall 2009, by the Chapter Board of Directors, to specifically allow the formation of Branches. Branches are governed pursuant to operating guidelines adopted from time to time. Branches shall not have separate Bylaws, and shall always defer to the Chapter Bylaws and these USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter Branch Operating Guidelines.

101.8 Branch Strategic Plan

A. A usable, updatable and understandable Strategic Plan will be developed by and for the Branch. The Strategic Plan should reflect the Branch's ambitions clearly and be consistent with the FGC and USGBC strategic plans. The leadership team should discuss and finalize clear and realistic goals. The plan should look at least three years ahead and state specific goals the Branch would like to achieve each year. This will enable the Chapter BOD and the Branch to measure its goals related to each specific goal. This plan shall be updated at a minimum of every three years.

101.9 Branch Style Guide

A. Among the tools and resources the USGBC has provided to Chapters, including the Chapter, is the "Chapter Communications Guidelines," a set of standards for communicating USGBC's message to the public and membership in a consistent way. In

turn, the Chapter will provide a style guide to the Branch to accurately and effectively communicate to its local members and community. In general, all communications produced by the Branch and Chapter should reinforce USGBC's image and integrity.

B. Branch officers, GC members, committee chairs and other members as approved by the Branch Communications Committee Chairs may use the USGBC logos for Branch business. Refer to the 'Communications Guidelines-Chapters' and the 'Logo Guidelines' on USGBC Chapter Leader's extranet.

C. Certain names, marks and phrases, including but not limited to "U.S. Green Building Council," "USGBC®" and "LEED®" are the proprietary marks of the USGBC. "USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter" is a Service Mark of the Chapter. Use of these Registered Trademarks, Trademarks or Service Marks of USGBC and/or FGC shall be in accordance with USGBC and/or FGC requirements and the Chapter Charter.

102.0 Organization and Governance of the Branch

102.1 Branch Governing Council (BGC) Membership

A. The Branches shall operate under the authority of the Chapter BOD, which shall have general charge and direction of the affairs and business of the Branch.

B. The Branch's activities shall be overseen by the Branch Executive Committee which shall consist of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and the immediate Past Chair.

C. The remaining composition of the Branch Governing Council shall consist of duly nominated and elected, or appointed Branch Committee Chairs, along with the Branch Executive Committee

D. The Branch Governing Council shall have general charge and direction of the affairs of the Branch.

E. The Branch Governing Council shall be comprised of not more than 13 Members serving staggered two-year terms. The BGC shall be comprised of the Branch Executive Committee and up to 8 committee chairs.

F. At a minimum the BGC should represent at least three of the USGBC member categories, including a nonprofit and/or a local government representative.

G. Please see the Chapter Bylaws for further information.

102.2 Election of Branch Governing Council

A. Only Full Chapter Members, in good standing and assigned to the respective Branches, may vote in local Branch elections. Chapter Members may vote in only 1 Branch election.

B. A Branch Member may vote for no more than the number of open positions and may cast only one vote for each open position. Ties shall be broken by the Chapter Executive Committee.

C. Each Branch election will occur concurrently with the Chapter election at the Chapter's Annual Membership Meeting.

D. Each Branch shall have a Branch Nominating Committee to propose a slate for open positions at the election. Eligible individuals may nominate themselves to the Branch Nominating Committee. All candidates for BGC positions must sign the Conflict of Interest Form and the Antitrust Memorandum prior to the Annual Election.

102.3 Tenure on Branch Governing Council

A. Governing Council members shall be divided into two (2) groups, as nearly equal as the maximum number of council members permits. Each group shall serve a two year term. One group will be up for election each year. Term limits shall be the same as for the Chapter BOD.

B. Governing Council members shall serve until the second succeeding annual meeting and until his or her successor shall have been elected or qualified or until his or her earlier resignation, removal from council membership, or death.

102.4 Vacancies on Branch Governing Council

A. Any vacancies, including any vacancy created by reason of an increase in the number of council members, may be filled by appointment of a replacement by the Chair with approval by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the remaining council members though less than a quorum of the council. A council member elected to fill a vacancy on the Branch Governing Council shall hold office only until

the next election of the group for which such council member has been chosen and until his or her successor shall be elected and qualified or until his earlier resignation, removal from office, or death.

102.5 Election and Term of Office for Branch Executive Committee

A. Initially, for the first year of the Branch's operations, nominations and letters of interest from volunteers for all Branch Governing Council positions will be solicited by the Chapter and the Branch Chair. Candidates for all positions shall be submitted in writing to the Chapter Nominating Committee for approval. The Chapter Nominating Committee shall appoint the founding Executive Committee of the Branch. The Branch Executive Committee shall appoint the founding committee chairs. To assure leadership continuity the initial officer terms shall be staggered with odd-year and even-year terms. The Branch Executive Committee shall appoint the committee chairs in order to form the Branch Governing Council.

B. In subsequent years, the Branch Governing Council will elect the Branch Executive Committee. The election will occur annually, immediately following the annual Chapter meeting and prior to the annual Chapter Board of Directors meeting.

102.6 Vacancies on Branch Executive Committee

A. Any vacancies in the Branch Executive Committee may be filled by the Branch Governing Council for the unexpired portion of the term.

102.70 Duties of Branch Executive Committee

The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are collectively called the Branch Executive Committee

102.71 CHAIR - The Chair is the presiding officer at all meetings and has the authority to call special meetings in addition to regular meetings. Additionally, the Chair:

- A. Presides over all Branch meetings and appoints members to ad hoc committees.
- B. Routinely communicates with Branch members and the BGC. Serves as the designated representative for communications with the Chapter BOD.
- C. Represents the Branch on the Chapter BOD as a Class B Director.
- D. Achieves consensus on controversial issues after encouraging full debate and hearing a broad range of views. Once the BGC has come to consensus, and with the BOD's approval, the Chair helps the Governing Council speak with one voice.
- E. Serves as spokesperson for the Branch.
- F. Promotes Branch member access to Chapter leadership and involvement.

- G. Identifies and encourages future leaders.
- H. Promotes membership in USGBC and the Chapter.
- I. Has ultimate responsibility for governance issues within the Branch.
- J. Conducts an annual meeting for all Members within the Branch

102.712 The Chair shall attend at least two-thirds of Chapter BOD face-to-face meetings, conference call meetings, Chapter leadership training, and Chapter leadership events.

102.713 The Chair ensures that all requested forms, the annual Branch Budget, meeting minutes, and the Annual Branch Activity Report are submitted to the Chapter Chair and BOD, in a timely manner. Finally, the Chair and the Chapter Treasurer must jointly approve all expenditures of local Branch funds. The Branch Chair may, at their discretion, incur and pay expenses of the business of the Branch in an amount not to exceed \$500 for any one transaction, and not to exceed \$1000 in any one calendar year, without the approval of the Chapter Executive Committee.

102.72 VICE CHAIR In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall be the presiding officer. When necessary, the Chair has the authority to delegate official responsibilities to the Vice Chair. In addition, the Vice Chair:

- A. Attends BOD meetings on behalf of the Chair.
- B. May lead event planning efforts, strategic planning, and training.
- C. Promotes membership in USGBC and the Chapter.
- D. Shall serve on the Chapter Growth Committee.

102.722 The Chair and the Vice Chair work together to establish committees as required for the proper functioning of the Branch.

102.73 SECRETARY - The Secretary is responsible for keeping all official records, minutes and documents for the Branch as well as official correspondence, notices, mailings and distribution of these materials. The Secretary, also:

- A. Places copies of all minutes from the monthly meetings on file and submits to the Chapter Executive Director for posting to the extranet.
- B. Keeps a permanent record of the proceedings and historical records of the Branch.
- C. Maintains a current roster of the BGC and assists the executive director and Chapter membership chair in maintaining a local Branch member directory.
- D. Is responsible for getting all Branch organizational and promotional materials to the Branch Chair.

- E. Promotes membership in USGBC and the Chapter.

102.74 TREASURER – Reports to the Chapter Treasurer on Branch Finances.

- A. Chairs the Branch Finance Committee.
- B. Proposes and coordinates the annual Branch Budget.
- C. Co-signer of Branch checking account.
- D. Manages revenue and expense activity.

102.8 Establishing Branch Committees

102.81 Double Linkage to the Chapter

The Chair and immediate Past Chair of the Branch will serve as Class B Directors on the Chapter's Board of Directors. If the immediate Past Chair is not available, the Vice Chair shall fill the second position. If the Vice Chair is not available the Chair shall appoint another member of the Branch Governing Council to fill the second position.

- A. Double linkage to the Committees: The BGC shall have double linkage to each committee via Dynamic Governance principals. The chair of each permanent committee shall be a voting member of the BGC, and each committee is encouraged to have a co-chair to support the Committee Chair.

102.82 Committee Meetings Committees shall meet at least quarterly and shall file minutes from each meeting.

102.83 Required Committees:

A Branch shall have **8 standing committees**, which for the first two years in a Branch's existence may consist of one person each, if need be. The eight Committees are:

- A. Programs/ Events/Education:** This committee will be responsible for developing and promoting the Branch's public events, and Branch membership meetings including Branch networking and educational activities. Members may also help the Chapter to participate in local conferences and exhibitions which promote the green building mission.
- B. Membership** This committee is responsible for implementing activities to recruit and retain Chapter members. This committee is also responsible for orienting new members to the activities of the Branch. This committee may conduct activities for identifying and developing Branch and Chapter leaders, including nominations for the BGC and the BOD. The nominations

should assure that the diversity of the membership is represented on the Governing Council and that there is a periodic rotation of member categories represented on the Governing Council.

- C. Communications:** The focus of this committee is to expand our Chapter's ability to educate the community on green building. This is done through website updates, writing for the Chapter's newsletter, participating in the online green directory, and helping with PR. Facilitates communication with other Branches and the Chapter.
- D. Advocacy/Government Affairs:** This committee promotes green building initiatives within public policy. Participants help expand its partnerships with local municipalities, and to identify and overcome barriers to green building that may currently exist in local building standards.
- E. Emerging Green Builders:** The EGB is a coalition of young professionals fostering the future leaders of the green building movement. The overall mission of EGB is to promote green buildings. More locally, it is to provide young professionals with a network of others interested in greening the future of our built environment. The EGB Committee focuses on educating its members on green building practices and involving them with the Chapter and various-activities of the US Green Building Council.
- F. Collaboration:** The committee is to work together with other organizations, key partners, and stakeholders interested in supporting sustainability. It will maintain strategic alliances with other green building organizations. It will provide outreach opportunities to our Chapter members, other Florida USGBC Chapters and the community at large. It is responsible to maintain cooperative relationships with other Florida USGBC Chapters and between Branches within our Chapter.
- G. LEED for Homes:** The committee shall promote and support the LEED for Homes initiatives from USGBC within the local Branch community.
- H. LEED for Existing Buildings Operation and Maintenance:** The committee shall promote and support the LEED –EBOM initiatives from USGBC within the local Branch community.

102.84 Recommended Committees and other Ad hoc committees may be created and terminated based upon the desire of the BGC. Ad hoc committees do not serve on the BGC and do not have voting rights in the BGC.

103.0 USGBC Based Compliance and Policy updates

A. The Chapter, Branches, Committees, Interest Groups, Steering Committees and Provisional Branches shall comply with all USGBC policies and procedures as may be amended from time to time by the USGBC.

104.0 Discharge

A. Members, including leadership, may be discharged from the Branch Governing Council by the BGC as a result of violation of the policies and procedures of either the USGBC or the Chapter, lack of attendance at one-third of BGC meetings, misconduct resignation or no longer being an Chapter member in good standing.

105.0 Branch Finances

105.1 Fiduciary Responsibility Local Branches will incur expenses, generate revenue, and manage their own budget which shall be approved as a part of and coordinated through the Chapter budget.

A. BGC members are fiduciaries – trustees of money that belongs to the members – and are accountable for how Branch finances are handled.

B. The leadership is responsible for fiscal management, paying expenses from the budget as approved, and preparing a regular financial statement for the Branch. Independent auditing of the records and accounts may occur annually, along with usual and customary accounting controls within the Chapter and Branch Treasurer functions.

105.2 Branch Bank Accounts Branches may not establish separate bank accounts. The Chapter shall maintain a single checking account allowing the Chapter to operate as a whole. The account will be used to receive all Branch revenues and event fees, and to pay general operating expenses and vendors contracted by the Branch.

105.3 Annual Budget

A. The Chapter will operate with one budget using Chapter funds wherever needed. This will help the organization act as a whole rather than several parts. The BOD will approve an annual budget at the beginning of each year after reviewing and approving the Draft version.

B. Each Branch shall provide input into the annual overall budget by submitting their own budgets with line items for specific projects, anticipated expenses and revenues. The Branch Chair and/or Branch Treasurer shall submit the Branch Budget to the Chapter Treasurer no later than October 31st of each calendar year to facilitate a planned November/December Chapter budget planning meeting for the next year.

105.4 Basic Financial Practices It is mutually understood that the Branches are

components of the Chapter and as such the following applies:

- A. The Chapter does not currently charge separately for Membership in individual Branches. Currently there is only Chapter Membership.
- B. All rebates assigned to the Chapter by way of membership of corporations, businesses, institutions, etc. in the USGBC go to the Chapter.
- C. All USGBC revenue sharing programs and partnership funds go to the Chapter. Revenue/funds will be distributed to each Branch based on the approved annual budget by the Chapter BOD.
- D. Each Branch shall work with the Chapter BOD to identify revenue opportunities and donors or sponsors to fund specific projects or events.
- E. Regular Branch Meetings should be revenue neutral through the use of sponsorships or fees.

105.5 Financial donations by Individuals and Corporations to the Chapter

- A. Generating revenues for Chapter activities is an important function of all persons in a leadership role whether on the Chapter BOD or a Branch Governing Council.
- B. The USGBC Chapter is a 501(c)(3) type entity, and the IRS has affirmed our status as a publicly supported educational charity. This status provides those who choose to donate to our Chapter an immediate income tax deduction, as allowable under the Internal Revenue Code.
- C. In order to maintain the Chapter's status as a publicly supported charity, there are reporting requirements that the Chapter must adhere to in receiving gifts, accounting for gifts, and in issuing receipts to our donors for their contributions. Failure of the Chapter to comply with IRS required reporting and documentation (including generally accepted accounting principles) could lead to an imposition of sanctions, fines, or complete retraction of our charitable status by the IRS.
- D. Some examples of the implications of these rules and prohibitions include:
 - 1. The IRS requires that we state in our receipt letters either that "No goods or services were provided by the Chapter in receipt of this donation" or "The tax deductible portion of this donation is \$_____.". If, beyond certain de minimus exceptions, the Chapter provides a detailed or distinct benefit (such as allowing a certain number of pre-paid meetings, a meal or, a tangible personal property item of value), then the Chapter must exclude the value that the donor received from the receipt letter issued.

2. The IRS requires that our Chapter operate in accordance with the mission of the Chapter as stated in our application for tax exempt status and request for publicly supported charitable status for our donors.
3. There are specific restrictions on lobbying that apply to publicly supporting charities that we must be aware of in our advocacy efforts.
4. The IRS specifically disallows “private inurement” to Chapter leaders from their activities and interactions with the Chapter. Thus, the need to understand and be cautious when a potential for conflicts of interest are present.

E. In addition to complying with Federal rules and reporting requirements, there may be other levels of reporting that are required of the Chapter to maintain good standing. For example, the State of Florida requires every publicly supported non-profit to register with the Secretary of State annually, including a listing of all fundraising activities. The Chapter Treasurer is responsible for such filings and the Branch Treasurers shall strictly adhere to all state and federal requirements under the direction of the FGC Treasurer.

F. The following guidelines apply to Chapter fund-raising activity.

1. To enable effective use of contributed funds to meet all Branch and Chapter goals, all donations shall be made by check payable to the USGBC Chapter. The funds will be deposited in the Chapter Checking Account and distributed as appropriate. This allows the funds to be used for any of the Branches, as well as for Chapter-wide initiatives. This also allows for prompt recognition of donors, completion of proper tax paperwork and tracking for renewal purposes.
 - a. Donor Restricted Funds. Any restrictions upon the intent and use of contributed funds noted at the time of contribution by the donor must be accounted for and tracked specifically by the Chapter and designated only for such use. For example, if funds are contributed specifically for an event or program (ie: a named Scholarship Fund), all of those funds must be used for that event/purpose. Only the donor may release unused funds for other purposes.
 - b. If a Branch receives contributed funds that are donor restricted specifically for that Branch’s activities, those funds are deducted from the amount that the Chapter would have otherwise contributed to the Branch, based upon the budget. In other

words, donor restricted contributions to a specific Branch are not considered additional funds above and beyond Chapter agreed upon budget funding for that Branch.

2. When a donation is received it must be accompanied by the following:
 - a. Documentation to positively affirm that the contribution is a gift, and amount of the gift.
 - b. The exact name of the donor individual or corporation, personal representative's name, title, address, and who will receive the receipt and recognition.
 - c. Notation of any restrictions, if applicable.
 - d. If funds are received at a Branch level, the appropriate paperwork (detailed above) must be supplied to the Chapter, for processing.
3. All donors will receive a receipt from the Chapter in accordance with IRS Guidelines.
4. All donors will be recognized in accordance with Chapter Recognition policies in effect at the time of the contribution.
5. If the Branch has a Development Committee, the committee chair will head up the fundraising efforts in that Branch. If there is no Development Committee, this will fall to the Finance Committee.
6. All other fundraising efforts should be discussed with the Chapter Partnership Chair in advance of proceeding.
7. The Chapter will coordinate all development campaigns, whether operated by the Chapter or by a Branch.

G. The Chapter will also attempt to recognize "in kind" gifts, (e.g.: Meeting Space, food, etc.) at the appropriate levels listed above. We will follow the IRS Guidelines when accepting, receipting, and recognizing In Kind contributions.

106.0 Chapter Support of the Branches

- A. If the Chapter BOD is contemplating the formation of a Branch, the Board shall appoint a Chair to head a steering committee to help form the Branch.

- B. The Chapter BOD and Committee Chairs and Co-chairs are committed to working with the Branches. The Chapter leadership team will coordinate programs and activities, expenditures and receipts, and communications between the Branches and the Chapter, as well as provide management assistance, and staff (when available), to the Branches. The Chapter will assist the Branch Membership Committee in developing productive marketing, membership recruitment and retention campaigns.

106.1 Branch Reports

- A. The Annual Report is sent to the Chapter BOD by February 15th annually, and covers a summary of specific Branch activities during the previous calendar year. The report includes a copy of the Branch's updated Strategic Plan, annual budget, and annual calendar of events. It assists the Chapter in assessing the Branch's viability and accomplishments, makes sure the Branch is meeting Chapter and USGBC standards, and tracks activities for enhancement to Chapter support services.
- B. Additional required reports to the Chapter shall include all approved BGC meeting minutes, committee meeting minutes and Treasurers' report.

106.2 Branch Webpage

- A. The Chapter has a space on the Chapter website devoted to each of its Branches. The Branch Chair or other designated individual will provide events information, pictures, and other content relative to the Branch to the Chapter Communications Committee for adding, revising and uploading.

106.3 Hosting USGBC Workshops

- A. The Branch will identify a primary Education Program contact, if not the Branch Chair, to obtain all appropriate documents and information from the Chapter for USGBC LEED Workshops. This person will work exclusively with his/her counterpart of the Chapter who will be USGBC's main point of contact for LEED Training coordination.
- B. These Branch Operating Guidelines were adopted by the BOD of the USGBC Florida Gulf Coast Chapter, Inc on July 21, 2009. These Guidelines may be modified from time to time by the Chapter BOD.

Chapter/Branch Operating Guidelines Task Force

USGBC FGC CHAPTER BRANCH OPERATING GUIDELINES July 19, 2011

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