

# **Exploring TRUE v2**

## **A guide to the public consultation**

*U.S. Green Building Council 2026*

## Why version 2

TRUE v2, the next version in the TRUE certification program, is the next step in cultivating a roadmap to support buildings, businesses, and communities to define, pursue, and achieve their zero waste goals, while driving the development of circular materials management infrastructure, behavior, and best practices worldwide.

Since 2013, TRUE has served as a trusted zero waste standard, equipping businesses and communities to fundamentally rethink every stage of their material life cycle, from purchasing decisions and operational practices to end-of-life management. Today, more than 600 projects have achieved TRUE certification, and the rating system is poised to evolve alongside its community, becoming more impactful, current, and accessible to all.

The TRUE v2 draft rating system reflects what we have heard from volunteers, USGBC members, TRUE project teams, consultants, community members, and beyond. Through focus groups, surveys, and direct communication, our stakeholders have shared their needs and desires, shaping the draft rating system to ensure the next version of TRUE best serves the people who use it.

During the public consultation feedback period, we are seeking the input of all stakeholders. This input will be incorporated as we refine the draft into what will become TRUE v2.

## Public Consultation timeline

**The public consultation period will open on February 25, 2026, and close on March 31, 2026.** We invite you to explore the rating system language and make your voice heard by sending us your comments. Public consultation is open to everyone.

## TRUE v2 at a glance

<b>Where TRUE v2 is making an impact</b>	TRUE v2 has been developed around three central areas of impact that the rating system will address to facilitate the transformational changes required in the built environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Closing the Loop</li><li>• Decarbonization</li><li>• Business Transformation</li></ul>
<b>Streamlined and simplified rating system</b>	The TRUE v2 rating system maintains and improves TRUE's ability to serve as a roadmap that guides project teams towards zero waste achievement through simplified categories and credits and increased guidance.
<b>Impact weighting and quantification</b>	The TRUE v2 rating system implements credit weighting, rewarding projects for high effort and high impact initiatives. The rating system increases the quantification of waste, materials, cost, and carbon impact to support projects in communicating their results.

<b>Expanded international and sector applicability</b>	TRUE v2 increases accessibility and applicability across regions and sectors, ensuring zero waste achievement can be accessible to all. While simplified, TRUE v2 aims to provide flexibility for project teams to achieve credits and increase accessibility, providing credit options that meet the credit intent.
<b>Additional updates and priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prerequisites that serve as a foundation and benchmark for credit achievement</li> <li>- Points distribution that strengthens the focus on strategy and performance</li> <li>- Consolidation and updates to credits from the TRUE v1 Rating System</li> <li>- New credits and requirements to move the market forward towards zero waste</li> </ul>

## Where TRUE v2 is making an impact

TRUE has consistently worked to support the widespread implementation of zero waste solutions that enable healthier, greener, and more socially responsible systems and communities. Today, TRUE v2 expands that mission with a focus on three impact areas: **Closing the Loop, Decarbonization, and Business Transformation.**

Every credit and prerequisite in the TRUE v2 rating system has a connection to closing the loop, decarbonization, and/or business transformation. This is detailed in each category overview in the rating system so that project teams can easily shape their own sustainability stories and communicate them.

### Closing the Loop

TRUE v2 supports extending the life of materials for as long as possible by cultivating circular systems to preserve land, ecosystems, and natural resources.

Credit examples:

- Advance Local Circularity
- Purchase Consumables for Zero Waste
- Establish Local Partnerships

### Decarbonization

TRUE v2 helps reduce emissions across the full lifecycle of the materials we use, creating a safer and more stable climate for future generations.

Credit examples:

- Manage Organics
- Evaluate Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Evaluate Material Emissions

### Business Transformation

TRUE v2 drives more efficient business practices, reduces costs, and transforms supply chains to advance healthier economies.

Credit examples:

- Engage the Supply Chain
- Divert Across the Nine Points of Generation
- Determine Zero Waste Financial Impact

## **Streamlined and simplified rating system**

The TRUE rating system serves as a roadmap, guiding project teams toward zero waste. TRUE v2 aims to increase the capacity, providing streamlined and simplified credits and requirements. The TRUE v2 rating system provides simplified credits with clear requirements to improve the certification process. The credits aim to address specific needs for a zero waste program, with distinct intents to support a project on the path to zero waste.

The TRUE v1 rating system has fifteen categories with each credit weighted at one (1) point for a total of 81 points. To simplify the rating system and remove redundancies, the TRUE v2 rating system includes seven (7) categories and is shifted to a 100-point scale.

The TRUE v2 rating system strives to increase accessibility and applicability globally and across sectors. While the credits and requirements are simplified, some credits allow for optionality or progressive requirements, allowing projects the flexibility to meet the intent of the credit with methods that fit their specific project needs.

## **Impact weighting and quantification**

TRUE v2 weights credits by impact and effort to reward projects that have implemented successful zero waste initiatives. The rating system awards higher points for efforts that showcase high-impact strategies and show excellence in zero waste performance.

The TRUE v2 rating system aims to increase performance-based credits that require projects to quantify waste, materials, cost, and/or carbon impact. In addition to the credits, the rating system aims to improve the guidance including tools and examples of how to quantify metrics. The increased structure for quantifying impact will support the accessibility across project types and locations, while also rewarding projects that demonstrate improved performance in the Zero Waste Measurement and Performance category.

## **Expanded international and sector applicability**

TRUE v2 increases the sector and region applicability and accessibility. The rating system improves approachability through simplified credits and requirements, allowing all facility types to understand and meet the level of rigor required by the leadership standard. The options provided within credits allow for different strategies or level of performance to be used to meet the same credit intent.

Additionally, TRUE v2 introduces the Project Priority category, worth up to 15 points. This category consists of credits that provide flexibility for different project types and innovative strategies. This includes credits related to innovation, specific facility-types, and adaptations. The Project Priority category also supports advancing social justice and moving towards a circular economy with novel approaches. This new category will be expanded to increase accessibility across sectors and regions, increasing applicability of the zero waste standard for all.

## **Additional rating system updates and priorities**

### **Prerequisites as foundations for credit achievement**

The TRUE v2 draft transitions from Minimum Program Requirements to prerequisites nested within credit categories. This change is intended to enhance user comprehension and establish a strong starting point for a project to achieve zero waste.

### **Rewarding strategy and performance**

TRUE v2 strengthens the focus on strategy and performance-based credits to reward projects for implementing initiatives and demonstrating impact reductions. The points are distributed across credit types, including planning-based, strategy-based, and performance-based credits. This distribution provides opportunities for projects to achieve points for planning-based efforts but also rewards projects for implementing initiatives and demonstrating impact reductions. Approximately 15% of the points are attributed to planning-based credits, 40% to strategy-focused credits, 30% to performance-based credits, with the remaining 15% associated with the Project Priority category.

### **New credits and requirements**

TRUE is a leadership standard for zero waste, and with ongoing market shifts, TRUE v2 aims to remain on the cutting edge. TRUE v2 restructures, removes, and introduces credits to maximize impact and value in a zero waste program. Additionally, it aims to fill technical and market gaps and push the market forward to a more sustainable future.

## **A thank you to our community of volunteers and members**

TRUE's continued growth and impact is only possible because of its community, and we thank our volunteers, past and present, for their contributions to our shared mission of creating a more circular, sustainable world. Thank you to the founders who brought TRUE to life, our TRUE Advisory Council, our vibrant community of TRUE Advisors, and everyone who has taken the time to share their feedback and engage with the TRUE community. We are excited to shape the next iteration of the future of TRUE with each of you.

[Access the draft rating system and resources.](#)