

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY



BOMA CANADA



TOBY
Award

2027 CRITERIA

THE OUTSTANDING

BUILDING OF THE YEAR®

(TOBY) AWARDS

RETAIL

Enclosed Mall - Under 1 Million Square Feet

Enclosed Mall - Over 1 Million Square Feet

Open Air/Strip Mall



Please carefully review the following information before proceeding with your TOBY application.

2027 TOBY PROGRAM, CATEGORY, AND COMPETITION INFORMATION for RETAIL

INTRODUCTION

The TOBY Awards represent the highest standard of excellence in building operations and management across the commercial real estate industry. This document outlines the criteria, eligibility requirements, and submission guidelines for properties competing at the local, regional, and international levels. It is designed to help property teams understand what is required to prepare a competitive entry and achieve recognition for outstanding performance.

Participation in TOBY begins with earning the BOMA 360 designation, which validates that a building meets rigorous benchmarks for operational best practices. By aligning TOBY with BOMA 360, the program provides a streamlined process for showcasing excellence in areas such as sustainability, emergency preparedness, tenant engagement, and overall building performance. This approach ensures that every entry reflects the highest standards of quality and professionalism.

Within this guide, you will find detailed category descriptions, mandatory inspection items, documentation requirements, and key deadlines. These resources are intended to simplify the application process, highlight improvement opportunities, and support property teams in achieving success at every level of competition.

CATEGORY DESCRIPTION – RETAIL

Properties must be managed as a single entity and consist of a group of retail and commercial establishments, either enclosed or open-air. Entries must have a minimum of 50% occupancy and may include the following.

There is no minimum office space requirement.

- Neighborhood Centers (30,000–50,000 square feet)
- Community Centers (100,000–400,000 square feet)
- Power Centers (250,000–600,000 square feet)
- Regional Shopping Centers (400,000–800,000 square feet)
- Super Regional Shopping Centers (800,000+ square feet)

Retail Sub-Categories:

- Enclosed Mall – Under 1 million square feet
- Enclosed Mall – Over 1 million square feet
- Open Air / Strip Mall

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Each building competing at the regional and international levels must have an active BOMA 360 designation through June 29 of the international competition year.
 - a. New BOMA 360 applications must be submitted by January 15 of the international competition year.
 - b. Canadian applicants must submit BOMA 360 applications by May 1 of the Canadian competition year to meet the regional deadline of July 15 of the same competition year.
 - c. Buildings with a BOMA 360 designation scheduled to expire between January 15 and the International TOBY Gala Night of the international competition year must submit a renewal applicatio to maintain eligibility.
2. Buildings must win at the local level to advance to the regional level and must win at the regional level to advance to the international level.
3. All portfolios must undergo a building inspection and receive a score of at least 70% to be eligible. Entrants must upload a completed and signed TOBY Building Inspection Verification Form to compete at the regional and international levels. This form is provided by your local BOMA association or international affiliate organization.
4. The building must be a member, or managed by an entity that is a member, in good standing with both their local BOMA association and BOMA International. All membership fees and outstanding debts must be paid prior to entry.
5. Previous Winners Eligibility
 - Buildings that won in the same category at the international level are ineligible to compete again for five years. (e.g., buildings that won in 2026 may not compete again until 2030 and would be awarded in 2031).
 - Buildings that won in a different category at the international level are ineligible to compete again for three years. (e.g., buildings that won in 2026 may not compete again until 2029 and would be awarded in 2030)
6. Buildings must be leased and physically occupied for at least one full year by June 15, 2026, starting from the first day of business for the first tenant. A minimum of 12 months of building operations and an average occupancy rate of at least 55% during this period are required. Canadian Entries ONLY: Buildings must be leased and physically occupied for at least one full year by June 15 prior to the Canadian competition year.
7. Each building may be entered in only one category.
8. All entrants are required to provide the following documentation. **Entries that do not include both Section A and Section B will not be eligible to compete at the regional and international levels.**
 - a. **Statement of Energy Performance (SEP)** - Provide a copy of the SEP generated from ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager for any consecutive 12-month period between June 30, 2024 and March 31, 2027. Uploading an alternate document (including an SEP application) or omitting this step may result in disqualification. The property does not need to be ENERGY STAR rated; however, an SEP must be submitted for each building entered.
 - b. **TOBY Inspection Verification Form** - Provided by your BOMA Local and signed by a local judge (electronic signature is acceptable).
9. Entrants may submit multiple buildings as a single entry only if the buildings are owned and managed by the same company; they are managed as a single entity and they are not located within a suburban office park (Buildings in suburban office parks must enter under either the

Suburban Low-Rise or Suburban Mid-Rise category). All entries must disclose whether the submission is for a single building or multiple buildings under the Building Operations and Management section.

10. If a building experiences a change in management or ownership after entering the local or regional competition and subsequently wins at the international level, the award will be presented to the management company or owner at the time of the original entry.

Requirements for Non-U.S. Entrants:

Canadian Entrants must obtain a BOMA BEST® Sustainable Buildings certification. A copy of the certificate or a letter from BOMA Canada confirming valid certification for the competition year must be provided.

International Entries: BOMA International requests that all materials be submitted in English whenever possible. If documentation is not in English, entrants must contact BOMA International at recognition@boma.org in advance for guidance on translation and energy performance benchmarking requirements.

MANDATORY ON-SITE BUILDING INSPECTION

In-person building inspections must be conducted at the local level of competition to verify that each entry meets eligibility requirements and is registered in the correct category. To qualify for TOBY consideration, a minimum score of 70% must be achieved during the inspection.

Mandatory Inspection Items:

1. Entrance/Mall Lobby	8. Central Plant/Engineering Office (if applicable)
2. Security/Life Safety	9. Equipment Rooms/Service Areas
3. Management Office	10. Roof
4. Elevators	11. Parking Facilities (if Owner/Agent Controlled)
5. Common Corridors	12. Landscaping Grounds
6. Restrooms	13. Trash/Refuse Removal, Grease Traps, Loading Docks
7. Stairwells	14. Tenant Amenities

Required Documentation (Where Applicable)

The following documents must be available at the property during the inspection. Online versions are acceptable, but must be easily navigable to ensure judges can efficiently review them:

1. Evidence of evacuation drills conducted within the past 12 months (silent drills are acceptable).
2. Regular financial reports and/or accounting software used.
3. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual or documentation.
4. Purchase Policies.
5. Preventative Maintenance Manual.

6. BOMA Building Measurement Standard Summary Sheet as proof of certification (or other pre-approved certification), provided by a measurement consultant or identified in a sample lease document.
7. Grease trap maintenance records.

ENTRY FEES

TOBY Local Entry Fees

Entrants should check with their local BOMA association for any local and additional regional fee details.

Regional and International TOBY Entry Fees

A \$450 USD entry fee is required for each submission entering the regional competition. This fee is collected by BOMA International once the entry is submitted. No additional fees are required for the international competition.

NOTE: All entries must be submitted and fees received prior to your region's submission deadline to be eligible. Fees paid to BOMA International are non-refundable.

JUDGING PROCESS & KEY DEADLINES

1. Judging occurs at the local, regional, and international levels. Contact your local TOBY administrator for your local cycle start date and submission instructions.
2. Each BOMA local association may submit one building per category to the regional competition.
3. Each BOMA region may submit one building per category to the international competition.
4. Deadlines:
 - Regional competitions must close no later than March 31.
 - Regional winners must be submitted to BOMA International by April 15.
5. International Judging takes place in April and May.
6. TOBY Awards are presented at the BOMA International Annual Conference held in June or July.

UNIVERSAL PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

Photograph Requirements

- File Type: High-resolution JPEG (compressed)
- Maximum File Size: 2 MB
- Note: Collages are not permitted; only single images may be submitted.

Supporting Document Requirements

- File Type: PDF, DOC, DOCX, RTF, or TXT (PDF recommended)
- Maximum File Size: 5 MB

Descriptive/Summary Text Requirements

- Each section has a specified word limit.

- Text must be entered directly into the provided text box; uploaded files will not be accepted for descriptive content.
- Acronyms must be defined at least once within each document.
- Text within supporting documents does not count toward character limits.

Recommendation

Prepare your text in Word or a similar program, then copy and paste it into the portal's text box. Be sure to spell check and confirm that all content is fully visible online. If the text is cut off, reduce the character count to meet the requirements.

PORTFOLIO SPECIFICATIONS

All required information must be submitted electronically via BOMA International's Recognition Portal at <https://recognition.boma.org> to be considered for both regional and international competitions. Strict adherence to the portfolio specifications outlined in the submission guidelines is required. Local entrants should consult their BOMA local association for specific local submission requirements.

***NOTE:** Each section of the entry is limited to a specified word count. Entrants are strongly encouraged to save and review their submissions before finalizing to ensure all content is properly captured.*

*******SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS*******

SECTION 0: BUILDING INFORMATION

(POINTS: 0)

0.1 Building Details:

NOTE: Enter N/A in "Other Certified Rentable Area Square Footage" if not applicable.

- a. Number of floors in the building.
- b. BOMA Certified Total Building Area Square Footage.
- c. BOMA Certified Office Rentable Area Square Footage.
- d. Other Certified Rentable Area Square Footage (where applicable) such as lab space, retail space, other mixed or multi-use areas.
- e. Year Constructed or Open.

0.2 Building Description

(Maximum of 350 words)

Provide a summary of the physical characteristics of the building(s), property, and location.

Attachments:

0.3 TOBY Inspection Verification Form - Provided by the local BOMA association and signed by a local TOBY judge. This mandatory form must be uploaded for the regional competition or the applicant will be disqualified.

0.4 Building Photographs

Attach the following photographs of your building(s). Upload and save each photo separately. No collages or text allowed.

- a. 2 front exterior photos of the building(s)
- b. 1 rear exterior photo of the building(s)
- c. 2 interior photos of public areas
- d. 2 signage photos: 1 exterior monument or pylon + 1 wayfinding (if applicable)
- e. 2 additional photographs of the entrant's choice

0.5 Awards Ceremony Photographs

For display at the awards ceremonies. High-resolution color JPEG (minimum 300 dpi, 1,500 pixels wide or larger).

- a. Building Exterior.
- b. Management team responsible for daily building operations.

SECTION 1: BUILDING OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT

(POINTS: 5)

This section provides an overview of the building(s) and property. Since judging at the regional and international levels does not include a physical inspection, this summary helps convey the quality and features of the property.

1.1 Narrative - Describe the following:

(Maximum of 2,000 words)

- a. Public Entrances (include total number)
- b. Public Area Standard Finishes
- c. Restroom Standard Finishes (if open to public)
- d. Elevators/Escalators/Moving Walks/Lifts (include make, model, year, total number if applicable)
- e. Customer Services/Concierge Facilities
- f. Utility Distribution
- g. HVAC Distribution System (include tenant & public area units)
- h. Fire/Life Safety Systems
- i. Loading Dock & Back of House Tenant Receiving Areas
- j. Parking
- k. Emergency Generator/Backup Power
- l. Signage & Wayfinding
- m. Multiple Uses (where applicable)
- n. Awards List (name + date of award matching uploaded items)
- o. Ceiling height, weight loads, truck/rail access, bay areas, design flexibility + other building standards

1.2 Attachments

- a. Floor plans showing the main or sample store entrance, the entire retail center and store layout.
- b. Site plan or aerial photograph showing the building(s) and property/boundary lines.

- c. Copies of any certifications or awards received. *(Optional)*.

NOTE: Combine multiple documents into a single attachment if needed.

SECTION 2: LIFE SAFETY, SECURITY & RISK MANAGEMENT

(POINTS: 15)

2.1 Narrative - Describe the following:

(Maximum of 2,000 words)

Life Safety

- a. Procedures and programs for fire, life safety and disaster preparedness.
- b. Training for property management, staff, and tenants for each life safety policy.
- c. Collaboration with local first responders and any live training conducted.
- d. Types of drills (e.g., fire, active shooter), including documentation and communication methods.
- e. Summary of the business continuity plan, including recovery procedures.

Security

- a. Security standards, policies and procedures.
- b. Training for property management, staff, and tenants.

Risk Management

- a. Monitoring and controlling activities in common areas.
- b. Building access and entry control, especially during non-business/non-peak hours.
- c. Other risk management programs.

SECTION 3: TRAINING & EDUCATION

(POINTS: 15)

3.1 Narrative - Describe the following for EACH management team member:

(Maximum of 1,800 words)

NOTE: Training for building personnel can be in person or virtually. Delivery options include face-to-face, virtual online courses, in-house training, classroom instruction, or staff meetings. Participation in BOMA-sponsored training (in-person and virtual can also be considered).

Training

- a. Ongoing training programs, including seminars and in-house sessions.
- b. Training completed in the prior year and current year, plus future training plans and goals.
- c. Training for both on-site and off-site team members dedicated to the property.

Education and BOMA Participation

- a. Participation in BOMA-sponsored educational events (local, regional, or international) or international affiliate events within the last 12 months.
- b. Professional designations, memberships in industry organizations, awards, and recognitions.
- c. Continuing education completed (e.g., BOMA designation requirements, real estate licensing courses), including courses and hours.

Team Building

- a. Team-building activities such as staff meetings, joint education sessions, BOMA events, or other collaborative initiatives.

3.2 Attachments

- a. Organization Chart for property personnel.

SECTION 4: ENERGY (POINTS: 20)

IMPORTANT: All entrants (where applicable) must use ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to measure their current ENERGY STAR rating and provide a Statement of Energy Performance (SEP) covering any 12-month period between June 30, 2024 and March 31, 2027.

- Entrants who do not complete this step will not be eligible to compete at the regional or international level.
- Canadian entrants must also provide a BOMA BEST certificate or letter.
- For multiple buildings, use a weighted average by square footage and provide analysis.

4.1 Benchmarking & Performance Scoring (6 Points)

- a. For Retail, the Statement of Energy Performance (SEP) must report energy use intensity (EUI) in kBtu/ft² or ekWh/ft², with the ENERGY STAR score shown as “N/A.” Entrants will receive three (3) points for benchmarking and uploading a valid SEP.

4.2 Narrative - Describe the following: (Maximum of 2,000 words)

Energy Improvement Efforts (3 Points)

- a. For Retail, describe the building’s energy benchmarking approach using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, current energy performance as shown on the SEP using energy use intensity (kBtu/ft² or ekWh/ft²), and past, current, and planned future efforts to reduce energy consumption. The narrative must also explain how SEP metrics are used to benchmark against industry standards and track performance improvements over time.

Building Staff & Tenant Education (2 Points)

- a. Programs to educate staff, property managers, engineers, leasing agents, and tenants on energy conservation.
- b. Include virtual or in-person training, participation in programs such as BOMA Energy Efficiency Program, ENERGY STAR® training, BOMA BEST® practices, and industry certifications.

Building Operations & Maintenance (3 Points)

- a. Maintenance procedures that support energy conservation, including:
 - i. Preventive maintenance programs
 - ii. System documentation and reporting
 - iii. Annual testing results
 - iv. Equipment and system performance monitoring
 - v. Sensor and control calibration

Energy Performance Results (3 Points)

- a. Steps taken to improve energy performance over the last three years.

Building EMS Monitoring (3 Points)

- a. Energy Management System (EMS) in place and how it is used to reduce energy consumption.
- b. Provide measurable results demonstrating energy reduction and improved performance.

4.3 Attachments

- a. ENERGY STAR® Statement of Energy Performance (Stamped by an engineer if score is 70 or greater).
- b. Canadian Entrants: BOMA BEST® certificate or letter.
- c. Charts or graphs outlining results (*optional*).

**SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY/HEALTH & WELLNESS
(POINTS: 15)****5.1 Narrative - Describe the following:**

(Maximum of 3,000 words)

Environmental (4 Points)

- a. Environmental policies and procedures including but not limited to:
 - i. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities
 - ii. Indoor air quality (IAQ) management and testing
 - iii. Storage tank management
 - iv. Generator testing and management
 - v. Hazardous waste management
 - vi. Asbestos management
 - vii. Refrigerant management
 - viii. Legionella testing and management

- ix. Emergency clean up
 - x. Blood-borne pathogen program
 - xi. Pandemic preparedness
 - xii. Tenant environmental management and compliance.
- b. Exterior maintenance plan including:
- i. Recaulking
 - ii. Window washing
 - iii. Pressure washing
 - iv. Green programs that impact IAQ or broader environmental goals.
- c. Additional environmental or regulatory policies and procedures not listed above.

Sustainability (3 Points)

- a. Sustainability policies and procedures including but not limited to:
- i. Storm water management
 - ii. Green friendly landscape management
 - iii. Integrated pest control management
 - iv. Green cleaning
 - v. Green purchasing policy
 - vi. Exterior building maintenance management
 - vii. Lamp disposal
 - viii. Water reduction and management
 - ix. Traffic reduction initiatives.
 - x. Additional sustainable policies and procedures not listed above.

Waste (4 Points)

- a. Waste reduction management work plan and source separation program including when applicable:
- i. Collection of organic waste.
 - ii. Collection of recycled materials including paper, metal cans, glass, plastic containers, cardboard, and lamps.
 - iii. Facilities diversion or capture rate.
 - iv. Educational training for occupants, custodians and the general public.
 - v. Organizational statement for continuous improvement in the reduction and diversion of waste streams.
 - vi. Prevention, diversion, and management of solid waste generated from both day-to-day activities and infrequent events.
 - vii. Future plans to increase recycling levels, including organics composting to reduce overall waste generation.

Health & Wellness (4 Points)

- a. Policies implemented to create healthy work environments for employees and tenants, and to promote health in the community.
- b. Wellness amenities available to one or more stakeholders, such as rest areas, access to outdoor spaces, drinking water provisions, walking trails, fitness areas, immunization clinics, farmers markets, and shared gardens.
- c. Building features that support health and wellbeing, including daylight levels, biophilic design elements, lighting and glare controls, user comfort controls, smoking policy, and acoustic conditions.
- d. Pandemic plan, including enhanced cleaning, disinfecting and maintenance protocols, PPE guidelines, employee training, escalation procedures, and communication strategies.

SECTION 6: TENANT/OCCUPANT RELATIONS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (POINTS: 20)

6.1 Narrative - Describe the following: *(Maximum of 4,000 words)*

Tenant and Occupant Relations (10 Points)

- a. Tenant relations efforts and programs sponsored by building management within the past 12 months.
- b. Work management system used to respond to tenant or occupant maintenance issues, along with any ongoing communication initiatives that keep tenants or occupants informed about building operations.
- c. Amenities available at the property. (Examples: health facilities, childcare services, food service options, seating areas, EV chargers, or child play areas).
- d. Tenant or occupant satisfaction surveys, including frequency, date of the most recent survey, major findings, and actions taken by management to share results, resolve concerns, reinforce successful practices, and maintain popular programs or services.

Community Involvement (10 Points)

- a. Impact of building management on the surrounding community, including jobs created as a direct result of the property, public amenities (such as parks, blood drives, and special events), health and wellness initiatives, tax contributions or special assessments for infrastructure improvements, and community recognition awards or letters of acknowledgment.
- b. Quantifiable benefits such as additional income, charitable contributions, or cost savings; include the duration and history of current programs and events.
- c. Efforts by building management that have made the property a benefit to the local community; corporate donations or activities may be included only if the onsite management team personally participated or the activity directly affected the property.

- d. Participation in advocacy days, meetings, or correspondence with elected officials or regulatory agencies on matters of industry importance (must be within the past 12 months; include date of activity).
- e. Building-sponsored forums or town hall-style meetings held within the past 12 months, or at least one planned or unplanned event coordinated with municipal departments such as police, fire, public works, or special improvement districts (include date of activity).

6.2 Attachments

- a. 3 appreciation letters or emails from tenants or the public.
- b. 1 newsletter or other communication (including screenshots from property apps) listing tenant/community events and building news.
- c. 1 copy of the tenant/occupant survey (if applicable).
- d. 1 example of tenant communication from the property management team.
- e. 3 photographs of tenant events referenced in the submission.
- f. Table of contents from the tenant manual (do not include the full manual or photo collages; only single images).
- g. 3 attachments related to community events (Example: posters, flyers, newsletters, or charity acknowledgment letters).

SECTION 7: MARKETING, BRANDING & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

(POINTS: 10)

7.1 Narrative - Describe the following:

(Maximum of 1,800 words)

Describe all proactive efforts by management, in collaboration with tenants, to implement an effective communication strategy for the Retail Building. The narrative should address how management:

- a. Positions the center competitively within the market.
- b. Enhances the overall customer experience and service delivery.
- c. Engages consumers through coordinated messaging, marketing programs, and tenant partnerships.
- d. Identifies shopper needs and expectations through research or direct feedback.
- e. Implements initiatives that exceed typical industry service levels.
- f. Actively manages the Retail Building environment to support customer satisfaction and tenant performance.

Entrants may provide up to three examples of marketing and branding campaigns, including:

- How each initiative was implemented.
- Methods used to monitor performance.
- How effectiveness was measured or evaluated.

Marketing & Branding (5 Points)

Describe marketing, branding, and promotional practices including, but not limited to:

- a. Website detailing all stores, services, facilities, and events.
- b. Ongoing market research conducted in the last two years to measure consumer feedback, brand awareness, and brand perception.
- c. Brand maintenance through multi-channel communication (email campaigns, media advertising, digital outreach, etc.).
- d. Footfall analysis for both the center and key stores.
- e. Social media program, seasonal promotions, and/or customer loyalty initiatives.
- f. Sponsorship activities such as play areas, branded signage, seasonal programming, or community-engagement events.

Customer Experience (5 Points)

Describe practices and programs that contribute to an exceptional customer experience, including:

- a. Regular consumer research (focus groups, mystery shopping, social media monitoring).
- b. Systems that encourage, recognize, or reward superior customer service.
- c. Efficient management of foot traffic throughout the center and parking facilities.
- d. Effective zoning of tenant mix to provide variety and meet consumer needs.
- e. Adoption of a service-oriented culture across all management staff.
- f. Family-friendly amenities and facilities.
- g. Technology features that enhance the shopping experience (Wi-Fi, ambient music, digital or interactive signage, etc.).
- h. Industry or community awards recognizing outstanding customer experience or service excellence.

7.2 Attachments

Provide up to three examples of marketing and branding campaigns referenced in Section 7.1, including:

- a. Implementation overview.
- b. Monitoring methods.
- c. Evaluation of campaign effectiveness.

*******END OF APPLICATION*******

SUBMITTED CONTENT

Building Registration Information and the Building Description may be used in Awards Program materials and with the media. Photographs may be used, with attribution, in Awards Program materials, with the media and in other BOMA International materials. All other content may be used by BOMA International in the creation of new industry materials. BOMA International will not include identifying information, such as building name, owner, etc., in these materials without the entrant's consent.

Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International

The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International is a federation of U.S. associations and international affiliates. Founded in 1907, BOMA represents the owners and managers of all commercial property types including nearly 10 billion square feet of U.S. office space that supports 3.7 million jobs and contributes \$205 billion to the U.S. GDP. Its mission is to advance the interests of the entire commercial real estate industry through advocacy, education, research, standards and information. Learn more at www.boma.org.

BOMA International • 1101 15th Street NW, Suite 800 • Washington, DC 20005 • 202-326-6300

Awards Portal: <https://recognition.boma.org> | Email: recognition@boma.org