

Green Building Update

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publication

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Obama's green building agenda

Business Week - November 17

The U.S. Green Building Council has drafted a progressive green agenda of sustainable policies that President-Elect Obama should pursue. With green and sustainable construction near the top of the agenda, Obama already plans to call for all new federal buildings to be carbon neutral by 2025 and all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2030. Also, Obama plans to invest heavily in transportation and infrastructure initiatives.

Green Building Focus

Survey: down market conditions not likely to stop green construction

The Wall Street Journal - November 18

Turner Construction Company recently conducted its 2008 Green Building Market Barometer survey. Despite financing concerns, 75% of the 754 commercial real estate executives surveyed said they would not be any less likely to construct "green" buildings. These executives viewed the benefits of green buildings, including (i) lower energy, operating and lifecycle costs; and (ii) higher building values, rents and occupancy rates, outweighing the potential obstacles of building green. Survey respondents consisted of developers (37%), building owners (31%), brokers and real estate servicers (27%), architects/engineers/contractors (22%), and others (23%).

USGBC's membership adopts LEED-2009

San Francisco Business Times - November 18

Last week USGBC's 18,000 members approved a new LEED rating system. USGBC received more than 7,000 comments since May, 2008 on how to update its eight-year-old, much-used green building rating system. Described as some of the most significant changes ever, LEED 2009 has re-weighted certain actions, based on scientific research, in favor of increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in new and existing buildings. Also, LEED 2009 includes regional credits, which are tailored to match environmental priorities in certain geographic areas.

Sustainable projects hold up overseas for now

GlobeSt.com - November 19

At the opening of USGBC's Greenbuild International Conference in Boston, the theme was international. A panel highlighted several major projects around the world that are moving forward despite the economic recession. Some of these projects include the following (1) Pedra Branca, a 10-mile-wide island off the coast of Brazil planned for 4,000 residents, 600 houses and condos and offices that house 4,000 workers; (2) [Masdar City](#), a \$15 billion project in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates to house 50,000 residents and use no fossil fuels; and (3) Deutsche Bank's new

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green headquarters set to open in 2010.

NY green construction thrives despite recession fears

New York Observer - November 13

Despite a grim economy, New York developers are moving forward with numerous green projects. LEED certification appears to be a "branding necessity" for new projects in New York. However, despite the benefits of building green, sustainable projects in New York appear to be suffering as much as other projects during this economic downturn.

Germans talk green with Chicago counterparts

GlobeSt.com - November 13

Last week in Chicago, the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest (Gaccom), brought together German and American business and trade groups to start a trans-Atlantic dialogue on the green building movement. Germany is ahead of the U.S. in energy efficient-buildings. The purpose of the meetings was to show U.S. architects and contractors how they could utilize sustainable German technologies in U.S. projects.

Green building techniques becoming industry standard

GlobeSt.com - November 12

Green building techniques are becoming the standard in the industry according to a panel of experts in a round-table discussion sponsored by Incisive Media and Williams Real Estate in New York. That is a dramatic shift from 18 months ago, when tenants and builders debated whether or not the increased costs of building green justified the benefits.

Labor shortage looms as green construction booms

Wall Street Journal - November 16

Demand is booming for environmentally friendly construction. However, green construction demand is increasing so fast that there are not enough skilled professionals and contractors to do the work. Green buildings demand a range of specialized knowledge that many builders do not have, such as obtaining recycled building materials to how to orient a building to maximize natural heating and cooling. Contractors, architects and other professionals are rushing to get up to speed before their lack of knowledge becomes a competitive disadvantage.

LEED helps Canadian owners compete in tough market

Daily Commercial News and Construction Record - November 13

Oxford Properties recently became the first real estate developer to receive a LEED Existing Building (EB) certification for a multi-tenant building in Canada. Major Canadian developers such as Oxford Properties, Colliers and Cadillac Fairview are pushing for the Canadian launch of the USGBC's LEED certification program. Canadian developers see the benefits of LEED, including increased values, enhanced energy efficiency and marketing advantages over non-certified buildings.

USGBC opens election of 2009 Board of Directors

U.S. Green Building Council - November 10

The USGBC has opened voting for its 2009 Board of Directors. The election will be open through December 10, 2008. All employees or member organizations may vote. USGBC's [election website](#) features information on the candidates as well as information on the [election ballot](#).

Wells Fargo's green financing reaches \$2 billion

GreenBiz - November 11

Wells Fargo has doubled its commitment to high performance, LEED-certified buildings, bringing its total financing of green structures to over \$2 billion. Wells has financed 45 projects in the past five years that have been LEED certified. Wells' green building financing is part of its [larger environmental](#) and [corporate responsibility drive](#) that includes an eco-friendly building plan for all new banks the firm constructs.

Notable green building projects...

Greensboro's Proximity Hotel -- first new LEED platinum hotel

The Proximity Hotel in Greensboro, North Carolina earning platinum status under its LEED program — the first new hotel in the country to earn such a distinction.

Fred Meyer retail store seeking LEED silver

A Portland, Oregon Fred Meyer's store is undergoing renovations intended to help it achieve LEED Silver certification from the USGBC. If successful, it will be the first retail store in Oregon and the first of Cincinnati-based Kroger Co.'s stores to achieve such certification.

Ohio State University welcomes first LEED-certified building

The energy-efficient 4-H center at Ohio State University campus is the first LEED-certified green building on campus. A geo-thermal heating system and other energy-saving features make the building five times more energy efficient than any other campus building.