Managing the LEED Process:
King County, Washington
Getting It Done – Tips for Managing LEED® Projects

Focus of This Document
- Provides overview of LEED project management “how to”
- Helps you create and find tools to manage a LEED project
- Helps you avoid project pitfalls

What Is LEED?
- LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national metric for designing and constructing high-performance, sustainable or green buildings – developed by and offered through the U.S. Green Building Council, a coalition of the building industry that promotes environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work.
- LEED presents a huge design and administrative process that requires careful and accurate management of people and paperwork to the umpteen detail

The Local LEED Climate

**Washington State**
- Sets LEED Silver as the goal for all state-funded projects
- 5,000+ gross square feet
- State agencies

**King County**
- Highest LEED level achievable based on life cycle cost analysis and available funding
- Applies to all new construction and renovations over $250,000

**City of Seattle**
- LEED Silver goal for all capital projects
- 5,000 gross square feet
- Private developer incentives: Requires LEED certification for buildings exceeding base FAR

Prepared for King County by Egis Certified and Otak, Inc.
General Project Goals

- Owner & design team are committed to doing LEED
- An Eco-Charrette will occur:
  - Often an all-day process where the entire project team collaborates to outline goals and strategies for sustainable, integrated design
- Credits that the project team is pursuing will be identified by the team

LEED Checklist

- Itemizes each credit or feature in a simple spreadsheet format
- Summarizes the features achieved in the project
- Assigns a point value to each credit achieved
- Tally’s the points achieved to reveal the certification level (Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum)

Step # 1: Select a Team Leader

- Choose a LEED Accredited Professional or team leader to act as hub for LEED project-related activities
- Registers the project
- Tracks the project’s points
- Sets up and attends meetings
- Functions as the primary LEED project driver
- Acts as the facilitator for communications among the team
- Collects and assembles PDFs or paperwork (LEED-Online changes this process)
- Checks submissions for accuracy and consistency across credits
- Prepares submission to USGBC
- Submits project to USGBC
- Is the primary contact with USGBC

Step # 2: Get LEED Criteria in the Specifications

- Makes it easy on you and your team by providing, in writing, the green specifications
- Helps avoid dreaded “change orders”
Writing Green Specifications

- Provide a General LEED Requirements section
- Specify intended certification level
- Identify all targeted prerequisites and credits
- Provide a glossary of green building terms
- Outline the required submittals and templates
- Be brief
- Specs will be especially important for the following credits:
  - Sustainable sites
    - SS p 1
  - Materials & resources
    - MR 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
  - Indoor environmental quality
    - EQ 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5

Step # 3: Register Your Project

- Register your project on the USGBC website
- You’ll need your project name, address, owner, primary contact, square footage, project details, etc.
- Pay with check or credit card
- You will receive a project number from the USGBC

Notify YOUR Team

- Send notification to your team that the project is registered and provide the project number
- Provide instructions for accessing the USGBC website, your project’s files and other pertinent info
- Provide instructions to your team members for submitting templates, drawings and other info necessary for certification

Step # 4: Meet with Your Team

- Group kick-off meeting
  - All stakeholders, owner, contractor, appropriate subs
  - Establish a regular meeting schedule
  - Ideally set up a specification check process

Step # 5: Assign Credit Champions

- Each LEED credit should have one person who is ultimately responsible for collecting the required credit documentation
Step # 6: Create an Information Management System
- Track and communicate project information
  - A detailed task list
  - Meeting notes systems
  - Email distribution lists
- Detailed task list should include
  - Requirements for each credit
  - Associated tasks for each credit
  - Submittal requirements for each credit
  - Backup documentation for each credit
  - Assigns individual responsibilities
  - Tracking for submittal receipts (until LEED-Online)
  - Identify which tasks are design requirements, submittal requirements or backup documentation
  - Provides a quick reference for meetings

Step # 7: Individual Meetings
- Meet with individual team members
- Make each team member has access to the LEED Reference Guide
- Make sure each team member has read the LEED reference guide
- Go over the task list and assign all items

Step # 8: Collect Submittals
- Start collecting as early as possible
- Store all documents as 8.5” x 11” or 11” x 17” PDFs
- Use a document management system or LEED-Online
- Review and check when received
- Cross reference
- Complete and update tracking system as you go

Step # 9: Submittal Process
- Ways of Submitting
  - Paper submittal (2 binders max)
  - Electronic File
LEED On-Line
- Options for submittal review by USGBC
  - Design review, then construction review
  - Combined design and construction review
- Streamline your submittal -- Don’t include extra “stuff” – read the credit requirement carefully and submit only what’s necessary

Helpful Hints for Streamlining the Certification Process

Tips — General
- Credit Interpretation Requests (CIRs) – read them on the USGBC website. Keep up to date!
  - You must be registered with the USGBC to access CIRs [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)
- Establish your occupancy and square footage early
- Collect back-up documentation up front. Possibly tie in with payment and retention.
- LEED is submitted like a law brief and judged like a law review
- Be tough! Reject poor submittals.
- Use the LEED Calculators

Tips – Materials and Resources Section
- Retain manufacturer’s information for products and materials
  - Letter or spec sheet
  - No Emails
- Check manufacture's claims - beware of nonacceptable standards:
  - “Made to Green Seal Standards”
  - “Environmentally tested”
- Forest Stewardship Council FSC-certified wood is acceptable – SFI-certified wood does not count towards LEED credits
- Ensure that the GC keeps subs accountable
Contractor Submittal Forms

To make it easy for your contractor to track and gather information for submittals:

- Create your own forms, tailored to your project for:
  - MR 4 - Recycled Content
  - MR 5 - Location of Manufacture & Extraction
  - EQ 4 – VOC specs
  - Our commercial buildings
  - Our government projects

Green building practices help secure a sustainable future for King County:

- Our residences
- Our businesses

For Further Information
King County Green Building
206-296-4466

Resources

Green Building in King County
www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/greenbuilding

LEED Supplement for King County
(an online database to help projects certify that contains credit descriptions, submittal requirements and online resources specific to each credit)
www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/LEED/leed-supplement.asp

United States Green Building Council
www.usgbc.org