

Green Building News

Centerpoint II earns LEED-EB Silver

Denver Centerpoint II earned Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Denver Centerpoint II is owned by Unico Properties LLC. It is Unico's first Denver portfolio property to achieve LEED certification.

The 218,000-square-foot, Class A office building is located at 1777 S. Harrison St. Since Unico purchased Denver Centerpoint II in 2006, more than \$900,000 has been invested in sustainable upgrades to the building. Since the retrofit process began in 2006, results from the ASHRAE Level I audit estimate that Denver Centerpoint II has lowered its overall electricity consumption by 1.27 million kilowatt-hours per year and its natural gas consumption by 13,500 therms per year, which equates to a 28 percent energy reduction compared with prior consumption.

Unico's investment in building improvements included the following:

- A lighting retrofit, chiller replacement and system automation upgrades yielding \$115,000 in annual operating savings;
- Installing high-performance plumbing fixtures that yield a 27 percent reduction in water use; and
- Diverting 51 percent of waste from the landfill with the use of recycling and composting.

"We are very conscious of the long-term effect buildings have on the environment and it takes effort and leadership to upgrade an existing structure to green standards," said Dan Preisler, Unico Properties general manager in Denver. "As the first building in our Denver portfolio to receive LEED-EB certification, we are pleased to bring our commitment to sustainably operating buildings to the Denver market."

With the LEED-EB Silver certification, Denver Centerpoint II uses 57 percent less energy than the national average and the building's energy costs are 36 percent lower than the average in Denver.

Denver Centerpoint II also increased its Energy Star rating to 94. Organizations earn the Energy Star label by using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national energy performance rating system to generate energy-efficiency ratings for their buildings, on a scale of 1 to 100, relative to similar buildings across the county. When Unico first purchased the building, Denver

Centerpoint II had an Energy Star rating of 79.

In Denver, Unico owns or operates an almost 1 million-sf portfolio of properties, which includes Unico's recent purchase of 17th & Larimer in Lower Downtown, Bellevue Tower in the Denver Technology Center, Centerpoint II, 1660 Lincoln Street and Cherry Creek Business Park.▲

KTGY-designed student housing targets LEED Silver

KTGY Group Inc., Architecture and Planning, designed a new 332-bed student housing community under construction at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. Under construction are 15 residential buildings and a 4,000-square-foot community center combined with maintenance facilities. The new development features 84 apartments, most of which consist of four bedrooms and three baths in primarily a townhouse-neighborhood with some flats near the community center. The student housing community was slated for occupancy in August.

"The development will be home to undergraduates and graduates in fully furnished apartments and will offer single-occupancy bedrooms and a mix of private and shared bathrooms," said Michael Ohara, AIA and principal in KTGY's Denver office. "The new facility will help the University of Wyoming housing program provide their student residents a graduated product cycle and variety of price points."

The new student housing community will meet the requirements of LEED Silver status on the ever-greening campus. High-efficiency room and water heating, use of recycled materials, low-VOC paints and materials as well as covered bicycle storage are just a few examples of sustainable approaches used to further the design. Low-flow fixtures and reduced water consumption in landscape areas will go a long way toward saving ever diminishing clean water supplies, noted KTGY's Dan McAllister, NCARB and principal.

The developer is American Campus Communities Inc., one of the largest owners, managers and developers of student housing properties in the United States. Petra Construction of Meridian, Idaho, is the general contractor.

KTGY has completed nearly 5,000 beds for the University of California-Irvine with American Campus Communities as the third-party developer. The most recent designs were LEED Gold certified.▲

Luxury hotel in Snowmass achieves LEED Gold

The Viceroy hotel in Snowmass achieved LEED Gold certification. The first hospitality project in the Roaring Fork Valley to receive such designation, Viceroy Snowmass is a 190,000-square-foot ski-in/ski-out, high-end luxury resort and conference center.

Beaudin Ganze Consulting Engineers Inc. was the MEP engineer of record for the entire Snowmass Base Village development, which includes Viceroy Snowmass. OZ Architecture was the architect of record. BGCE provided complete mechanical, electrical, plumbing and technology engineering services to meet the owner's stringent requirements and progressive stance on building design, as well as coordinate with the architecture and other disciplines. BGCE also provided energy modeling, spa design, the signature 8K restaurant design, and assisted with the lighting design.

BGCE is celebrating 20 years of providing LEED, commissioning, energy audits, mechanical, electrical, lighting and technology engineering services from offices in Denver, Fort Collins and Vail; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Truckee, Calif.▲

Alta Aspen Grove earns LEED Silver for Homes

Alta Aspen Grove has become the first market-rate apartment community of stick-frame construction to be certified under LEED for Homes in Colorado, according to developer Wood Partners.

"Alta Aspen Grove is a solid example of leadership in our all-important apartment sector. While many developers are choosing traditional, low-cost building methods, Wood Partners chose to build Alta Aspen Grove so its residents could enjoy all of the benefits – lower utility bills, a healthy indoor environment, access to local transit and services – of living in a green home," said Nate Kredich, vice president of residential market development for the U.S. Green Building Council. "What's more, Alta Aspen Grove will educate countless future and prospective residents on how we can live our lives more sustainably."

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 2000 to provide a framework for certifying green building practices promoting sustainable building and development practices. LEED for Homes is a relatively

new rating system specifically designed for residential buildings under seven stories – as opposed to LEED NC, which applies to commercial and high-rise structures – and Alta Aspen Grove is the first apartment community in the state to qualify under the LEED for Homes rating system.

"Wood Partners has been focused on Building Green almost since its inception in 1997. We have pursued and attained LEED certification for several of our high-rise developments, but Alta Aspen Grove will be our first wood-frame construction community to be LEED certified," said Tim McEntee, Wood Partners director. "The additional capital investment – which was over \$2,000 per unit – was supported by our equity partner upfront and HUD also was very excited about the upgrade. We feel this type of product advancement will be the standard in years to come and will give us a competitive advantage today."

All units in Alta Aspen Grove are expected to receive Energy Star for New Homes certification through the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency for superior energy efficiency and will be certified as they are completed.▲

Downtown Embassy Suites garners LEED Silver status

The Embassy Suites Denver-Downtown/Convention Center earned LEED Silver certification. LEED certification recognizes the proactive efforts the owners, management team and construction partners made to design, build and operate a more efficient, green hotel in the heart of downtown Denver.

The upscale, all-suites Embassy Suites Denver-Downtown/Convention Center is the first hotel within the Embassy Suites Hotels brand and the only hotel in the city of Denver to have earned this certification, established by the U.S. Green Building Council and verified by the Green Building Certification Institute.

"We are proud that the hard work and decisions made by the team have resulted in the stringent LEED certification at the Silver level," said Bill Upshaw, president and chief operating officer of Windsor Management Services, which manages the hotel.

Specifically, the hotel proactively recycled scrap materials produced during construction; incorporated into the new construction the concrete from the multistory parking garage that was previously on the site; placed solar reflective material on the roof to reduce

heat transmission and lower the energy required to cool the building; used rapidly renewing materials such as bamboo; and placed an energy efficient glazing on all windows to reduce heat transmission and reduce the energy needed to cool the building.

All plumbing, mechanical equipment and lighting systems were selected to conserve water and use less energy. The hotel was planned to maximize use of public transportation and provides preferred parking for low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles. Bicycle storage and a changing room are on site. The hotel is operated in a manner using "Green Housekeeping Practices" and efficient recycling practices.

"With each new LEED-certified building, we get one step closer to USGBC's vision of a sustainable built environment within a generation," said Rick Fedrizzi, president, chief executive officer and founding chairman of U.S. Green Building Council. "As the newest member of the LEED-certified family of green buildings, the Embassy Suites Denver-Downtown/Convention Center is an important addition to the growing strength of the green building movement."

The hotel was built by WPM Construction and is owned by WMB IX LLC.▲

HUD, EPA select Place Matters to head project

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency competitively awarded \$5.65 million to eight organizations, including Place Matters, to help existing federal grantees work together to solve common problems.

Place Matters Inc. (Denver) and PolicyLink (Oakland, Calif.) will work with communities to advance social equity in planning, participation and decision making.

The awards build upon the work of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an innovative interagency collaboration, launched by President Obama in June 2009, between HUD, EPA and the U.S. Department of Transportation to lay the foundation for a 21st century economy by creating more financially, environmentally and socially sustainable communities. Award recipients will form a national leadership network of existing and future HUD and EPA grantees that are advancing sustainable local and regional planning and development in their respective areas.▲



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