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Real Estate Buzz

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'Electric highway' goes through Tacoma



Photo courtesy of Unico Properties [\[enlarge\]](#)

Wells Fargo Plaza in downtown Tacoma will be a stop on the “electric highway” from Seattle to Portland, thanks to Unico Properties.

Unico said the 25-story building has been certified LEED silver and is the first in Tacoma to receive that certification in the existing building category.

Unico also says it's the first company in Tacoma to work with the U.S. Department of Energy and Ecotality North America to install commercial-grade electric car-charging stations. The two stations in Wells Fargo Plaza will be part of a network from Seattle to Portland. Unico also will have stations in Rainier Square in Seattle, Skyline Tower in Bellevue and U.S. Bancorp Tower in Portland.

Retrofitting the 308,000-square-foot Tacoma building began in 2009, and has cost about \$1 million. Projects include buying 100 percent renewable energy, installing high-performance plumbing fixtures, starting a commercial composting program with DM Recycling and increasing daylight.

Annual savings in operating the 25-story tower should be about \$80,000. The rehab is expected to reduce electricity costs by 29 percent, natural gas consumption by 16 percent, and water consumption by 45 percent. Unico hired McKinstry to do an energy audit.

Unico is seeking rebates and an interest-free loan from Tacoma Power Utility.