Important News About LEED 2012: A Message from Rick Fedrizzi

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To USGBC members and LEED users:

The amazing volunteers on all our LEED committees have been working extremely hard for the past 3+ years to get LEED 2012 ready for launch. The continuous evolution of LEED is made possible through hard work, and these committed technical experts undertake this work because they have a passion for USGBC's commitment to market transformation and they see LEED as the best tool to help us get there. We are all deeply in their debt.

We always have to remind ourselves that LEED is only about 12 years old as a rating system. It was launched and grew during one of the greatest economic expansions in US history. Then 2008 saw some 60,000 architects lose their jobs, the new housing market shrink by 1/3, and commercial real estate new construction ratchet down. Though focus has shifted to improving our existing buildings, critically important work to be sure, financing remains difficult.

Despite this, LEED continues to thrive. More than 1.6 million square feet of space is certified every day.

LEED 2012 has always been envisioned as a significant step forward in the rating system, one that would raise the bar on performance, and push all the players in our industry – everyone from the architects to the product manufacturers to the financial community – to the next level. However, as we've gone through public comment on LEED 2012, and engaged in hundreds of discussions with our members, the LEED community and numerous other stakeholders, we have heard repeatedly that while our community continues to fully embrace our mission, they need more time to absorb the changes we're proposing and to get their businesses ready to take the step with us. Most importantly, they want more visibility into the infrastructural improvements we've promised with the LEED 2012 program — forms, documentation, education and LEED Online – to inform their internal adoption strategies.

Therefore **we've decided to delay ballot on LEED 2012 until June 1, 2013**, (or potentially sooner in 2013 if our members and the market tell us they are ready). We will use this time to deliver on the infrastructural improvements to the LEED program already underway.

Our marketing team has been hard at work for the last 18 months on a comprehensive brand strategy taking into account LEED's much stronger role in the global green marketplace. Our team believes that a simpler rating system nomenclature is more conducive to continuous improvement and maintaining clear communications throughout development. Therefore, **we see this ballot date change as an opportunity to begin to refer to this next version of LEED as LEED v4.**

Also, **USGBC will ensure that LEED 2009 and LEED for Homes will remain available for registration for three years.** This means that the rating system our stakeholders have begun to master is still there so they can make the switch when they are ready.

We will, as previously announced, continue to ask for the market's assistance in "test driving" the fourth public comment draft. This test will give us important insight to make program improvements in advance of ballot and launch.

We're also committing to a fifth public comment, and it will open on October 2, 2012, and run thru December 10, 2012. This has been done to take advantage of Greenbuild in November, where we will hold public forums and educational sessions on site in San Francisco to help stakeholders better

understand the requirements as well as any final changes that may appear in the new draft. It will also allow us to debut some of the new forms, submittal documents, LEED Online enhancements and other infrastructural upgrades that will help improve and enhance the project teams' experience. We will solidify the infrastructure of the LEED v4 program in early 2013 in advance of ballot.

Speaking of ballot, I want to give a large thank you to the USGBC members who opted into the consensus body and to whom we commit to providing as much education and insight as possible over these next months so they can head to the ballot with full knowledge of all aspects of LEED v4.

To be clear... this change is 100% in response to helping our stakeholders fully understand and embrace this next big step. We intend to do everything we can to ensure that the market is ready for LEED v4 because it represents progress on both carbon reduction and human health improvements. Greenbuild will provide us the perfect venue to start to experience the look and feel of the new system as an integrated package, and ensure the information necessary for informed voting in ballot is available.

The passion for market transformation that resides in our membership and our LEED users is undeniable, but we also acknowledge the reality of the day-to-day assessment of market conditions that has informed this decision. Our commitment to you is that the balloting and launch of LEED v4 will be seamless for our users and successful in terms of advancing the market transformation we all seek.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

S. Richard Fedrizzi
President, CEO and Founding Chairman
U.S. Green Building Council

Cc: Elizabeth Heider
Chair, USGBC Board of Directors

Rick Fedrizzi
President, CEO & Founding Chairman
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