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Nearly 100 Building Projects Test the Next Version of LEED

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Global projects represent a variety of building types, including schools, universities, healthcare facilities, office spaces and residential buildings

Washington, D.C. (May 30, 2013) – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced today that nearly 100 building projects across the globe are already using LEED v4, the next version of the LEED green building program, by participating in the LEED v4 beta. The beta project teams are helping USGBC validate and improve LEED v4 implementation and testing support resources such as reference guide content and LEED Online forms. USGBC's goal is to fine-tune the LEED user experience during this beta period, before LEED v4 launches this fall, based on suggestions and input from the beta project teams.

LEED v4 builds on the fundamentals of the past while offering a new system that prepares all LEED projects in a portfolio to perform at a higher level. LEED v4 also provides a new suite of time-saving support tools designed to help streamline the certification process.

"LEED v4 beta participants are some of the most forward thinking leaders of our time," said Scot Horst, senior vice president of LEED, USGBC. "These projects are incorporating cutting-edge green building strategies and techniques, and will serve as a model for future green building projects across the world. The beta has helped streamline LEED, making it easier for LEED users to accomplish their goals."

"The truth of the matter is that LEED v4 is much more practical," said Theresa Lehman, LEED Fellow and director, Sustainable Services, Miron Construction Co. Inc., working on Lake Mills Elementary School in Lake Mills, Wis. "LEED v4 continues the mission of USGBC to transform the industry, and I commend USGBC and the technical volunteers for taking the leap and putting a lot of thought and effort into the program."

"I appreciate that the new LEED reference guide incorporates all the different documents," said Chloe Bendistis, Sheward Partnership, working on Humanscale's San Francisco office and showroom and two projects with University Place Associates in Philadelphia, including its new headquarters. "The LEED v4 reference guide includes campus guidance, district thermal energy guidelines and scenarios that might impact retail, healthcare or hospitality. It's helpful to have all of these pieces together in one place."

Over the course of LEED's development cycle, the program undergoes a series of public comment periods culminating in a final ballot, during which USGBC members vote to pass the changes within the final system. LEED v4 will open for a 30-day ballot period beginning June 1, and it is expected to publicly launch this fall at USGBC's annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo.

In addition to making continuous updates to the LEED rating system to maintain its rigor and cutting-edge approach, USGBC has taken on a series of actions to improve the LEED customer experience in advance of the release of LEED v4. As a result, USGBC was awarded a Bronze Stevie Award for its superior customer service.

These actions include:

- Reducing the number of LEED submittal forms to simplify the certification process
- Creating credit documentation and calculators, to be available via USGBC's Credit Library

- Developing LEED reference guides in a variety of formats, including a forthcoming and entirely new web-based reference guide that will include online tutorials, videos and other useful resources to help project teams implement LEED
- Scaling up the size and expertise of its LEED certification review team, managed by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI), which is responsible for assessing the quality of LEED certification applications and materials and granting LEED certification
- Growing the LEED certification review team to include licensed engineers, architects and other specialty building professionals
- Significantly investing in LEED Online to streamline and increase the reliability of the user interface, the central online portal for submitting documentation for LEED certification

The LEED v4 beta currently is open, and USGBC is encouraging additional projects to sign up. To register, contact Chrissy Macken at cmacken@usgbc.org.

About U.S. Green Building Council

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, the Center for Green Schools and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit usgbc.org, explore the Green Building Information Gateway (GBIG) and connect on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

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