With the U.S. Green Building Council’s updated graphic identity and branding, we have also redesigned the LEED® Plaque, which is awarded to certified buildings.

The new plaque incorporates the key design elements of the new USGBC logo. Because we want the plaque to reflect the significance of your accomplishment, elevating the aesthetic quality was critical. In addition, we are striving to lessen the impacts of plaque fabrication by choosing a material, fabrication process and delivery methods that have a smaller environmental footprint.

- **Material:** The new LEED plaques are made of recycled content glass, helping to close the loop by providing demand for recycled glass.

- **Fabrication:** The plaques are cut, then sandblasted, not etched. This is less-energy intensive than cast metal, and sandblasting does not involve the toxic chemicals involved in the etching process. In addition, this process allows us to fabricate the plaques virtually “on demand,” which means we will not have leftover inventory at the end of the calendar year and minimizes the potential for waste.

- **Delivery:** We are working with our fabricator deliver the plaques directly to the certified project’s designated recipient, which cuts down on the environmental costs of transportation.

We realize that the project's design may dictate how you choose to display/mount your plaque; however, for your convenience, our fabricator has designed custom hardware for mounting, available for a small additional cost.

In addition, USGBC guidelines now provide for customized plaque installations to allow you to integrate the plaque into your project design. Custom plaque guidelines are provided on the following pages.
One advantage of USGBC's new branding is the added flexibility of incorporating the Certification Mark into the architecture of the building or space. You can now create a custom LEED® certification "plaque," or mark, be created as an intrinsic part of the certified project. The architect or designer can use his/her imagination in terms of material and location for the mark: on glass, on the building itself, or even on the ground.

General Design Guidelines
The main objective is for the LEED certification mark to appear tone-on-tone, that is, in the “color” of the natural material, i.e., the stone or glass, with no additional or contrasting color added to it. The plaque can be applied to an existing surface, or it can be mounted as a plaque as a piece of stone, or a disc of metal, etc. Some of the techniques that can used to achieve this tone-on-tone feeling include: sandblasting, etching, or frosted vinyl applied on glass (this is a less expensive alternative to sand blasting on glass and will give a similar feel). Though the idea is tone-on-tone, enough contrast must be achieved in order for the logo to be legible.

Care needs to taken when specifying the depth of the sandblasting or etching, and one should have samples made in the exact material prior to the final application.

Size
Though we realize that care will be taken in sizing the logo in relation to the area on which it will “live,” we do not recommend the plaque size to be smaller than 12 inches in diameter. For single-family residences certified under LEED for Homes, however, plaques may be as small as 7 inches in diameter, due to the small scale and character of these structures. In applications on some commercial buildings, the logo can be applied quite large, again, in accordance with the architect or designer’s vision.

Some examples of materials and techniques:

- Sandblasted Stone
- Etched or Cast Metal
- Sandblasted Glass

The principle behind this approach is that the LEED Certification is not just a trophy representing an award, but rather it represents an intrinsic difference in thinking, design and construction of a built space, and therefore the plaque should endeavor to be intrinsic with the building itself. In large spaces with multiple entries, consider multiple applications of this designation near different entry points.