The Living Building Challenge

“What the Challenge Means

The Greater Toronto Chapter is developing a formal partnership with the Cascadia Region Green Building Council to represent and promote their Living Building Challenge to all building owners, architects, engineers and design professionals in Southern Ontario. The Living Building Challenge is attempting to raise the bar and define a true measure of sustainability in the built environment, at least as far as what is currently possible and given the best knowledge available today. Projects that achieve this level of performance can claim to be the most sustainable in North America. Cascadia feels compelled to release The Living Building Challenge to provide a signal to the green building industry where it needs to head in the next few years if we are to address the daunting challenges ahead.

A building that is informed by the eco-region’s characteristics.

A building that generates all of its own energy with renewable resources.

A building that captures and treats all of its water on site.

A building that uses resources efficiently, and for maximum beauty.

“Imagine buildings that are built to operate as elegantly and efficiently as a flower.”

The standard will work for existing buildings as well as for new buildings. Specific modifications for existing buildings will be defined in the Users’ Guide. The Living Building standard works for any building type since it is performance-based. As a result, the strategies to achieve it will vary widely by building type.

For more information, please visit the Cascadia Region Green Building Council website at: www.cascadiagbc.org. The new Greater Toronto Chapter website is under development and will provide more information on the Challenge in coming months.
The World Green Building Council
7th International Congress Showcases Canada’s Hospitality

By now most readers will have heard, to some degree, about the success the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority has had in winning the bid to host the new World Green Building Council Secretariat at The Living City Campus just north of Toronto.

The first order of business after announcing the location of the Secretariat was to host the 7th International Congress in Toronto. This was a 4 day conference from July 8-11, 2007 where delegates from over 25 countries participated in events and workshops focused on advancing the objectives of established green building councils and worked to create new green building councils in interested countries around the world.

Sunday July 8th was a day of introductions. CMHC hosted a bus tour of Toronto’s significant sites for the visiting delegates. In the evening 200 delegates and guests enjoyed a boat cruise on Lake Ontario with fine food and music.

Monday July 9th was the first day of workshops with guest speakers from around the world including Sandy Wiggins, Chair of the US Green Building Council and Rob Bennett of the William J. Clinton Foundation. The evening was coordinated around a gourmet Canadian BBQ hosted by the Boiler House in Toronto’s Distillery District. This was a great opportunity for over 300 industry leaders to meet Congress delegates.

Tuesday, July 10th was the second day of workshops and was dedicated to strategic development for green building councils. The formal Gala was on this night at the Liberty Grand on the CNE grounds. 350 leaders enjoyed the festivities and well-known guests included Provincial Finance Minister Greg Sorbara, Provincial Transportation Minister Donna Cansfield, Toronto Mayor David Miller, East Gwillimbury Mayor James Young and many more.

Wednesday, July 11th delegates toured The Living City Campus where the WorldGBC Secretariat will be located.

As we work and prepare through all of this fast-paced WorldGBC activity, I marvel at the international support and calibre of leaders helping to ensure the vision and objectives of the WorldGBC are achieved. No easy feat considering the WorldGBC is striving to expand from 11 international green building councils (which currently includes Australia, Canada, United Emirates, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Taiwan, USA, England, and Brazil) to 30 GBC’s over the next year, to 100 GBC’s in 3 years. If this target isn’t impressive enough, the WorldGBC also wants these emerging councils to be at the capacity of the USA and Canada Green Building Councils as soon as possible. A goal only reached by USA and Canada after many years of development. Scientists have given us a target of ten years to make an impact on climate change. After that, we might have to live with the environmental impacts and the associated social and financial implications required to adapt our built environments. This is a challenge the WorldGBC takes very seriously. The next big step is creating the international partnerships and industry collaboration needed to achieve success.
News from CaGBC National: LEED Complete, “The Next Generation”

In collaboration with its members, partners and LEED® practitioners, the CaGBC is updating the LEED® Canada Green Building Rating System to support the building industry in taking the lead to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and proactively accelerate other national environmental challenges. The next generation of LEED® Canada will deliver certification and actual performance benefits faster and at a lower cost for any type of building at any point in its life-cycle.

The next generation of LEED Canada will be a scalable, flexible and rigorous tool that will rapidly and affordably improve the performance of buildings. LEED Complete is about integrating new tools and harmonizing the rating system credits. Other key aspects include:

**Custom credit sets** – flexibility to select project-specific “credit sets” generated on-demand. Credits and prerequisites will include assessment of carbon emission reductions.

**Web-based delivery** – a new online process will reduce cost to project teams and streamline certification and include value-added processes for enhanced building design and operation for continuous performance improvements.

**Performance-based certification** – ongoing measured data collection and reporting with performance feedback loops to owners and building operators.

**Technical rigour** – best current scientific, risk and life-cycle assessment knowledge. The CaGBC will establish performance standards to be used as “baselines” for different building types. These standards will be raised as new information on better designs and operational practices becomes available to ensure a continuous improvement in building performance.

**Certification at all key life-cycle milestones** – performance-based certification and reporting will occur at distinct stages of a building’s life-cycle. This will foster a long-term relationship between LEED and accredited building owners and operators, and ensure their investment in the rating system delivers ongoing value. LEED will shift from a “one-time intervention” tool into an ongoing management system for buildings and land development.

**Engaging leaders in LEED Complete**

Pilot projects will be conducted with partners in key sectors in 2007 and 2008. The pilot process will evaluate building performance measures and management tools, and beta test certification for groups of buildings, new online certification tools, and new procedures for LEED certification agents. Key sectors are invited to participate and contribute to the pilot projects, including: K-12 schools, residential, government and commercial buildings, and university campuses. GHG emission reduction strategies will enable these building owners to save money and become important participants in a national building-centric climate change effort and community based sustainability program.

Findings from the pilot projects will form the basis for the LEED Complete framework that will be announced June 11-12, 2008 at the CaGBC national summit in Toronto.

*Review by Ian Jarvis, Past Chair, CaGBC*

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**Executive Director’s Note**

I would like to thank Sandra Kaiser of SmartCentres for setting up this all too brief meeting and photo opportunity with Al Gore on June 27th. Mr. Gore’s words of wisdom continue to be an inspiration. I am proud to have made his acquaintance (and yes, that is a look of awe and excitement on my face!).

Andrew Bowerbank
Calling all Green Building Consultants

This is your opportunity to strut your stuff and peddle your expertise in green buildings to the Building and Land Development Industry (BILD - formally the Greater Toronto Home Builders Association). We need twenty volunteer “subject matter experts” and five moderators to help out with our latest initiative: the development of an industry and association-specific “education outreach through awareness” program.

Using a panel presentation and Q & A format, the Chapter will draw upon our membership to provide audience specific speaker content in the area of Green Building & Sustainable Development. These forums are meant to provide introduction, insight and overview and are not meant to be technical training.

The first Association to sign up for this program is the Building and Land Development Association (BILD). The BILD program is scheduled to begin in October and run through December.

The preliminary agenda and curriculum is as follows:

**Session One – “Getting Started - On the Road to Sustainable Development and Green Building”**

The panel should include one low-rise and one high-rise Builder/Developer with experience in a green project, along with their principal “green consultant (LEED AP)”.

**Session Two – “Integrated Design – Foundations for Green Buildings”**

One session will focus on hi-rise, one on low-rise. The panel should include a client, a green design consultant (LEED AP/EnergyStar Evaluator), a municipal building official, and a simulation modeler.

**Session Three – “Tech Talk, Applying Green Building Strategies”**

One session will focus on hi-rise, one on low-rise. The panel should include a civil engineer, a mechanical energy engineer, a landscape architect, a lighting specialist, and an ecologist.

Please contact Melissa Ferrato (mferrato@trca.on.ca) or visit our website (www.cagbc.org) for more details.

**This initiative is being programmed by the Tech/Ed committee, whose time and contribution are greatly appreciated.**

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**Mark Your Calendars**

**Sept 12 – Chapter Meeting**

210 King St. E at the Autodesk Studios. This is the 1st meeting of the fall season, and we are planning a big event! A representative from CaGBC National has been invited to present the new LEED Complete program. Special thanks to the Toronto Economic Development Corporation for sponsoring this event.

**Oct 24-25 Toronto Regional Green Building Festival**

www.greenbuildingfest.com

Atlantis Pavilions - Ontario Place.

Now in its 3rd year, the Chapter is very proud to be a founding partner of this event, hosted by Sustainable Buildings Canada.

**Nov 6-9 USGBC GreenBuild Conference, Chicago.**

www.greenbuildexpo.org

This event is the premier North American conference for green buildings. Attendance is expected to exceed 20,000! The Chapter highly recommends that you attend this conference and take part in the international forum on Nov 6th.

**Nov 7 Charles Sau ri o l Environmental Dinner - Guest Speaker: Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Pearson Conference Centre**

Hosted annually by TRCA, this is the longest running environmental dinner in the country.

www.charlessaurioli.ca for ticket information

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