

Best Practices for LEED® Certification in VA Facility Construction & Renovation Projects (v. 1)

This *Best Practices* document has been developed to assist CFM staff in facilitating LEED® certification in major facility projects. It will be regularly updated to capture any new best practices. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions to SustainableDesign@va.gov.

Planning/Programming for LEED Silver Certification

- Planners are encouraged to have a LEED Green Associate® or LEED Accredited Professional® credential.
- Conduct a LEED certification feasibility analysis.
 - Evaluate all LEED categories and point levels to determine which are feasible/not feasible.
 - This analysis will determine which Planning-level actions must be taken to ensure certification success.
 - Pursue higher levels of LEED (i.e. Gold or Platinum), if the project is a suitable candidate.
 - If LEED Silver certification will not be attainable, notify AED OFP immediately and submit a formal waiver request.
- Conduct feasibility analysis of Renewable Energy (at a minimum, include Solar Photovoltaic, Solar Hot Water, Direct Geothermal Heating, Wind, and/or on-site hydroelectric).
- Conduct feasibility analysis of Ground-Source Heat Pump (Geothermal Exchange).
- For all technologies determined feasible, conduct a high-level lifecycle cost analysis. Include LCC-effective technologies in the Program. Include as much power generation capacity as is feasible. (This can always be reduced later, but can rarely be increased later)
- If a project site provides strong opportunity for renewable energy, inform the leadership team as soon as possible so they can decide whether or not to make the project a renewable energy showcase project (or, possibly Net Zero).

A/E Contracting for LEED Silver Certification

- Procurement staff are encouraged to have a LEED Green Associate or LEED Accredited Professional credential.
- Include a requirement for the A/E of record (or Design-Build firm) to be responsible for submitting all certification documentation upon completion of construction.

Designing for LEED Silver Certification

- Project Management staff are encouraged to have a LEED Green Associate or LEED Accredited Professional credential.
- Conduct a LEED charrette as early in the design process as possible.
- Project Managers must bring a third-party Commissioning Agent (CxA) on-board as early as feasible. The CxA will play a very important role throughout design.
- Ensure construction documents include requirements to submit appropriate LEED documentation to support certification.

Constructing for LEED Silver Certification

- Ensure construction contracts include language indicating the project was designed to be LEED-certified and the construction contractor must avoid eliminating any LEED-specific design features or materials.
- Be familiar with which components of the project were included for LEED certification purposes. Protect those features!

The Point of Contact for this document is

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