Backgrounder

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

- The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings.
- LEED™ promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.
- LEED™ is a point-based rating system; credits are earned for building attributes considered environmentally beneficial.
- Designers can pick and choose the credits most appropriate to their project to achieve a rating. LEED™ credits cover six topic areas:
    - **Site Development**: minimize storm water run-off, encourage car pooling and bicycling, increase urban density and green space
    - **Water Efficiency**: reduce site irrigation, reduce water consumption, minimize or treat wastewater
    - **Energy Efficiency**: reduce building energy consumption, use renewable energy, eliminate ozone-depleting chemicals, commission building systems
    - **Material Selection**: minimize construction waste, re-use existing building façade, use recycled and salvaged materials, use renewable construction materials and design and build more durable buildings
    - **Indoor Environmental Quality**: incorporate daylighting, use low off-emitting materials, provide operable windows and occupant control of work space, improve delivery of ventilation air
    - **Innovation in Design**: use a LEED Accredited Professional, greatly exceed the requirements of a credit, incorporate innovative environmental features not covered in other areas.
- LEED™ has four performance ratings:

26 to 32 points: Certified	39 to 51 points: Gold
Certified 33 to 38 points: Silver	52 or more: Platinum

- LEED™ was developed in the United States and adopted in late 2004 by the Canada Green Building Council