CaGBC Streamlines LEED Canada Certification Process

Changes aim to shorten certification to less than six months

November 24, 2011, Ottawa, Ontario - The Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC) is announcing changes to the LEED Canada certification process that aim to streamline certification to less than six months. The CaGBC's goal in implementing these changes is to better serve project owners and deliver certification in a timely fashion, in line with market expectations.

LEED has been a highly transformative force in the Canadian building industry, driving dramatic changes in design, construction practices and operations. To better meet the large market demand for LEED certification in Canada, the CaGBC has already increased internal staff to address the majority of backlogged projects and delayed Credit Interpretation Requests (CIRs). In addition, the CaGBC hired four new review teams of highly skilled consultants, bringing the total to six teams who are now working to certify projects.

In June 2011, the CaGBC established a taskforce to further expedite certification. The taskforce, which included industry stakeholders and subject matter experts, recommended significant changes to the CaGBC's certification process. These recommendations will be implemented over the coming year and will streamline the certification process to an average of less than six months.

These changes include:

- **Shortening the three stage certification pathway to two stages for *LEED Canada NC 1.0* and *LEED Canada CS 1.0* projects.** Projects that choose this option will follow a certification pathway similar to that used in the 2009 versions of the rating systems, and will benefit from a quicker and cleaner certification process.
- **Investing in technology infrastructure to improve the administration of certification.** CaGBC will more effectively manage the large volume of projects undergoing certification by investing in more sophisticated technology tools.
- **Introducing a design review process.** *LEED Canada NC 2009* and *LEED Canada CS 2009* projects will have the option of submitting design-stage credits and prerequisites immediately following design. The design review will allow issues to be addressed while the relevant parties are still engaged. It will also provide teams with greater clarity as to the likely outcome of certification, and allow for adjustments to be made before final certification.

"We listened to the industry and have taken action. We've created an implementation plan that should shorten the certification process to an average of less than six months," said Thomas Mueller, President and CEO, CaGBC. "The demand for LEED is a positive sign of where the green building industry is going in Canada. It's the CaGBC's responsibility to support and better serve the market."

Delays in certification also stem from the failure of applicant teams to respond to certification reviews in a timely manner. To streamline LEED certification, the CaGBC will be introducing measures to help encourage quicker response times from applicant teams.

"Everyone needs to play their part to make this work," said Mueller. "Even with the new two-stage process, timely review of materials is critical to achieving the goal of under six months. We strive to provide the best service possible to help applicant teams understand the certification process, and also provide training workshops to further build out their expertise."

To assist applicant teams seeking certification, CaGBC offers a *'Speed up Your LEED Certification: Getting it Right the First Time'* interactive workshop that discusses the more complex documentation requirements. Anyone involved in project certification would benefit from taking this course. Additionally, early in 2012 CaGBC will offer an on-demand online session addressing the process associated with certification. For more information on these courses, please go to this link http://www.cagbc.org/AM/PDF/Speed_Up_Certification_flyer_en_Nov21.pdf.

About CaGBC

CaGBC (www.cagbc.org) is the leading national industry organization advancing green building and sustainable community development practices. It represents a cross section of organizations involved in the design, construction and operation of buildings and homes. The CaGBC reduces environmental impacts from the built environment through education/training, building certification, performance benchmarking and reporting, advocacy and information sharing. The CaGBC is the license holder for the LEED green building rating system in Canada. CaGBC also delivers the GREEN UP Building Performance Program and supports the Living Building Challenge in Canada.

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