

Durham: Committed to Sustainability Through Green Buildings

What is LEED?

LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It is a green building rating system developed by the US Green Building Council in 1998. Buildings can achieve one of four levels – certified, silver, gold, or platinum – based on the amount of sustainable aspects that are incorporated. Buildings are scored in a number of areas including:

- Sustainable Sites
- Water Efficiency
- Energy and Atmosphere
- Materials and Resources
- Indoor Environmental Quality

Making Existing Buildings More Sustainable

The County continues to reduce the environmental impact of its existing buildings by installing low-flow water devices for plumbing fixtures in all buildings and replacing light fixtures with compact fluorescent and LED lighting.

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Durham County has demonstrated a public commitment to sustainability and Green Building. The County's commitment to achieving high levels of LEED certification for all new facilities and major renovations exemplifies careful stewardship of natural resources and the land. Several buildings have already received LEED certification, and several more are under design or construction.

The City of Durham is committed to building environmentally friendly buildings through LEED guidelines or the Triangle J Council of Governments' High Performance Building guidelines. Together, the green building efforts of the County and City will aid Durham in its goal to reduce government greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030.

- The Triangle Waste Water Treatment Plant is the first such plant in the country to have a LEED Certified administration building.
- The new North and East Regional Libraries attained Certified and Silver LEED status. The South Regional Library (under construction) is targeting LEED Gold status.
- The 244,000 square-foot Human Services Complex is currently under construction and has a target of LEED Gold certification. It is scheduled for completion in November 2010.
- The future Durham County Justice Building is also registered with LEED for a goal of Gold status and should be completed by 2012.
- The City's Durham Performing Arts Center (pictured below) was designed and built with the environment in mind. Built on previously developed land, much of the building was built with recycled materials and half of the waste generated from construction was recycled. The building boasts water and energy efficient systems and high indoor environmental quality.

