



CITY OF SYRACUSE COMMON COUNCIL

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Councilor-at-Large

9/10/07

City of Syracuse Adopts Green Building Standards for Municipal Buildings

Today the City of Syracuse has become one of the first City's in New York State to adopt "green" building standards for all new construction and major renovations of City owned, municipal buildings. Those standards will also apply to the City School District's new construction and renovation projects.

What buildings are covered under this ordinance?

All City owned buildings used by the City for public, municipal purposes.
It does not apply to privately owned buildings.

The new ordinance:

The law requires that all major renovations and new construction of public buildings meet a LEED "Silver Standard" as set by the US Green Building Council. However, if there is no appropriate Silver standard for that type of project or if there is no practical way that the project can meet that Silver standard, then the City Engineer (or other applicable department) can set a lesser green building standard. Only that portion of the renovation or new construction must comply with the green standard. The law does not require that existing public buildings be retro-fit to comply with this new standard.

What is the LEED Silver Standard?

LEED is a term used by the US Green Building Council. It stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It is a nationally accepted rating system for the design, construction and operation of buildings of all types. It gives building owners and managers benchmarks for how "green" a building may be, focusing on sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor air quality.

Points are awarded for different types of efficiencies incorporated into the building. Projects are awarded Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum certifications depending on the number of credits achieved. LEED for schools allows for up to 79 points. Silver Certification will be awarded if the project meets between 37 – 43 points. For example, points can be earned by how well the building recycles its materials, reducing water use, increasing the amount of daylight in a classroom and even by using the school itself as a teaching tool for environmental knowledge.

Will there be a cost to going green?

Greening schools is extremely cost efficient. Studies have shown that the initial investment for green school design is, on average, 2% higher than for traditional construction. However, the cost savings through lower energy and water costs and lower health care costs is approximately 8%. New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERTA) also provides low interest loans for energy efficient measures and building materials and also provides technical assistance for energy efficiency and green building measures.

Who supports this effort?

Working closely Mayor Driscoll, the Syracuse School Board and District, the Working Families Party and a large collation of organizations, this ordinance will be the first step of many, creating opportunities for a more sustainable community.

Other groups supporting this effort include Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Parents for Public Schools, New York League of Conservation Voters, Greening USA, Boys and Girls Clubs of Syracuse, Central New York Communities, Sierra Club, Partnership for Onondaga Creek, Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 267, Alliance for Quality Education, local architects and other design professionals. The Common Council has also received over 75 letters from our citizens supporting the Green Scene, Building Our Community.

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**ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED
GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF
SYRACUSE, AS AMENDED, TO ADD A NEW
CHAPTER 52 ENTITLED CITY OF
SYRACUSE GREEN BUILDINGS
ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, the City of Syracuse is dedicated to the mutually compatible goals of economic vitality, social equity and environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, the City of Syracuse is dedicated to the environmental health and safety of its employees, and to efficient and effective work; and

WHEREAS, municipal government should assume the role of leadership role in promoting the efficient use of natural resources providing for the long-term protection and enhancement of our environment, our economy and the health of our citizens and future generations; and

WHEREAS, buildings account for 71% of electricity use in the U.S. and 39% of greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, green buildings save 30-50% of energy, 35% of carbon emissions, 40% of water and 70% of solid waste; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has developed a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system which is a consensus- based, market-driven green building rating system for new and existing commercial and institutional buildings used to determine what constitutes a sustainable building, using national standards; and

WHEREAS, 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 air quality; and

WHEREAS, according to the USGBC, to date, 12 federal agencies, 22 states and 75 localities have already made various commitments to use LEED; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) provides low interest loans (4% below market rate) for energy efficiency measures and building materials that meet LEED or other generally accepted green building standards; and provides incentives for energy efficiency measures and technical assistance for certain energy efficiency and green building measures; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Green Building Tax Credit Program provides a tax incentive to commercial developments incorporating green strategies informed by LEED; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the people of Syracuse that all municipal buildings constructed, expanded, or renovated should be modern facilities, combining the most energy-efficient design, the most environmentally sustainable systems, with maximum access and benefit to employees and the public; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Common Council for the City of Syracuse:

The Revised General Ordinances of the City of Syracuse are hereby amended to add a new Chapter 52 entitled City of Syracuse Green Buildings Ordinance to read as follows:

Section 52-1. Title and Purpose

(a) Syracuse Green Buildings Ordinance

The purpose of this legislation is to establish a policy of the City of Syracuse to plan design, construct, manage, renovate, and maintain its facilities and buildings to be sustainable.

Section 52-2. Definitions.

For purposes of this General Ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below:

- (a) “City” means the City of Syracuse and its departments and offices, including the Syracuse City School District.
- (b) “Department” means the Department of Engineering, or other City department or agency as designated by the Mayor.
- (c) “LEED Certified Standard” means the United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating system level of certification referred to as Certified standard, or such other equivalent standard as designated by the Department.
- (d) “LEED Silver Standard” means the United States Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating system level of certification referred to as Silver standard, or such other equivalent standard for that building type, as designated by the Department.
- (e) “Covered public project” means a construction project involving real property including land and/or buildings which meet the terms of subsections (1) and (2) of this definition:
 - 1. The City is the record owner of said real property including land and/or buildings or related improvements which are used for municipal or school public purposes; and
 - 2. which involve (a) new construction, or (b) renovation or rehabilitation of an existing building or the expansion of an existing building provided that where the covered public improvements necessary for the project involve only: 1) the improvements necessary for the renovation or rehabilitation of a portion of an existing building, or 2) the improvements necessary for the expansion of an existing building, the applicable green building standards shall apply only to such portion of an existing building being renovated or rehabilitated or to the actual expansion of the existing building respectively.

(f) "Public Building" means any real property and buildings and/or improvements thereon owned by the City of Syracuse and used for municipal and public purposes.

Section 52-3. Public Buildings

(a) Green building standards

All covered public projects entering the design phase 90 or more days after the effective date of this legislation shall be designed, constructed and certified to at least the LEED Silver standard established at the time the Project becomes Registered with USGBC.

(b) Exemptions

A covered public project does not have to meet the LEED Silver standard if the City Engineer determines that:

- a. There is no appropriate LEED Silver standard for that type of building or renovation project. In such case, the Department may set lesser green building standards that are appropriate to the project.
- b. There is no practical way to apply the LEED Silver standard to a particular building or renovation project. In such case, the Department may set lesser green building standards that are appropriate to the project.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that this Ordinance shall take effect on
October
~~September~~-1, 2007 subject to the provisions of Section 52-3(a) contained herein.