

One building block at a time^{by}

Celeste LeCompte - 3.2.07

PORTLAND Portland's Brewery Blocks offer some of the West Coast's best-known green buildings, but so far, just three of the project's six components have received certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The latest addition is The Louisa, a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold apartment building.

The project features four separate green roofs that manage 28 percent of the site's stormwater, as well as energy-efficiency measures that reduced the building's energy usage by 40 percent compared to a conventional building of the same size.



The Louisa's roofscapes add functional green space to Portland's Pearl District.

According to project consultant Brightworks, The Louisa's energy savings prevent 1.3 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions a year. Completed in 2005, the project was designed to earn LEED Silver certification, but energy-efficiency gains from construction methods and a strict non-toxic cleaning policy helped the building achieve additional credits that bumped it up to 39 points — just enough to earn a Gold designation.

Brewery Blocks certification has been a challenge for Brightworks, in part because of the project's scale. "The Brewery Blocks was a very unique and slightly more complex thing because of the multi-block nature of it," says Brightworks consultant Scott Lewis.

For instance, construction and demolition waste was recycled and disposed of across projects, making it difficult to attribute recycling waste percentages to individual buildings.

In addition, The Louisa's groundfloor retail tenants were in charge of designing their own spaces. Certification required developer Gerding Edlen to create a manual for tenants encouraging them to use green building strategies. The three remaining blocks of the project, home to tenants that include Whole Foods (NYSE: WFMI), Gerding Edlen Development and Scottish Powerowned (NYSE: SPI) PPM Energy, are expected to complete certification this summer.

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