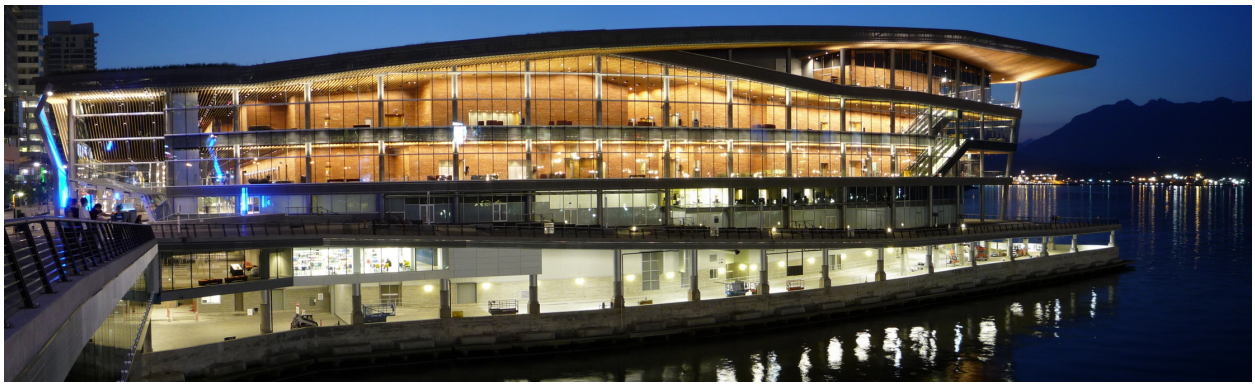

Vancouver Convention Center
LEED Platinum | Vancouver, Canada
Photo credit: Bobak Ha'Eri (Wikimedia Commons)

LEED O+M

Recognizing excellence in existing buildings

It can take up to 80 years to make up for the impacts of demolishing an existing building and constructing a new one, even if the resulting building is extremely energy efficient. At the same time, however; many buildings around the world are inefficient and resource-depleting. The global existing building stock represents one of the largest opportunities to address the negative impacts of buildings.

LEED for Operations and Maintenance (O+M) certification recognizes existing buildings that have implemented sustainability strategies in energy, water and waste striving for beneficial impacts in biodiversity, human health and wellbeing, regenerative material resource cycles and social equity and reduced contributions to climate change. With an approach focused on both performance oriented sustainable strategies and outcomes, LEED O+M supports the operations and maintenance of high performing buildings by increasing operational and resource efficiencies and influencing human behaviors through the development of policies.

LEED O+M can be applied to both whole buildings and interior spaces in a number of sectors, from offices and retail to manufacturing, warehouses and distribution centers, and even hotels, healthcare and universities.

Benefits
LEED certified green buildings are better buildings. Benefits of LEED O+M certification include:

- Demonstrate actual green building performance, versus theoretical design-based performance
- Communicate achievement of corporate social responsibility goals
- Market differentiation
- Remain competitive in market
- Increase occupancy, rental rates, and property value
- Reduce tenant turnover
- Lower operating expenses, which equals higher asset value
- Enhanced energy efficiency
- Indoor air quality improvement
- Reduced natural resource use
- Waste source reduction
- Improved water efficiency
- Employee productivity gains, retention and recruitment

Recertification
LEED recertification uses on-going performance data to protect your asset and ensure it is operating exactly the way you intended from the day you first earned LEED certification. Recertification verifies LEED projects continue to maintain high levels of sustainability performance long after they are constructed and occupied.

Health and Wellbeing
Improving occupant health and wellbeing remains as a critical business benefit of green buildings.

Decisions made around indoor air quality, thermal and visual comfort and occupants' satisfaction can have a significant impact on occupant health. Green buildings with good indoor environmental quality protect the health and comfort of building occupants. High-quality indoor environments also enhance productivity, decrease absenteeism, improve the building's value, and reduce liability for building designers and owners.[1]

LEED O+M policies, strategies and tracking mechanisms support existing health needs and also identifies project potential risks to occupant health.

LEED encourages project teams to develop policies and programs based on proven methods that prioritize the health and comfort of the building occupants and to measure performance with well-established indicators.

Environmental, Social, and Governance Strategies

"The pandemic accelerated tenant demand for ESG assets. Since Q1 2020, non-LEED occupancy in the U.S. has fallen from 90% to 88%; yet the occupancy rate for LEED-certified assets has increased from 90% to 92% over the same period."

(Cushman & Wakefield, 2021)

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) represents an entity's behavior on environmental issues, its engagement with society and the strength of its governance. The outcome of a prioritized ESG strategy is to benchmark and report on quantitative and qualitative data related to non-traditional topics that supplement financial disclosures to provide company investors and other stakeholders a more complex and comprehensive view of the performance of the company.

ESG strategies encompass cross-disciplinary initiatives including greenhouse-gas emissions reduction, green building certifications, procurement, waste management, energy and water conservation, stakeholder engagement, risk assessments, human rights, resilience, health and safety, and transparency.

The third-party verification and certification provided by LEED O+M offers an ongoing element to support long-term ESG strategies and to gain credence through various reporting schemes such as GRESB, GRI, PRI, CDP, and DJSI.

[1]U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Health Buildings Healthy People: A Vision for the 21st Century, epa.gov/iaq/pubs/hbhp.html (October 2001) (accessed July 25, 2013).

There is an evolutionary change in asset level assessment and reporting that is shifting the nature of ESG reporting for assets. Transparency is essential for stakeholders to gain insight into the nature of their investments so they can connect values and business strategies. Sustainability reporting and green building certifications have become more than just a relevant aspect of decision making as they are now material concerns to investors, shareholders, and company owners.

For real estate investors and investment managers, sustainability is a requirement to secure funding for investments. Similarly, Fortune 500 organizations and large multi-national companies that own or occupy real estate around the world aggressively seek to ensure quality and consistency through sustainability and specifically green building certifications such as LEED O+M.

By 2023, 80% of investors intend to incorporate ESG into their strategy.[2]

LEED O+M and Arc

Arc is a technology platform that tracks, measures and analyzes performance data, producing a performance score to serves as path to the LEED O+M certification. This process also supports LEED recertification. By measuring energy, water, waste, transportation and human experience data through Arc, buildings can achieve certification and recertification and quantify their investments relative to climate change mitigation.

More than 21,000 projects in 135 countries are using Arc to track their data, covering 5.54 billion square feet of space, and impacting 10.4 million occupants.

Arc enables owners to protect their sustainability investments over time by ensuring that their initial certification is just the starting point for ongoing environmental mitigation. With ever-increasing organizational commitments to ESG and sustainability goals, improving building performance is one of the most powerful ways companies can prove their commitment.

LEED Zero

LEED Zero builds on LEED O+M by verifying and recognizing buildings that have achieved net zero carbon, net zero energy, net zero water, and/or net zero waste.

Existing buildings are responsible for 40 percent of energy-related greenhouse gases, and the sector is not yet reversing its contribution; as populations grow, and building space per capita increases, the relative significance of buildings to climate is increasing, creating greater urgency to focus on net zero goals.

[2] Cushman & Wakefield, 2021, Green Is Good: Sustainable Office Outperforms in Class A Urban Markets (August 2021)