



# 2017-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

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*USGBC's call to action is to execute defined ideas that drive innovation and transformation. With a shared vision and purpose that is as inclusive as it is actionable, our opportunities to change the world are limitless.*

## INTRODUCTION

This is a strategic plan for the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC®), a U.S. based community of members and volunteers focused on the transformation of the built environment at the national, state and local level through the engagement of our local communities, membership (organizations and individuals) and national stakeholders. While USGBC's work is focused on the United States, our mission, programmatic platforms, certification tool (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED®) and certification organization (the Green Business Certification Inc., or GBCI®) are global and have been leveraged in 167 countries by working actively with local Green Building Councils (GBCs), aligned NGOs and strategic partners, giving all of us, collectively around the world, the opportunity to celebrate our own innovations while sharing in the advancement and achievement of our missions.

This strategic plan will guide USGBC's focus and efforts over the next three years, and be implemented and tracked through a detailed market development plan.

## OUR MISSION, VISION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### VISION

Buildings and communities will regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation.

### MISSION

To transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life for all.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Along with our vision and mission, USGBC's guiding principles provide the global foundation upon which the work of the organization stands and the reservoir of intent and imagination out of which our strategy grows. They also serve as the key foundation by which USGBC evaluates the success and integrity of our work both inside and outside of the organization.

#### RECONCILE HUMANITY WITH NATURE

USGBC will endeavor to create and restore harmony between human activities and natural systems.

#### PROMOTE THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

USGBC will pursue robust triple bottom line solutions (people, planet, profit) that clarify and strengthen a healthy and dynamic balance between environmental, social and economic prosperity.

#### ESTABLISH LEADERSHIP

USGBC will foster both revolutionary and evolutionary leadership by championing societal models that achieve a more robust triple bottom line.

#### FOSTER SOCIAL EQUITY

USGBC will continue to respect all communities and cultures and aspire to be a fully inclusive movement that embraces opportunities which broaden and expand our reach through partnerships and initiatives.

#### MAINTAIN INTEGRITY

USGBC will be guided by the precautionary principle\* in utilizing technical and scientific data to protect, preserve and restore the health of the global environment, ecosystems and species.

\*Refer to definition on page 3.



## BE INCLUSIVE

USGBC will ensure inclusive, interdisciplinary, multi-sector, and democratic decision making with the objective of building understanding and shared commitments toward a greater common good. In this spirit, USGBC will continue to seek common ground and partner with allied, influential organizations and leaders in the field to confront mutual challenges.

## EXHIBIT TRANSPARENCY

USGBC will continue to operate in an organizational culture that places honesty, excellence, openness and transparency above all else.

### Precautionary Principle as defined by UNESCO

When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. Morally unacceptable harm refers to harm to humans or the environment that is

- Threatening to human life or health;
- Serious and effectively irreversible;
- Inequitable to present or future generations; or
- Imposed without adequate consideration of the human rights of those affected.

The judgment of plausibility should be grounded in scientific analysis. Analysis should be ongoing so that chosen actions are subject to review. Uncertainty may apply to, but need not be limited to, causality or the bounds of the possible harm.

Actions are interventions that are undertaken before harm occurs that seek to avoid or diminish the harm. Actions should be chosen that are proportional to the seriousness of the potential harm, with consideration of their positive and negative consequences, and with an assessment of the moral implications of both action and inaction. The choice of action should be the result of a participatory process.

## STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

The strategic imperatives presented here define the key focus areas USGBC will pursue to further our mission in 2017-2019:

1. Expand the green building marketplace;
2. Expand sustainable, healthy and resilient communities, cities, and cultures;
3. Calibrate and communicate the full benefit of green building, communities, cities, and cultures; and
4. Ensure viability through organizational and community excellence.

Taken together, these four complementary and inclusive strategic imperatives create a flexible but focused framework for a strategic plan for market expansion and the continuing transformation of the relationship between people and the natural systems that surround them.

The work plan's ideas, tactics, and members' suggestions will be maintained in a dynamic IDEA BANK that will allow for ongoing contributions from our community and provide a rich repository of ideas and intelligence that can be



continually drawn on to advance our mission. We will create a tool to track all ideas, tactics, and members' suggestions from the community. This tool will help us to continually drive engagement and create transparency on our progress. USGBC will share this tool with its partner ecosystem, including GBCs, NGOs, GBCI, and local communities to centralize ideation. We want our local and regional communities to use it as a source of inspiration and a place to share initiatives that have worked well in their communities. At a more strategic level, it will give us a tremendous wealth of knowledge that we can use to build USGBC's strategic plans in the future.

There are many definitions for "green" – in reference to environmental sustainability - around the world. USGBC largely defines "green" through the lens of LEED. LEED began as a rating system, enabling market transformation of our built environment. Through this strategic plan, we will transition LEED from a rating system to a comprehensive platform that addresses green buildings, communities, districts, neighborhoods, cities, nations, and the planet. The LEED Platform will include both the current and future evolutions of LEED itself and will also integrate other aligned certification standards, and a variety of protocols, guidelines, and systems that the broader green building movement continues to develop.

### **STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 1: EXPAND THE GREEN BUILDING MARKETPLACE**

USGBC is the recognized leader of the green building movement, providing the tools to help advance and sustain green building practice and the innovation necessary to fully carry out our mission. Through LEED and GBCI's expanded portfolio of aligned certification standards, we are at the forefront of driving growth across a global market that is at varying degrees of adoption and maturity. Our approach of global development, regional management and local execution has proven a successful strategy for advancing markets that are at varying levels of maturity, while at the same time making market transformation simpler and more scalable.

The global market is populated with common building types and the unique sectors they support. We want to drive growth in all commercial building types, including schools, retail, healthcare, hospitality, senior living, shopping malls, campuses, industrial facilities, sports arenas and assembly structures, federal, state and local government buildings, shelters and community centers, data centers and labs; as well as in residential buildings, including single-family homes and multi-family structures of varying sizes, regardless of geography, economic means, or social and political status.

It's worth noting that while we will continue to support the growth of green building practice in new construction, the key focus for this strategic plan cycle is across-the-board improvement of our existing buildings.

### **STRATEGIES**

1.1 Accelerate demand for green buildings. In order of priority, this includes:

- Existing commercial and government buildings;
- Affordable housing; and
- New commercial, government and residential buildings.
  - Strengthen and broadly communicate the business case for green building using the multiple lenses of occupant health and productivity, building operations, property valuation, and structural resilience.
  - Identify, nurture, and leverage public, private, and civil society partnerships that support performance-based green building practice, facilitate product and service innovation, and enable access to capital in ways that advance market expansion. Partners will include, but are not limited to other Green Building Councils, NGOs, and other non-profit organizations.
  - Use life cycle assessment to encourage transparency in the supply chain of building materials to better understand the impact on human health and the environment.

1.2 Focus relentlessly on building performance.

- Use data and technology to track and measure ongoing green building performance, especially its global impact on climate change mitigation and adaptation.



- Share data through a universally accessible platform so as to achieve broader impact.
- Develop metrics for measuring human health, performance and productivity impacts of green buildings.

1.3 Continue to develop LEED to enhance its market position as the premier global green building rating system.

- Build market capacity through education and credentialing.
- Proactively look for ways to provide comprehensive support to partners who are using LEED across the globe.

1.4 Contribute to the development and support of government policies that encourage and incentivize use of green building practices in both the public and private sectors.

- Enhance state and local advocacy efforts, including proactive education of policy-makers, to accelerate green building growth and adoption.
- Maintain status as a knowledgeable and supportive partner of federal policies as they relate to green building specifically, and to the larger contributions green buildings make to energy efficiency in the transition to the clean energy economy.
- Advocate for stronger initiatives to support access to safe, clean water and water conservation.

1.5 Embed the values and practices of social and ecological equity, resilience and improved public health in every undertaking, communicate these values broadly and apply them globally.

## **STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 2: GROW SUSTAINABLE, HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES, CITIES, AND CULTURES**

USGBC will maximize the impact of synergies between communities, districts, cities, regions, countries, and green buildings and their supporting infrastructure.

### **STRATEGIES**

2.1 Accelerate demand for sustainable, healthy, and resilient communities, cities, and cultures (hereafter referred to as “communities”).

- In order of priority, this includes:
  - Communities;
  - Districts;
  - Cities;
  - Regions;
  - Countries; and
  - Green buildings and their supporting infrastructure.
- Strengthen and broadly communicate the business case for green communities, using the multiple lenses of social and ecological equity, resilience and improved public health.
- Identify, nurture and leverage public, private and civil society partnerships and collaborations that facilitate innovation, market expansion and access to capital.
  - Engage and partner with people from underserved communities to co-create tools and resources that correct the structural inequalities of the community around race, class, gender, immigration, poverty and other forms of social inequity.
  - Drive citizen engagement through broad-based education on the benefits of healthy and sustainable communities and the process to achieve them.
  - Promote life cycle assessment and encourage transparency and disclosure in the community infrastructure supply chain so as to enable sustainable and regenerative transformative change in the life cycle of materials.

2.2 Develop a programmatic, communication, and technology platform that measures and certifies achievement against defined metrics and celebrates those who achieve success.

- Put people’s well-being at the center of this effort by embedding and applying the values and practices of



social equity, resilience and improved public health in every undertaking.

- In partnership with GBCI, use LEED and other aligned certification standards to provide a roadmap to this achievement that is applicable globally, regionally and locally.

### 2.3 Focus relentlessly on performance.

- Use data and technology to track and measure ongoing performance of green communities, especially their global impact on climate change mitigation.
- Share data through a universally accessible platform so as to achieve broader impact.
- Develop metrics for measuring the impact of green communities on human health, performance and productivity.

### 2.4 Contribute to the development and support of government policies that take a holistic approach to green communities.

- Maintain status as a knowledgeable and supportive partner of federal policies as they relate to green infrastructure and healthy and sustainable communities.
- Enhance state and local advocacy efforts, including proactive education of policy-makers, to accelerate green community growth and adoption, and to foster healthy and sustainable communities.
- Advocate for stronger initiatives to support access to green infrastructure.

### 2.5 Embed the values and practices of social and ecological equity, resilience and improved public health in every undertaking, communicate them broadly and apply them globally.

## **STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 3: CALIBRATE AND COMMUNICATE THE FULL BENEFIT OF GREEN BUILDINGS, COMMUNITIES, CITIES, AND CULTURES**

Green buildings and communities have demonstrated that the design, construction and operation of the built environment – from the scale of buildings to the scale of metropolitan regions – can play a crucial role in advancing responsible environmental stewardship and sustainability as well as have a measurable, positive impact on human health and wellness. Taking its cue from local ecologies, the built environment can positively affect the larger environment, contributing ecosystem services such as air and water purification, nutrient cycling, soil formation and retention, climate mitigation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity support, all of which contribute to human health and wellness.

## **STRATEGIES**

3.1 Measure and publicize the environmental and health benefits of the LEED rating system and other aligned certification standards.

3.2 Develop a reporting mechanism for carbon disclosure in buildings, communities, and cities.

3.3 Continue to develop and promote robust strategies, tools and technologies to measure and document the environmental benefits of green building, including the reduction of pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and use of finite or scarce resources.

3.4 Continue to evolve the LEED rating system and other aligned certification standards to be outcome-based, to help reduce building and transportation-related adverse environmental and health impacts, promote life cycle assessment, and increase the adoption of regenerative/restorative building practices.

3.5 Educate communities and the building sector that serves them about the potential for the building sector to positively affect natural systems, including but not limited to air and water, climate, natural resources, biodiversity and human health and wellness.



3.6 Research outcomes to help define strategies that anticipate the impact of climate change, promote more resilient communities, and provide adaptation strategies for vulnerable communities around the world.

3.7 Partner with like-minded organizations to depoliticize climate change by emphasizing its human, social, and economic costs and the costs and benefits of mitigation and adaptation.

#### **STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE 4: ENSURE VIABILITY THROUGH ORGANIZATIONAL AND COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE**

Never have the stakes been higher for our work. Embracing the belief that “partnership is the new leadership,” we will strive to ensure organizational and community excellence through developing key strategic global alliances and fostering a strong, diverse, global community of stakeholders. To be successful at this endeavor, USGBC itself should evolve and grow in a way that is both disciplined and bold.

At the local, regional, and global levels, USGBC will continue to educate and facilitate the dissemination of LEED and other aligned certification standards by partnering with allied national Green Building Councils (GBCs), along with international thought leaders, global NGOs and best-in-class corporations. Where GBCs need our help to establish themselves in the regional market, we will lead. Where they have an effective presence, we will follow and provide support to advance their purpose. At the local level, USGBC will build on the work we began in 2016 toward integrating several of our independent chapters into USGBC, improving the financial and administration model so volunteer leaders in local communities can focus on developing and delivering local green building and community strategies. We will continue to nurture our relationships with aligned communities, supporting their local initiatives, but also connecting in new and creative ways to our organizational members in every community.

#### **STRATEGIES**

4.1 Grow an organizational membership base and volunteer community that reflects racial, class and gender equity across all sectors and professional disciplines.

4.2 Demonstrate leadership in organizational design by sharing our knowledge, experience, tools, resources, platforms, etc. to help everyone scale and grow, at the global, regional, and local level.

4.3 Recognize and leverage the strengths of the USGBC community, GBCs, GBCI, LEED and other aligned certification standards, and our growing global network of partners, that will assist USGBC to open new markets, improve delivery systems and enhance customer, member, and volunteer experience.

4.4 Identify and develop the research needed to support the market’s need for data and to inform the development of innovative tools that advance our mission.

4.5 Regularly assess organizational capacity, relevance, structure, alignment and performance against best-in-class organizations and refine as needed.

- Recruit, retain, and develop strong volunteer and employee leadership, paying particular attention to developing a pipeline that supports students and emerging professionals to become the next leaders in the community and larger market.
- Identify underdeveloped networks at the community level, determine their strategic importance to the organization and mission, and, if appropriate, provide additional resources to further their development.

4.6 Broaden funding sources and strategically allocate them in ways that build USGBC’s ability to support these organizational and community excellence strategies.



4.7 Develop, maintain and promote the dynamic IDEA BANK to capture the best ideas across the movement so they can be shared and implemented locally, regionally and globally to advance our mission.

- Provide organizational visibility for ideas that are adopted and their effectiveness.

4.8 Seek opportunities to establish areas of common ground with organizations, including industry trade associations that have different perspectives, and work together to advance shared principles toward a meaningful solution.

4.9 Maintain fiscal discipline to ensure long-term viability of the organization.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The review of and update to the 2013-2015 USGBC Strategic Plan was launched in 2016 at the direction of the USGBC Board of Directors. JFFixler Group was selected to facilitate the update to the strategic plan and the following events occurred thereafter:

- A Strategic Plan Working Group of eleven diverse members was appointed by Board Chair Fiona Cousins to provide guidance and insight throughout the development process.
- A stakeholder assessment was conducted through an online survey developed by JFFixler Group in consultation with the Working Group. The survey was distributed to selected staff and volunteer leaders of USGBC.
- Additional research was conducted including telephone interviews of Board members, Advisory Council members, staff leaders, and external partners and stakeholders. Interviews were conducted by JFFixler Group, USGBC staff, and members of the Strategic Plan Working Group.
- Meetings of the Strategic Plan Working Group were held virtually throughout the first half of 2016 to develop and then review the research Plan and results.
- JFFixler Group analyzed the survey data and the interview reports and developed a summary report of findings to date in June 2016, as well as an addendum with updates following the final interviews in August 2016.
- An integrated meeting of the Board of Directors, the Strategic Plan Working Group, and the Advisory Council was held at the Mid-Year Meeting in Jacksonville, FL on June 20, 2016.
- Teams from the Mid-Year Meeting continued working on recommendations for updates to specific goals of the Plan following the Mid-Year Meeting and submitted recommendations for consideration which were incorporated into a draft of the Plan.
- The USGBC Board of Directors discussed the draft 2017-2019 USGBC Strategic Plan at a meeting on September 1 and provided feedback on the content.
- The Strategic Plan Working Group revised the draft as directed by the Board, and recirculated it to the Board for additional comment.
- The Strategic Plan Working Group created a final draft of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan and submitted it to the USGBC Board of Directors.
- The USGBC Board of Directors adopted the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan on November 10, 2016.

JFFixler Group, in collaboration with the USGBC Board of Directors, the Strategic Plan Working Group, and executive staff, facilitated this update of the USGBC Strategic Plan.





## APPENDIX

### FOUNDERS

S. RICHARD FEDRIZZI  
DAVID A. GOTTFRIED  
MIKE ITALIANO

### 2016 USGBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FIONA COUSINS, Chair  
PAUL ANASTAS  
JANINE BENYUS  
AARON BERNSTEIN  
BOB FOX  
MIKE MCNALLY  
BRUCE ORECK  
CHRISSA PAGITSAS  
RICK FEDRIZZI, *ex officio*

### 2016 ADVISORY COUNCIL

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MARGE ANDERSON  
DAN BURGOYNE  
STEPHEN BUSHNELL  
LINDA CHIPPERFIELD  
AMY COSTELLO  
BRIAN DUNBAR  
DUYGU ERTEN  
DANIELE HORTON  
MARK JAMES  
LISA MATTHIESSEN  
SARA NEFF  
SARA O'MARA  
CHRISTOPHER SCHAFFNER  
KEVIN STACK  
EMMA STEWART  
BRANDON TINIANOV  
JOE VAN BELLEGHEM  
VANCE VOSS

### 2016 GBCI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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RICK FEDRIZZI  
HARRY T. GORDON  
THOMAS MUELLER  
LIBERTY MUNSON  
MAHESH RAMANUJAM, *ex officio*

### 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

MIKE MCNALLY  
PAUL ANASTAS  
MARGE ANDERSON  
FIONA COUSINS  
JENNIFER DRULINER  
RICK FEDRIZZI  
MARK JAMES  
ROGER LIMOGES  
MAHESH RAMANUJAM  
KEVIN STACK  
JUDITH WEBB

### 2016 EXECUTIVE TEAM (STAFF)

RICK FEDRIZZI, CEO & Founding Chairman  
MAHESH RAMANUJAM, Chief Operating Officer  
SCOT HORST, Chief Product Officer  
JUDITH WEBB, Executive Vice President  
DOUG GATLIN, Senior Vice President, Global Service Delivery  
RACHEL GUTTER, Senior Vice President, Knowledge  
TARYN HOLOWKA, Senior Vice President, Marketing, Advocacy & Communications  
KIMBERLY LEWIS, Senior Vice President, Community ADVANCEMENT, Conference & Events  
ROGER LIMOGES, Senior Vice President, Organizational Design  
PETER TEMPLETON, Senior Vice President, Global Market Development  
DAVID WITEK, Senior Vice President, Finance, Operations & Administration  
BRENDAN OWENS, Chief of Engineering

### STRATEGIC PLAN FACILITATORS:

JFFIXLER GROUP  
BETH STEINHORN AND LINDA PUCKETT  
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