

DattnerArchitects

Strategic Sustainability Plan



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## 1. Mission



Dattner Architects is committed to excellence in civic architecture—improving and sustaining communities and the urban environment. Our work aims at the realization of our clients' highest aspirations, respecting our shared social and environmental responsibilities, built within available resources. Projects for a wide range of communities, clients and users demonstrate our respect for context and the needs of the people these projects serve.



## 2. Vision



We seek to incorporate sustainability into all aspects of our practice, designing each project with an understanding of the social and environmental implications of the design. Our design approach conserves resources, reduces energy consumption and promotes healthy buildings that improve the urban fabric. Dattner Architects adopted the AIA 2030 Commitment to join with like-minded firms to help realize the goal of designing carbon neutral buildings by 2030.

Through our project work, continuing education, and the advocacy efforts of Dattner Architects' Sustainable Practice Group, we will deepen our understanding of the environmental impacts of our actions and expand opportunities to improve sustainable design practices. We will continue to develop our expertise in designing sustainable buildings and will work with our clients to promote environmental responsibility for each project. We seek to lead by example in sustainable design, both in our project work and in the practices of our firm.





### 3. Current State of our Practice



Building on a foundation of sustainability that has been a part of our practice since its inception, we have designed projects that have become industry benchmarks:

- Mid-century modern, earth-bermed corporate buildings (Estee Lauder Manufacturing Facility on Long Island)
- NYC's largest green roof (Riverbank State Park)
- A pilot project in NYC High Performance Design Guidelines program (the NYC Administration for Children's Services)
- NYC's first public LEED project (Bronx Library Center)
- A pilot project in NYC Transit's Design for the Environment program (the Myrtle-Wyckoff Station Complex)
- Green Guidelines for K-12 School Design (New York City Green Schools Guide)
- NYC's first publicly funded LEED certified project (the Bronx Library Center, achieved LEED Silver Certification)
- One of NYC's first LEED for Homes projects (Habitat for Humanity's Atlantic Avenue Apartments achieved LEED Gold Certification).
- A LEED Platinum Certified project (the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy Maintenance Facility)
- A leading example of innovative, sustainable, affordable housing (Via Verde – The Green Way in the Bronx, aiming to achieve LEED Gold certification).
- Precedent projects for the NYC Active Design Guidelines (Bronx Library Center, Battery Park City School Via Verde, Manhattan Districts 1/2/5 Garage).

We have designed projects to meet LEED standards, the NYC SCA Green Schools Guide, NYCT's Design for the Environment, Enterprise Green Communities Initiative, the NYSERDA Multi-Family Performance Program, NYC Active Design Guidelines, NYS EO111 and NYC Local Law 86.

#### **Sustainable Building Systems**

Our projects have incorporated a broad range of high-performance systems, in each case selected specifically for the site, program, and building design. Systems include:

- Active and passive double walls
- Chilled beams
- Geothermal wells for heating and cooling
- Green roofs
- Grey water systems
- Highly insulated building envelopes
- High performance mechanical systems
- High performance lighting and lighting controls
- Natural ventilation
- Photovoltaic arrays
- Radiant heat
- Rainwater harvesting
- Solar shading
- Underfloor air

We have two projects under construction projected to achieve LEED Gold certification (Via Verde, Manhattan Districts 1/2/5 Garage), two projected to achieve LEED Silver certification (GSA Rodino Federal Office Building Modernization, GSA Degatau Federal Building Modernization) and three projects in design or construction designed to meet the NYC Green Schools Guide (New Settlement Community Campus, PS 160, Riverside Center School). We are tracking the Energy Use Intensity of our projects for the AIA2030 program.

#### **Staff Credentials & Involvement**

The office of Dattner Architects (which we designed in 2010 and occupied in 2011) is expected to achieve LEED Gold certification. Our staff of 70 includes 29 LEED Accredited Professionals. Staff members are involved in USGBC, Urban Green Council AIANY Committee on the Environment (COTE), NYC Green Zone and the Citizens Housing and Planning Council Green Buildings Committee.

#### **Training & Education**

The Dattner Architects Sustainable Practice

### 3. Current State of Practice

Group (SPG) is a committee which the firm initiated upon adopting the AIA 2030 commitment in 2011. The SPG's focus is to develop and support the sustainable practices, initiatives and goals of the firm. Educational programs, such as the Green Salon series encourage staff members to learn more about sustainable design, to gain continuing education credits and achieve LEED credentials. The SPG is developing a database of greenest projects, set up to be easily searchable. This office-wide resource will include information on systems studied as well as implemented in our projects.

The office encourages and supports employees to become LEED Accredited Professionals. Exam fees are reimbursed for employees who earn the LEED AP credential. The office has in-house study/reference materials for those interested in pursuing this credential and offers opportunities for staff to earn the required continuing education credits.

## 4. Operations



Our new office, which we occupied in 2011, has allowed us to institute a series of sustainable procedures for facilities operations. We continue to seek ways to improve how we do our work and operate our business.

### **Office Energy Use**

All office computers, LCD monitors and kitchen appliances are Energy Star labeled. As new printers are purchased or leased, they are Energy Star labeled. The office policy is to shut down computers, monitors, and printers every evening and on weekends. We are investigating equipment to reduce phantom plug load.

The design of our office maximizes the benefit of the perimeter windows on three sides of the space. Daylight and views are provided for 80% of the office. Light fixtures are on occupancy sensors and automatically adjust based on daylight levels.

The office's HVAC system has a building management system (BMS) which allows system control and monitoring. Air temperature and fan speed are set at a low level within occupant comfort range, and are adjusted for each season. The BMS allows special settings for evenings, holidays and weekends. In addition, temperature controls are available for employees to adjust for thermal comfort. When possible, the office goes into natural ventilation mode; air conditioning is turned off and the windows are opened.

We track our monthly energy use through utility bills. We are investigating systems and processes for monitoring and reducing plug loads at workstation and printer areas.

### **Waste Reduction and Supplies**

We have established an office standard for double-sided printing as the default on most printers to reduce paper use. Used paper is collected and re-purposed to create sketchbooks / notebooks for employees.

Water use is reduced through low flow plumbing fixtures. Employees are encouraged to use the dishwasher instead of hand washing dishes. The office provides china mugs, plates, and silverware, and does not regularly purchase paper cups.

The office purchases recycled-content paper products, including paper towels, toilet paper, and printer paper. Employees are encouraged to recycle. Each work station has a recycling bin, and shared recycling bins for paper, glass, metals, and cardboard are located in the pantry.

### **Meeting Procedures**

Three of our four conference rooms are equipped with teleconferencing equipment and LCD monitors to facilitate web conferencing and electronic document viewing. Conference room LCD monitors are connected to the network, which allows drawings and files to be viewed on the monitor, reducing printed material for meetings.

### **Transportation**

Our office is conveniently located in close proximity to major subways, rail stations, and bike lanes. Secure bike storage is available for employees in the building.

Travel to project meetings and job sites is done almost entirely via public transportation or walking. Because the majority of our projects are in NYC, we make very limited use of personal or rental cars or airplane travel.

Employees have the option to purchase public transportation passes for commuting and business travel with pre-tax dollars through the Transit-Chek program.



## 5. Approach to Projects



- Outline best practices and maintain rubrics for sustainability actions
- Foster team communication and collaboration to design the best sustainable solutions
- Promote an integrated working process with consultants, client and contractors throughout the project
- Meet regularly with the client and stakeholders to review progress in meeting sustainability goals
- Carry out internal QA on project documents to insure sustainability items are covered
- Follow through on QA through bid negotiation and construction administration to insure sustainability items are executed in construction

Our project teams seek ways to integrate passive and active sustainable approaches into the design of each project, meeting our client's goals and the required levels of sustainability. We are working to increase the resources available to each team, so that we can achieve a higher level of sustainable design with each project opportunity.

### **Goals**

Our goal is to design sustainability into each project, as an integral part of the architectural approach, supporting the project's program and appropriate to its budget.

### **Strategies**

Reducing the energy intensity of our projects is a key concern. Through traditional design, 'low-tech' and 'high-tech' strategies, we seek ways to reduce the carbon footprint of each project, while also promoting a healthy environment for users and the public.

### **Actions**

- Establish sustainability goals with the client at the beginning of project by a 'design charette,' etc.
- Engage consultants early in the project and set framework for meeting sustainability objectives

**Dattner**Architects

1385 Broadway, 15th Floor tel 212 247 2660  
New York NY 10018 [www.dattner.com](http://www.dattner.com)