

# Sustainability Action Plan

for the

## AIA **2030** Commitment

### **Practicing Sustainability**

The places where we live, work, and play represent the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in America. The design and construction industry has made significant strides towards creating high performance buildings. As a result, the industry is positioned to have a profound impact by continuing to foster high performance buildings and reducing building-related greenhouse gas emissions.

As architects, we understand the need to exercise leadership in creating the built environment. We believe we must alter our profession's practice and encourage our client's and the entire design and construction industry to join with us to change the course of the planet's future. An intense effort will be required to alter the current design and construction practices and realize significant reductions in the use of natural resources, non-renewable energy sources, and waste production and promote regeneration of natural resources.

We have undertaken a significant long-term sustainability action plan that will one day achieve carbon neutrality for the every project that we design. We have also undertaken a firm wide commitment to demonstrate that we can also make a difference in our own environment by aligning with the American Institute of Architects 2030 Commitment program. We have established a Corporate Sustainability Operational Action Plan that addresses our own internal energy usage, waste reduction, and recycling actions.

To further emphasis our own commitment to sustainable design our Southern California corporate office as well as our branch office in the San Francisco Bay Area were designed to achieve a LEED Silver rating for Commercial Interiors. We are also excited about the fact that we have installed a Photovoltaic System on our corporate headquarters building that will offset the energy use of the facility by 10%. One benchmark for demonstrating our commitment to practicing what we preach.

The following Sustainability Action Plan is our guide to identifying specific goals and objectives which we will utilize to realize our commitment to change the course of our planet's future with respect to the built environment.

## Sustainable Design Goals

Sustainability of the design will be a focus on each and every project regardless of size, complexity, or project type. Sustainability will be an inherent quality of every design of every project that we undertake. Each project will have a focus for sustainable design from the beginning of the design process regardless of whether it is a client concern or requirement.

In order to achieve this design goal we will be using a variable number of checklists as a guide to the strategy we propose for each project depending on the client, project type, design strategy, goals and schedule.

In general the checklists will consist of:

- LEED checklists will be utilized for governmental, religious and corporate projects.
- HPI checklists will be utilized as a standard default process for K-12 educational projects.
- CHPS checklists will be utilized for designated K-12 educational projects.
- Other checklists and programs may be utilized such as Savings By Design.

The ultimate design goal will be to reduce the amount of fossil-fuel based energy used to align with the AIA 2030 Commitment target goals of:

- 2015 – 70%
- 2020 – 80%
- 2025 – 90%
- 2030 – Net Zero

In addition to these fossil fuel based energy goals the following other environmental goals will be targeted to align with the AIA 2030 Commitment:

- Reduction of potable water for domestic and landscaping use.
- Improvement of indoor air quality through the elimination of hazardous materials.
- Documentation of projects in case study format with consistent criteria as part of a post-occupancy evaluation.

## Staff Training and Education

WLC Architects, Inc. currently has 27 LEED Accredited Professionals and encourages all employees to attain a LEED credential in their area of interest. This encouragement is promoted office wide by the Principals of the firm as well as all senior staff members. It is paramount that the firm's commitment to sustainable design be demonstrated by the examples of leadership at all levels.

WLC Architects, Inc. is a long standing corporate member of the USGBC and during the coming years has dedicated itself to enrolling all of its LEED AP's in the GBCI's Credential Maintenance Program. In addition to the normal professional development topics covered by the in-house WLC University Program, WLC will be hosting no less than two in-house seminars a month for all of its staff and employees that are specific to the categories of energy conservation and sustainable design issues.

Employees will be encouraged to participate in local chapters and program events of the USGBC / CHPS and the firm will promote these events as being important and worthwhile. The firm will allocate time and cost for these events as a benefit that the firm provides for the employees. Employees who do participate in these events will be encouraged to relate their experiences back to others in the office thru the WLC University Program.

## Evaluation in the Design Process

In conjunction with the sustainable design goals that are enumerated above, the design process will be viewed as a multidisciplinary, collaborative, and goal-oriented process. Each project will be subjected to an early decision making process to establish the sustainable direction that is best suited for the project based upon the scope, budget and schedule of the project.

The post occupancy review of successful strategies will be recycled back into later projects in order to create a basis of evidenced based design options that have proven to be successful.

## Sustainable Operations

Under the previous Sustainable Operational Action Plan that WLC Architects, Inc., had submitted in 2010, there were a number of specific strategies that were identified and employed that have proven to be highly successful. We intend to continue refining these as time goes on and revising them as needed to make them even more successful. Some of these processes that were identified previously were:

- Installation of photovoltaic panels to augment electric power consumption.
- Use of recycled content materials for office expendables.
- Implementation of a paperless and electronic only filing / archive system.
- Using video conferencing meeting procedures.

## Business Strategy

WLC Architects, Inc., has developed a number of sustainable marketing brochures that promote the effective use of efficient energy design. These brochures as well as the sustainable design categories of our web based corporate internet site highlight the value of sustainable design and place an emphasis on our commitment and involvement in the area of sustainable design.

We view the process on implementing energy and sustainable design as a standard part of the everyday professional service that we provide on every project. We also promote the process and procedures that are involved with sustainable design as our moral and ethical obligations as architects to make our built environment a better one for all concerned.