



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **SIERRA CLUB & U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL LAUNCH ‘GREEN BUILDING FOR COOL CITIES’ PROJECT**

### *Partnership Highlights Municipal & County Leadership in Energy-Efficiency*

PHOENIX – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Sierra Club’s Cool Cities program today announced the launch of the “Green Building for Cool Cities” collaboration. The partnership will leverage Cool Cities’ more than 200 local campaigns and USGBC’s national network of 80 chapters to encourage and promote the adoption of policies by local governments that will support new and retrofitted energy-efficient buildings — a key part of the solution to global warming and transitioning to a clean energy economy.

At a news conference at USGBC’s Greenbuild International Conference & Expo in Phoenix, the organizations released a step-by-step green building policy guide for communities of all sizes. The recommended policies range from basic to more advanced plans of action to address energy efficiency and environmental sustainability through the built environment.

“Local governments have long been laboratories of innovation when it comes to energy efficiency, proving by example that sustainable building practices can be effectively brought to scale. USGBC is pleased to join forces with the Sierra Club to engage our network of green building practitioners on this important campaign,” said Roger Platt, USGBC’s Senior Vice President for Global Policy and Law.

Highlighted policies include leadership standards for government buildings that serve as models for the community; financial and no-cost incentives to build green for the commercial and residential sectors; and improved minimum efficiency standards through energy code adoption and enforcement. The “Green Building for Cool Cities” policy guide is available online at [www.coolcities.us](http://www.coolcities.us) <<http://www.coolcities.us>> and [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) <<http://www.usgbc.org>>.

“Because buildings contribute nearly 40% of global warming emissions and consume over 70% of electricity use in the United States, increasing energy efficiency of our homes and businesses is an urgent clean energy solution to global warming and rebuilding our economy,” said Glen Brand, Sierra Club’s Cool Cities Program director.

Some of the cities whose policies are mentioned as models include: small cities such as Greensburg, KS, Clayton, MO, and Doylestown Borough, PA; medium-sized cities such as Kearny, NJ, Portsmouth, NH, and Asheville, NC; and larger cities such as Anchorage, New Orleans, Boston, Los Angeles, and El

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Paso. In addition, the green building policies of several counties are highlighted, including Chatham County, GA, Montgomery County, MD, and Sonoma County, CA.

USGBC develops the LEED green building certification program, the leading internationally recognized green building third-party rating system for verifying that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, stewardship of natural resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

In recent years, thousands of buildings in the United States have achieved LEED certification. As of October 2009, more than 200 localities across the U.S. are recognizing LEED as an effective tool for benchmarking the performance of buildings in their communities and 2,995 local government projects are currently pursuing LEED certification.

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### **U.S. Green Building Council**

The Washington, D.C.-based U.S. Green Building Council is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings.

With a community comprising 78 local affiliates, more than 20,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 131,000 LEED Accredited Professionals, USGBC is the driving force of an industry that is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product from 2009-2013. USGBC leads an unlikely diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students.

Buildings in the United States are responsible for 39% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, 40% of energy consumption, 13% water consumption and 15% of GDP per year, making green building a source of significant economic and environmental opportunity. Greater building efficiency can meet 85% of future U.S. demand for energy, and a national commitment to green building has the potential to generate 2.5 million American jobs.

### **LEED**

The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED green building certification system is the foremost program for the design, construction and operation of green buildings. Over 35,000 projects are currently participating in the LEED system, comprising over 6.9 billion square feet of construction space in all 50 states and 114 countries.

By using less energy, LEED-certified buildings save money for families, businesses and taxpayers; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community.

USGBC was co-founded by current President and CEO Rick Fedrizzi, who spent 25 years as a Fortune 500 executive. Under his 15-year leadership, the organization has become the preeminent green building, membership, policy, standards, influential, education and research organization in the nation. For more information, visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

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