

Greening the

How certification programs LEED and Parksmart are extending sustainability.



ENVIRONMENT

By Trevyr Meade, LEED GA

Sustainability requires designers, property managers, and consultants to find opportunities that go beyond a single building and can deliver triple-bottom-line benefits across people, profit, and planet. Owners are taking a focused look at each asset on their properties to identify new ways to not only reduce their environmental effects, but also increase financial savings and efficiencies.

For nearly 20 years, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), the green building program created by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), has been an international symbol of excellence when it comes to the sustainable design, operation, and management of buildings. With more than 94,000 registered and certified projects in 167 countries and territories, it has become the world's most widely used green building program. LEED's comprehensive and holistic approach has helped define green building, and its success has inspired other certifications, such as Parksmart, that support the greening of the built environment.

Green Parking

Parksmart is the solution for property owners looking to align their parking structures with sustainability goals. Through certification, parking structures are recognized for smarter, more sustainable siting, design, and operations. As new technologies and modes of transportation continue to change the way people travel, Parksmart is an opportunity for property owners and parking managers to update the services parking garages offer.

Today, there are more than 100 registered or certified Parksmart garages. As owners continue to reimagine the services these structures offer communities, examples of innovative approaches can be found in the U.S., China, Europe, and Canada.

Parksmart benefits building owners and property managers as well as tenants and drivers. Parking structures can achieve reduced environmental impact, increased energy efficiency, and lowered energy use

through lighting, ventilation, controls, and commissioning measures. In addition, such structures succeed at integrating sustainable mobility services and technologies, diversifying mobility options, promoting alternative modes of transportation, and reducing operational costs up to 25 percent compared to the national average.

Synergies between LEED and Parksmart

Green building remains a priority for owners and managers and continues to deliver financial and environmental benefits for buildings. Its continued growth has created an opportunity to align green business certification programs, including LEED and Parksmart. Synergies between the two programs are now helping design teams incorporate parking strategies into green building projects from the beginning.

Projects pursuing LEED certification for new construction or existing buildings under LEED v2009 and LEED v4 can automatically earn credit toward Parksmart certification. Not only is a property's LEED certification also recognized by Parksmart, but specific LEED credits that focus on commissioning, construction, building life cycle, and renewable energy are as well. The parking experience is often the first and last experience a visitor has with a LEED building, and these Parksmart synergies now put LEED projects on the path to another certification that demonstrates how their green building work extends beyond the building. Parksmart's "Parksmart and LEED Synergies" guidance outlines the credit synergies and is available online at no charge at parksmart.gbci.org.



Earning Both Certifications

An office tower atop a parking structure or a retail mall containing structured parking can earn both LEED and Parksmart certifications, showing how sustainable principles can be applied beyond the building itself. Some of the strategies Parksmart encourages include:

- Parksmart traffic flow strategies and wayfinding systems deliver a parking experience that eliminates the needless emissions and frustration created when visitors have difficulty finding a parking space or navigating to the garage exit.
- Parksmart bicycle amenities, such as lockers, drinking water, and mechanic stations, go beyond providing bicycle parking to welcoming cyclists who visit your property.

Parksmart and LEED provide their customers with rigorous, third-party certification. Why is this so

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Likewise, LEED-certified buildings save money and energy, reduce water consumption, improve indoor air quality, facilitate better product and material choices, and drive innovation. LEED-certified buildings have 34 percent lower CO₂ emissions, consume 25 percent less energy and 11 percent less water, and have diverted more than 80 million tons of waste from landfills. From 2015 to 2018, it is estimated that LEED-certified buildings in the U.S. alone will have more than \$2.1 billion in combined energy, water, maintenance, and waste savings.

"LEED and Parksmart are two sides of the same coin, and doing both together generates even greater return on our investment," explains John Schmid, CEO of Propark America. "Focusing on, for example, a commercial building as a building as well as a multi-modal transportation hub with impact beyond the building is like compound interest. Our impact ripples out through the building community and the transportation community. What's better than that?"

A LEED or Parksmart plaque on a building or garage signals leadership, letting everyone know that the building has an integrated design that will be energy- and water-efficient, while reducing overall environmental impact and increasing occupant health and comfort.

Value of Multiple Certifications

As companies continue to work to validate sustainability performance and communicate progress, more and more projects are finding value in multiple certifications.



A Hines LEED Platinum property certified under Core and Shell, 811 Main (formerly BG Group Place) is recertifying under LEED O+M. The Houston, Texas, property is wrapped in a glass facade, hosts a vegetative roof, employs efficient lighting and ventilation technologies, has a condensate recovery system to reduce the property's resource consumption, and provides commuters with local and sustainable transportation options.

"811 Main was developed adjacent to a new public transportation feature—the Metro Light Rail—with sustainability in mind," says Winpark's Nichole Kenley. "The parking garage's green roof, condensate recovery system, and its lighting controls are key to both the LEED and Parksmart certifications, so it's wonderful to hear that the overlap is now recognized." Both LEED and Parksmart certifications contributed to the BOMA International Outstanding Building of the Year TOBY Award.

Brookfield's Bank of America Plaza drew from its LEED certification to achieve Parksmart recognition early on. The 2,128-space garage serves a 55-story office tower in downtown Los Angeles, Calif., and is a hub for the surrounding community. Sustainability measures implemented at the garage that helped achieve both certifications include energy-efficient lighting and ventilation systems, green cleaning practices, low-emitting vehicle spaces, bicycle parking amenities, electric-vehicle

charging stations, and access to sustainable transportation options.

"The Parksmart certification validated all the work and policies we implemented in the garage when the building first achieved LEED status in 2009–2010," explains Mario Izaguirre, ABM parking facility manager at Bank of America Plaza. "Knowing that the garage holds its own certification makes us all even more proud to be here, and the dual certification helps our marketing efforts and leasing discussions with prospective clients, too."

Parksmart benefits everyone from building owners and property managers to tenants, visitors, and neighbors. Certified parking structures reduce environmental impact, improve energy efficiency, and reduce energy consumption. Parksmart structures integrate sustainable mobility services and technologies, diversify mobility options, promote alternative modes of transportation, and reduce operational costs up to 25 percent compared to the national average. **P**



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