

Designform

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION ON DESIGN
VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2, JULY 2008, 2 PAGES

Building Green

Sustainable Architecture for All Purposes



Eastern Health Center, Birmingham, AL

From recycled materials to improved energy efficiency, a 'green' wave is sweeping the globe. Virtually every company has managed to find a way to market their products or services to this environmentally focused society.

How does architecture fit into this puzzle? As more and more clients are looking to make their spaces more energy efficient and environmentally friendly, it becomes the architect's responsibility to design a facility that will meet the client's needs while proving to be environmentally sound.

While that may appear to be quite challenging, **Designform** has been able to take the request to build more energy-efficient 'green' facilities for our clients and continue to exceed their expectations. The **Jefferson County Department of Health** chose Designform to design their new **Eastern Health Center**, located in the Roebuck community of Birmingham, AL, with 'green' in mind. The 43,000-square-foot facility was designed with Low-E insulated glass to



Rendering of the Quality Circle Development, Huntsville, AL

decrease solar heat gain, lighting controls with daylight sensors to reduce energy use, high-efficiency mechanical systems, low-flush toilets and waterless urinals, low VOC paints throughout the interior, high insulation values in the roof and walls, daylight utilization through the use of clerestory windows, preserved as many trees on site as possible, and minimized the site impact of the building by using a rainwater retention system below the parking area.

Graham & Company approached Designform to create a new business distribution facility that would feature 'green' building techniques. The **Quality Circle Development**, located in Huntsville, AL, has been designed with numerous

sustainable design initiatives, including water-efficient landscaping, the use of materials with recycled content, interior daylighting, use of regional materials, and nighttime light pollution reduction, as well as many other 'green' solutions. Upon completion, the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification will be pursued for the facility.

Sustainable architecture is proving to be the sought-after approach to new building construction today. By ensuring that resources, such as energy and water, are conserved responsibly, sustainable architecture provides a means for building 'green' and environmentally responsible facilities for all purposes.

What is LEED Anyway?

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a third-party certification program. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

Architects, real estate professionals, facility managers, engineers, interior designers, landscape architects, construction managers, lenders, and government officials all use LEED for building sustainability when designing new or renovating facilities for use. LEED Certification is not limited to the United States: LEED projects are currently in progress in over 41 countries around the world, including Canada, Mexico, India, and Brazil.

LEED Certification is not generic. There are several sub-categories of LEED, which include LEED for the following:

- New Construction
- Core and Shell
- Commercial Interiors
- Existing Buildings

- Schools, Retail, and Healthcare facilities
- Housing

There are different levels of LEED Certification for green buildings based on different criteria, as well as total credits and points earned toward certification. LEED Credits are given based on:

- Sustainable sites
- Water efficiency
- Energy and atmosphere
- Materials and resources
- Indoor environmental quality
- Innovation and design process

Just like placing in a competition, there are different LEED Certification levels, ranging from "Certified" to "Platinum", that are based on the amount of points a building receives for successful attempts at the six categories. "Platinum" certification is the highest LEED rating and designates a building as the most environmental and health friendly.

Source: USGBC; Wikipedia.com

On the Drawing Board

At the request of Graham & Company, **Designform** is currently preparing plans for a speculative office building to be located at the far East end of Morris Avenue. Since the proposed building will be located adjacent to Birmingham's Historic Loft District and the railway, the material palette for the building will be a combination of salvaged masonry and rusted metal elements, along with some tilt-up concrete panels, allowing the

proposed building to remain contextual with the surrounding environment. The owner would also like to make the new structure 'green', which will be reflected in the elevation with large openings for views, canopies to control direct heat gain, visual greenery as a design element, and other features to allow the proposed building to be more environmentally sound.



Designform Welcomes Tyler Price

Designform is happy to welcome **Tyler Price** as our newest intern architect. Price graduated from Auburn University in 2006 with his bachelor's degree in Architecture with honors, and he also completed his thesis at Auburn's Urban Studio for architecture and design in Birmingham. He has over two years of direct architecture experience, and is currently serving on the project design team for Graham & Company's **Quality Circle Development**, located in Huntsville's Thornton Research Park.



Green Architecture Did You Know?

In 2005, Washington state became the first state in the United States to enact green building legislation. According to the law, all major public agency facilities with a floor area exceeding 5,000 square feet, including state funded school buildings, are required to meet or exceed LEED standards in construction or renovation. The projected benefits from this law are 20% annual savings in energy and water costs, 38% reduction in waste water production and 22% reduction in construction waste.

Source: Wikipedia.com

Designform

2 North 20th Street
Suite 850
Birmingham, AL 35203

PHONE:
(205) 324-0018

FAX:
(205) 322-9981

E-MAIL:
info@designforminc.com

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.designforminc.com