



Leasing LEED certified buildings: Providing your clients with environmentally friendly options

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Leasing space in LEED certified buildings can be a complicated process. The first assist you need is from a LEED certified architect, especially if your tenant chooses to have their space LEED certified. Though challenging the results can be not only rewarding but make good business sense. The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is the organization that grants LEED certification. There are many considerations when your LEED architect attempts to determine the possibility of your tenant obtaining LEED certification for their space. Under consideration will be:

- * Water efficiency within the tenants space;
- * Energy consumption and performance;
- * CFR reduction in the HVAC & R equipment;
- * Materials used to build out the space;
- * Recycling waste building materials;
- * The use of materials with recycled content;
- * Using certified wood;
- * Innovation in design of the space;
- * Controllability of lighting and HVAC systems increased ventilation;
- * Using daylight and views;
- * The use of green power.

Many tenants in today's market are specifically looking to be associated with an environmentally conscious building. Some have even chosen to go to the next level and fit up their individual spaces to achieve a LEED certified designation. It is a common perception that materials such as carpet, recycled metal studs, certified wood products, to name a few, cost more than conventional materials. This is true in some but not all instances. First of all, most of the certification points come from the building itself. This actually lowers the bar for individual tenants to achieve this standing. In our current business climate, many responsible companies are looking to make a commitment to the future by going the extra mile to gain certification. An interesting note regarding human efficiency - studies are increasingly showing that by improving the indoor work environment, many employers are experiencing increases in productivity, a reduction of absenteeism, a boost in employee morale and corporate loyalty which also reduces employee turnover. Also, as they are just gaining public notice, Green Buildings enjoy high profile and tenants associated with them are experiencing a well-deserved public perception of goodwill toward not just the employees but additionally the community at large.

A current example that illustrates this is the United STEP 1 building. This building is located at the NYS Energy and Research Development Authority's new (STEP) Saratoga Technology and Energy Park located in Malta. The United Group (an upstate real estate development firm) is in the process

of leasing up a new 105,000 s/f office / high tech manufacturing building that will be LEED certified "silver" when completed.

An important advantage at this particular location is the availability of NYS funding through NYSERDA to assist in various aspects of the fit up and ongoing operational costs discounts associated with the park and upstate area. This allows for tailored programs for tenants who fit the usage criteria and provides strong incentive to making the plunge into environmentally friendly space. As with most things, an understanding of available programs and services focused on the green movement will allow a broker to create the custom fit for their tenant that facilitates the possibility of going green by making it an economic viable alternative. A good resource on the benefits and advantages to a tenant can be found on the NYSERDA website under green buildings. (www.nyserda.com).

In conclusion, as awareness of the opportunities in LEED certified building space continues to gain growing popularity, a strong understanding of the processes and advantages involved will allow a savvy broker to provide his clients with environmentally friendly options in the site and building selection arena.

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