Florida Fourth in Number of LEED Projects in USA in 2016

Boca Raton, FL (February 3, 2017) -- Florida ranked fourth in the number of LEED projects in the U.S. in 2016, according to an annual ranking produced by the US Green Building Council. The annual ranking highlights states throughout the United States that made significant strides in sustainable building design, construction and transformation over the past year. LEED is the world’s most widely used and recognized green building rating system.

“This speaks volumes about Florida's commitment to environmental excellence and social responsibility,” said Mike Hess, Chair of the USGBC Florida Chapter. "We applaud the companies, owners, municipalities and everyone who played even a small part in this effort to deliver environmentally responsible, healthy and resource-efficient buildings in 2016 and in the future."

In addition to ranking the number of LEED projects, the report, which includes commercial and institutional green building projects Certified during 2016, ranked states' projects' LEED Certified GSF, as well as the total square feet of LEED Certified space per resident based on U.S. Census data. Florida finished fourth in number of LEED projects, 11th in LEED Certified GSF, and 29th in square feet of certified space per resident.

Across the USA, 3,366 projects were LEED Certified in 2016, representing 470.39 million square feet. In 2016, Florida saw 204 new LEED Certified projects representing more than 15 million square feet. Through January 10, 2017, Florida has 1,422 LEED Certified projects representing more than 125 million square feet.

In 2016, 53 percent of LEED building space was Certified in LEED’s Operations and Maintenance rating systems, representing a shifting focus toward greening the nation’s existing buildings stock. LEED for Building Design and Construction, which primarily deals with new construction and major renovations, represented 42 percent of the Certified square footage Certified. LEED for Interior Design and Construction made up approximately 5 percent of total square footage Certified.

(cont.)
The LEED green building certification system is the foremost program for the design, construction, maintenance and operations of green buildings. More than 59,000 commercial, neighborhood and residential projects are currently LEED Certified, comprising more than six billion square feet of construction space in all 50 states in the U.S. and in more than 164 countries and territories globally.

Green construction is also a large economic driver. According to USGBC’s 2015 Green Building Economic Impact Study, green construction will account for more than 3.3 million U.S. jobs -- more than one-third of the entire U.S. construction sector -- and generate $190.3 billion in labor earnings by 2018. The industry’s direct contribution to U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) is also expected to reach $303.5 billion from 2015-2018.

"It's unquestionably the right thing to do for the communities in which we live, work and play. Our Chapter's amazing volunteers work hard to engage, educate and advocate for the adoption of green building policies and initiatives that will make our buildings, cities, communities and neighborhoods more resource- and energy-efficient," said Mark Gelfo, Vice-Chair for USGBC Florida.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green-building program, developed by the USGBC, is a voluntary, consensus-based international rating system for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings, homes and communities. LEED addresses all building types and emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies aimed at key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality. The LEED Professional Credential demonstrates green-building expertise.

For the list of states in the USGBC report, see attachment with this release.

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The U.S. Green Building Council Florida Chapter, a nonprofit (501[c][3]) organization, embraces innovative building practices that conserve land, energy, water, resources and materials. Its Mission is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life. USGBC Florida has nearly 20,000 members, volunteers and friends providing educational programs and market transformation services to the Sunshine State from seven Regions -- Central Florida, Florida Capital, Florida Gulf Coast, Heart of Florida, Northeast Florida, Northern Gulf Coast, and South Florida. Contacts: Lee Cooke (Executive Director, 561-373-7367, lcooke@usgbcflorida.org) and Sarah Boren (Director of Policy and Programs, 904-535-0055, sboren@usgbcflorida.org).