

USGBC Charlotte Region Chapter 2008 Strategic Plan

I. Summary

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is the nation's foremost coalition of leaders from across the building industry working to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work.

Since its inception in 1993, the USGBC has played a vital role in providing a leadership forum and a unique, integrating force for the building industry: leading a national consensus for producing a new generation of buildings that deliver high performance inside and out.

Council programs are committee-based, member-driven, and consensus-focused and members work together to develop policy guidance and educational and marketing tools that support the adoption of sustainable building.

Members also forge strategic alliances with key industry and research organizations and federal, state and local government agencies to transform the built environment.

Council membership is comprised of visionary leaders representing building product manufacturers; building owners, managers, users and brokers; financial and insurance firms; press; professional societies; design, architectural, engineering and professional firms; contractors and builders; nonprofit organizations; utilities; universities, K-12 school systems and research institutes; state, local and federal governments; and building control service contractors and manufacturers.

The strength and diversity of the USGBC significantly enhances the resources available and the effectiveness of member efforts to improve the quality of buildings. It is the intention of the organization to maximize the breadth of stakeholders representing the entire green building industry.

II. History of Chapter

Green building advocates in the Charlotte, NC region began informally discussing the formation of a USGBC chapter in early February 2005. The first interest group meeting was held March 9, 2005 with an attendance of 51. A letter of intent to form a chapter was sent to USGBC on April 13, 2005 and organizing group status was granted on April 18, 2005. The steering committee began meeting bi-weekly on May 4, 2005 and organizing group meetings, including sub-committee break-out sessions have been held monthly since May 2005.

In the course of the organizing group's meetings, certain values were established. The membership agreed that the value of great places – interior and exterior – is in creating space that delights users and occupants. The resources of our planet are not unlimited and as builders, facility managers, architects, designers, engineers, civic leaders, and community advocates, it is our role to safeguard those resources. We have a responsibility – indeed an obligation – to weigh the costs and benefits of our work to the environment, the economy, and the community equally.

Ultimately, we want the development of our community to appropriately represent the values of each of its institutions, while responsibly managing the resources shared by all.

III. Relationship to USGBC

The mission of USGBC chapters is to be the focal point for information exchange and advocacy of green building at the local level, with support from the Council. The Charlotte, NC region is at such a point in its growth and maturation that the local chapter of the USGBC can have an enormous impact on the community's development. While there are many in the Charlotte region's building services industry who understand sustainability, smart growth and green building issues, there are also myriad opportunities for advancing this knowledge in the larger community. The USGBC Charlotte Region Chapter intends to fill those gaps.

IV. Vision and Mission Statement

Vision: The USGBC Charlotte Region Chapter will inspire and support the Charlotte region as a leader in growing sustainable communities.

Mission Statement: To promote and advocate for sustainable buildings, sites, practices, products and lifestyles through the education of professionals within the building and related industries, academia, public and private organizations, and the greater Charlotte, NC community.

Purpose: Primarily the Charlotte Region Chapter intends to accomplish its mission through leadership and coalition building with public and private sector entities and residents as a whole – fostering collaboration with key stakeholders in the community to accelerate the adoption of green practices, policies and programs. Partnering with the city and county governments, educational facilities, public agencies, the private sector, and non-profit groups, the Charlotte Region Chapter will provide education, information, technical assistance and training.

V. Goals

A. Education and Community Outreach

Educate and engage the Community on the importance, value and benefits of sustainability and conservation.

1. Establish a collaborative effort amongst design and construction professionals to increase awareness among the building community through educational program and resource development.
2. Offer technical training for both professionals and tradespersons in the region, work to promote good sustainable practices in their day-to-day businesses, and provide materials and resources to designers and builders at all levels.
 - .. Promote the LEED certification process.
 - .. Promote the Architecture 2030 Challenge
 - .. Promote the Green Roof 2015 Challenge
 - .. Promote sustainable local master planning efforts.
3. Work with local school districts and universities to infuse sustainable education into curriculum and green operations in educational facilities.
 - .. Provide educational training materials to educators and facility managers throughout local school districts.
 - .. Assist in developing and organizing training programs that can be taken from school to school.
4. Distribute educational materials.
5. Provide core competence workshops to assist in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program and professional accreditation.

6. Provide technical training sessions in specific areas of expertise which correspond to the available LEED product types, including new construction, commercial interiors, core and shell, existing buildings, homes, neighborhoods, and other specific applications such as retail, multiple buildings and campuses, schools, healthcare, laboratories and lodging.
7. Generate press and publicity.

B. Advocacy

Advocate for policies that enhance sustainability efforts throughout the city and region.

1. Provide a forum for local municipalities and public utility groups to collaborate on green initiatives to include those for buildings. Work to create consistent green standards, share information, and support each others' programs and initiatives.
2. Analyze the market and identify key stakeholders
 - .. Research comparable markets
 - .. Incorporate elements from other municipality's initiatives
1. Assess City and County policies and resources
 - .. Low impact development requirements
 - .. Preferential permitting for green buildings
 - .. Develop incentives for green building practices
 - .. Eliminate barriers to green building practices
2. Develop partnerships
3. Promote Green Program Elements
 - .. Alternative transportation programs
 - .. Commute trip reduction programs
 - .. Incentives for utilizing mass transit and carpooling
 - .. Increase bike and pedestrian trails
 - .. Maintain a healthy urban forest
 - .. Promote tree planting
 - .. Promote Streetscaping
 - .. Increase recycling rates in the city/county
4. Leading by Example
 - .. Adoption of LEED rating programs for all city- and county-owned property
 - .. Greening City Business and Tourism Operations
 - .. Architecture 2030 Challenge
 - .. 2015 Green Roof Challenge
 - .. Promotion of the Cool Cities Agreement
 - .. Utilization of third-party rating systems
5. Generate Press and Publicity

C. Green Program and Policies

To foster integrated sustainable practices and behaviors that encompass the environmental, social-cultural, technological, economic, and public policy aspects of the greater community.

1. Serve as a resource to local businesses of all sizes and functions on greening business operations, products and services.
2. Develop materials targeted to greening businesses, develop a partnership with the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Center City Partners and others; and provide a Speakers Bureau available to businesses looking for information on how to make their businesses more sustainable.
3. Provide resource information on varying business types.
4. Work with the *Charlotte Business Journal* and other media sources to develop a recognizable Green Business Recognition program.
5. Promote existing 'green' awards in the region.
6. Foster a culture of sustainable design that encourages the integration of green and sustainable principles into the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of projects.

7. Promote a planning and design process that ensures the development of designs that create healthy work and living environments, extend a structure's useful life, and are capable of achieving high-performance building standards with attention to energy efficiency, water efficiency and other goals of the LEED rating systems.
8. Partner with municipalities in the development of a management approach that reinforces the integration of sustainable design principles into the core competency skill set of the City/County/Town planners, architects, engineers, and project managers.

D. Healthy Communities

Encourage the development of 'green,' livable communities through smart, sustainable practices.

1. Provide a venue for neighborhood associations, homeowners, and non-profit groups committed to educating residential neighborhoods on the collective benefits of sustainable home ownership.

E. Global Climate Change

The direct link between rising global temperatures and human resource-use patterns has been proven for some time. The potential negative effects of climate change threaten every aspect of our society. The Charlotte Region Chapter will encourage and promote solutions and ideas to minimize these negative effects at every level.

F. Habitat Loss | Species Extinction

Each year, more and more virgin habitat is lost to the lack of sustainable development. As development expands and intensifies, existing habitats become strained and degraded. With each acre of land degraded or developed, the potential for additional species extinction increases, leaving our land a much poorer place and in a more precarious position to combat the negative effects of climate change. The Charlotte Region Chapter will focus on mitigating Habitat Loss within the region.

G. Global Equity

More than half of the world's citizens exist with sub-standard resources, education, health and welfare. The Charlotte Region Chapter recognizes how socially unjust many of our practices and industries are, and understands the direct link between a lack of adequate resources and harsh strain on ecosystems and natural health. The Charlotte Region Chapter will educate people on building systems, products, materials and technologies that will help create a world of equitable abundance for all.

1. Serve as the vanguard of a movement to engage people to speak and act for a just world through a respectful, thoughtful, and intellectually probing perspective.
2. Be at the center of efforts to address issues of global justice and to build bridges of understanding to alienated people in our community.
3. Bring together the extremes of disparate beliefs in hopes of facilitating understanding and respect.

H. Operational Principles

The Charlotte Region Chapter lives a culture of sustainability by operating with mutual respect, service, collaboration and inclusiveness. As change agents we seek to create coherent and effective culture across our region and communicate our values in a consistent manner.

1. Belief in the Vision – We approach each challenge with a spirit of optimism. When we describe a vision for the future that is sustainable, we do so not only with optimism, but also with a belief that such outcomes are technologically and socially possible.
2. Social Equity – We believe in helping people move beyond their current paradigms in a respectful and dignified manner. We accept all people where

they are and engage them where they can relate to us as we endeavor to change minds.

3. Integrity at all Levels – The Charlotte Region Chapter operates with the highest level of integrity. We treat all members, volunteers and everyone we do business with respect, honesty and fairness. We believe in a policy of transparency and inclusiveness.