



Green Builders

Five design and construction innovators stand on the balcony of REI's flagship store, an early landmark of the sustainable-building movement designed by Seattle's Mithun Partners. **Matthew Freeman-Gleason** (left) founded the Environmental Home Center in 1991 to supply builders and remodelers with recycled, nontoxic, and other environmentally friendly materials. With demand booming, EHC has moved to Seattle from its first home on Bainbridge Island, expanded to Portland and Bend, Oregon, and moved into nationwide distribution. "It's been a long time coming," says Freeman-Gleason, "but now there's

a new sense of urgency." Mithun architect **Richard Franko** designs buildings for energy efficiency, resource thriftiness, and general ecological performance. "The result does not have to look any different," he says, "but it often will create new forms by configuring rooms and windows creatively to optimize ventilation, wind flow, daylighting, and solar exposure." **Lucia Athens**, coordinator of Seattle's green building program, established the nation's first such municipal program in Austin in 1991. "What I see is more willingness to experiment, to innovate with edge," she says. **Lynne Barker**, sustainable-

communities planner for the city, started out in construction; she created her first environmental job at Seattle's Sellen Construction, where she inaugurated a system that diverted 85 percent of construction wastes to recycling and saved the company \$1 million on projects for Microsoft. In 1996, she cochaired the U.S. Green Building Council committee that developed the LEED rating system. **Charlie Laboda**, a senior project manager for Vulcan's massive South Lake Union development, oversees construction of Alley24 (background, right), planned to be one of Seattle's first LEED-certified mixed-use buildings.

It's easy building green

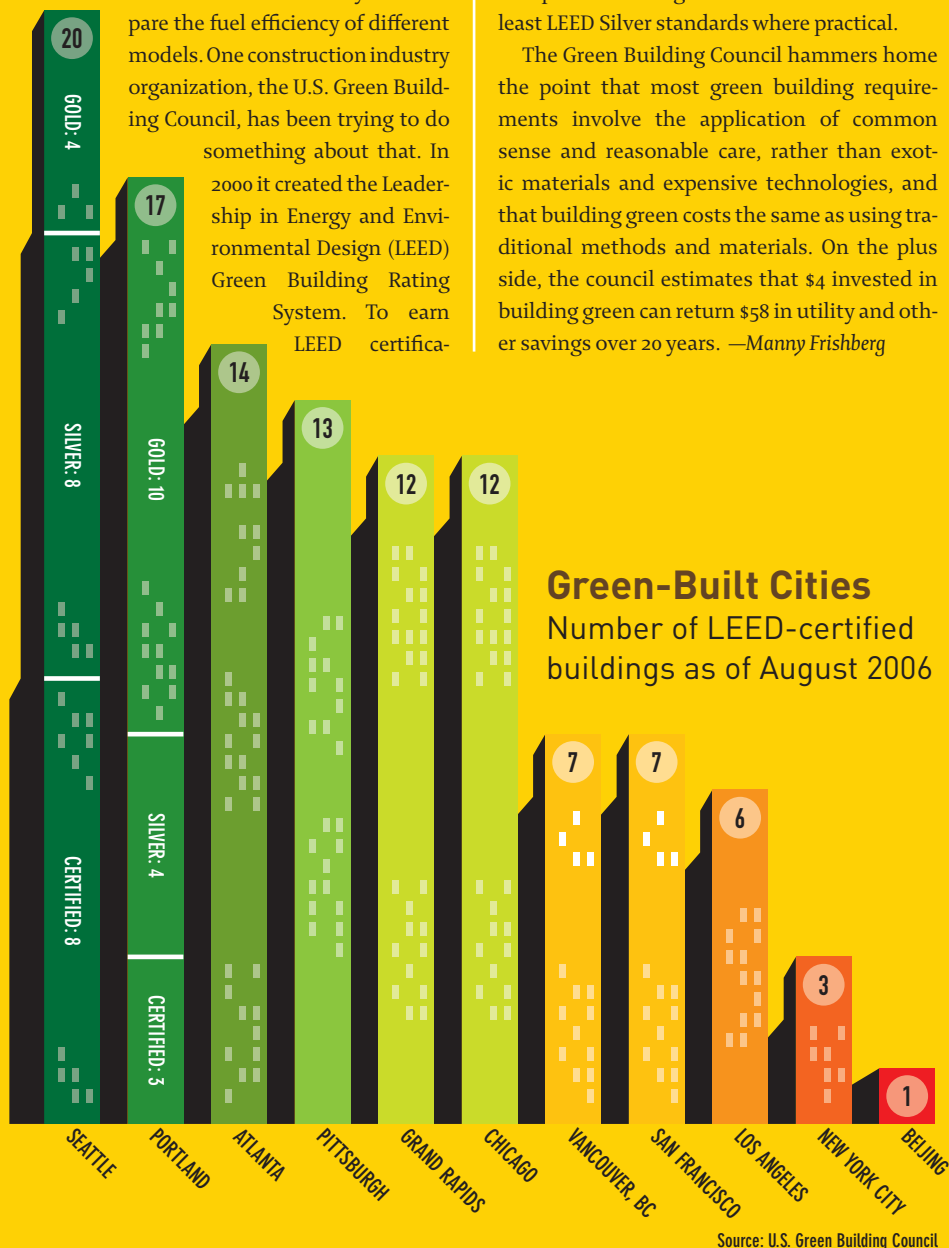
Seattle LEEDs the way on the energy-saving, water-hoarding, dollar-smart construction frontier.

Next to our cars, the buildings we live and work in have more impact on the environment than anything else we use. They're responsible for 40 percent of the greenhouse gases pumped into the earth's atmosphere. And the consequences of our choices in buildings persist much longer: Very few vehicles stay on the road more than 10 or 20 years, and most owners replace theirs much sooner. Buildings, on the other hand, live on for decades or, as Europeans attest, centuries.

Unfortunately, building designs don't come with the equivalent of the EPA's gas-mileage stickers that let car buyers compare the fuel efficiency of different models. One construction industry organization, the U.S. Green Building Council, has been trying to do something about that. In 2000 it created the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. To earn LEED certification,

builders must employ such earth-friendly features as recycled materials, ventilation improvements, and systems to reduce energy and water use. Green buildings are rated Certified (the lowest) Silver, Gold, or Platinum. Since the standards' inception 569 LEED-certified buildings have gone up around this country and 12 others, and 4,399 more have been registered under LEED protocols, but are not yet rated. Seattle has built more than any other city, 20 as of late July, and has 64 more registered; only Portland and Chicago have more in the pipeline. Last year Washington became the first state to require that public buildings and schools be built to at least LEED Silver standards where practical.

The Green Building Council hammers home the point that most green building requirements involve the application of common sense and reasonable care, rather than exotic materials and expensive technologies, and that building green costs the same as using traditional methods and materials. On the plus side, the council estimates that \$4 invested in building green can return \$58 in utility and other savings over 20 years. —Manny Frishberg



Source: U.S. Green Building Council

Going for the gold

Seattle-area LEED Gold-certified buildings

CARKEEK PARK ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER, Seattle

CEDAR RIVER WATER TREATMENT FACILITY, Renton

EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE SEMINAR II, Olympia

FAA SEATTLE TERMINAL RADAR APPROACH CONTROL, Burien

ISLANDWOOD, Bainbridge Island

KING COUNTY KING STREET CENTER, Seattle

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY MORKEN CENTER, Tacoma

REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, Monroe

SEATTLE CITY HALL

SEATTLE PARK 90/5 C

STATE VETERANS SKILLED NURSING FACILITY, Retsil

TUMWATER OFFICE BUILDING, Tumwater

U.S. Green Building Council

The Building Index

Average increase in home price per \$1 reduction in annual fuel bills: \$10–\$20

Rick Nevin and Gregory Watson, *Appraisal Journal*

How much "adding skylighting to the average nonskylit retail store would be likely to improve its [sales] performance": 40 percent

Heschong Mahone energy consultants