

PH's greenest, Zuellig building earns Platinum

THE US Green Building Council (USGBC) awarded the Zuellig Building in Makati City certification at Platinum level under its Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (Core and Shell) (LEED-CS) program.

The Zuellig Building is the first development in the Philippines, and among the first in Asia, to earn the highest level in the LEED rating system for "green" architecture, sustainable construction methodologies and resource-efficient building operations.

The new Makati landmark joins an elite group of about a hundred Platinum-certified high-rise office buildings worldwide. Among the ranks of these "greenest" buildings are the Bank of America Tower in New York City, Asia Square in Singapore, and Taipei 101. The Zuellig Building's LEED Platinum certification brings the Philippines and Makati into the world-class league of green architecture and state-of-the-art office infrastructure.

Initiated by the USGBC in the year 2000, LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is recognized as a global standard for the assessment of the sustainability of buildings.

The LEED-CS rating system allocates points based on a building's environmental impact and human benefits, in five major credit categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality.

Each of the performance categories includes pre-conditional mandatory measures. Certification is granted solely by the USGBC in Washington, D.C. and requires third-party verification of compliance.

From the project's inception, the strategic intent of the developers of the Zuellig Building was to build a sustainable and environment-friendly structure. Green principles were integrated in the plans of the architects and design consultants, W.V. Coscolluela & Associates, and Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM, New York), while adherence to LEED requirements was monitored throughout the construction process by the project's sustainability consultant, Langdon & Seah.



"Attaining the highest mark under this international green building metric means the project underwent rigorous certification review and has been validated to conform to the highest international industry standards for green buildings. The Platinum award for the Zuellig Building is just icing on the cake. It confirms that the project team successfully constructed a world-class green building. In a short span of two to three years, the Zuellig Building has brought a new mindset to our industry by raising the awareness for environmental

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sustainability in architecture, construction and building management," said Carla Cruz, assistant vice president of Langdon & Seah.

Studies show that buildings account for over half of the world's carbon emissions, making their impact on the environment a key concern. This is especially evident in Asia with its rapid growth of highly urbanized populations. In the Philippines, there is now a growing trend in the urban property sector towards sustainable architecture and construction methods, the main objective being the reduction of power and water consumption.

The green technologies employed in the Zuellig Building achieve significant energy savings (at least 15 percent compared with a base building built to conventional US standards), thereby reducing greenhouse emissions and energy costs. In addition, the building has an on-grid photovoltaic solar power system to generate renewable energy. Recycling of grey water and the collection of rainwater and condensate water result in over 70 percent water savings (29 million liters annually).

Transport is another major contributor to worldwide carbon emissions. The location of the Zuellig Building allows tenants easy connectivity and access to public transportation. Bicycle stands and showers are provided for office users who choose to pedal to work instead of burning fuel.

Green buildings are designed to support the wellbeing and productivity of occupants.

In the Zuellig building, 90 percent of the office space gets natural light. The indoor air quality (IAQ) plan controls the choice of construction materials to eliminate the health risks of volatile organic compounds, and carbon dioxide sensors control and modulate the airflow.

In addition to the Platinum LEED-CS certification (core and shell), Zuellig received a Platinum LEED-CI certification (commercial interiors) for the fit-out of its corporate offices on the 32nd floor.

Tenants who desire a LEED-CI certification for their individual fit-outs automatically gain a certain number of points simply by being located in the building.

Standing on a landscaped site of 8,285 square meters in the heart of the Makati CBD, the Zuellig Building has a total leasable area of 55,000 sqm of prime-grade office space for multi-tenant use. The property is owned by Bridgebury Realty Corp., an affiliate of the Zuellig Group.

From its beginnings as a trading house in Manila over a hundred years ago, Zuellig has evolved into an international federation of businesses, with strategic market positions throughout Asia-Pacific in healthcare and pharmaceuticals, agri-business, industrial solutions and insurance.