

# Sustainable Connections Green Building Program

# FIVE 12

*The FIVE/12 Agenda is a municipal strategy to creating a supportive environment for green and sustainable buildings in Bellingham and Whatcom County.*

## Bellingham is committed to Sustainability

- In 2005, Bellingham adopted a resolution to promote LEED and Green Building Construction practices in the private sector and to educate city staff on LEED and Green building strategies.
- In 2007, the city adopted aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals to be achieved, in part, by further promotion of green building standards.
- The Mayor's 100 Day Report states that the city's Green Building Team will "explore incentives and pilot programs... and provide leadership to the public and private sectors."
- The population of Bellingham has repeatedly shown an appetite for sustainability:

- Most successful green power community in EPA history
- Highest increase of bus ridership of the 150 largest transit agencies in the nation
- Largest Eco Home & Landscape Tour north of Seattle

## LEED registered projects in the City of Bellingham



Whatcom County Courthouse



Depot Market Square



Matthei Place Affordable Housing



WECU Loan Center



Wade King Recreation Center at WWU



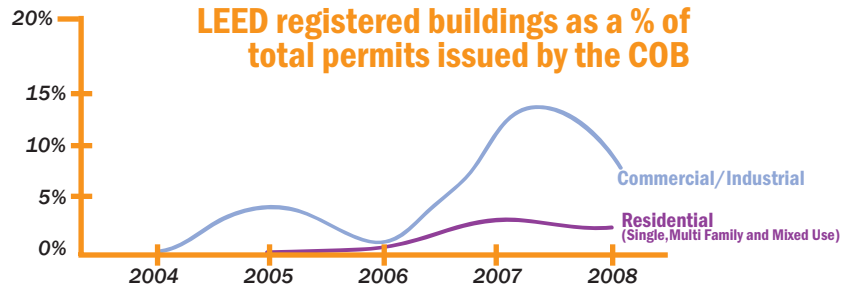
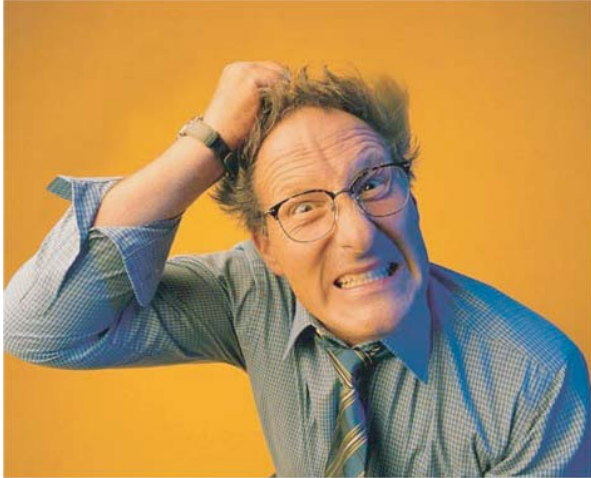
BIA of Whatcom County

## Green Building Program Successes

With the support of the City of Bellingham, Sustainable Connections has held Green Building educational events in 2007 and 2008 that attracted over 2,000 attendees ranging from local engineers, architects, developers, builders, and other professionals, along with over 300 local government staff members from Public Works, Building Services and Planning Departments. The City recently installed an educational green building kiosk in the permitting center featuring upcoming workshops, LID technical information, utility rebate incentives and general green building information. In addition, the main lobby houses a large map of Bellingham featuring 38 individual projects that implement methods of green building.

## Why we could be doing better

- McGraw-Hill and the National Association of Home Builders calculate that the market value of green building construction is projected to increase to \$60 billion by 2010. While this is a significant increase in the market share, the #1 factor that contributes to this success is an unprecedented level of government initiatives.
- Climate Solutions and Clean Edge Inc. recently identified Green Building Design Services as the one of the areas with the greatest potential for green job growth in the Pacific Northwest. However, they also identified outdated building codes and the absence of “a streamlined process for green building permitting and approval” as significant hindrances to the realization of the economic potential of this sector.



### What we have heard

Industry and government surveys from workshops conducted between 2005-2008 show that there is a perceived barrier to further expansion of green buildings: outdated municipal code/zoning. There is also significant interest in City incentives.

## Planning and Building Services Past Successes

- Formed “Green Team” in 2007
- Instituted single point contact review and piloted several green building projects
- Over 200 staff attending a Sustainable Connections green building event in 2008

## What we are proposing

We’re aiming to grow these successes by partnering with the City of Bellingham in creating at least FIVE tangible success stories over the next 12 months. Bellingham can become one of North America’s leading cities for green building.

### Next steps:

- 1 City and industry collaboration to develop a ranked list of barriers and potential incentives to green building
- 2 The development of a workplan to address these barriers and pilot these incentives
- 3 Implementation of at least FIVE “early action items” within 12 months
- 4 Coordination with Whatcom county

### Possible future successes!

We want to hear from you, your ideas, innovation and inspiration about what incentives would work best for you:

- “Green Factor” analysis
- Green building core review team on city staff
- Reduced green permit turnaround times
- Code barrier removal
- LEED-ND applied to Urban Village planning package

If you have immediate ideas or questions please contact Nick at the Sustainable Connections office, [nick@sconnect.org](mailto:nick@sconnect.org) or 360.647.7093 x107



**CASCADIA**  
REGION GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL