

MNCBIA Environmental Awards

Green Building

GABLES TAKOMA PARK

Project Description

Gables Residential, a leading national multi-family residential owner, developer and manager recently achieved LEED-NC Silver certification by the United States Green Building Council. Gables Takoma Park, a 145-unit infill development located in the environmentally conscious Takoma Park community in Washington, DC received the Silver certification in June 2009. This development is the first LEED project pursued and achieved by Gables and the first Silver certified apartment building in Washington, DC. The building offers luxury amenities and convenient transit access with the property situated adjacent to the Takoma Park metro stop. The appeal of its eco-friendly design, amenities and location resulted in an 8 month lease up period and current occupancy rates of 97 percent. Gables Takoma Park is an excellent model of “green” building design, which was planned and developed with a variety of sustainable features.

Successful implementation of designing and building Takoma Park to LEED standards was achieved through comprehensive training and coordination with an outside green building consultant, Greenshape, LLC. In addition, Gables worked with a commissioning expert CPM Scheduling, LLC to ensure the building systems operated as designed. Working on the Takoma Park project has motivated three Gables employees to become LEED Accredited Professionals, whose efforts continue on other green building projects in the DC metro area.

Green Building Practices

Gables Takoma Park, a progressive example of environmentally friendly living, incorporates a number of green building features. Over 30 percent of the project’s materials were extracted, processed and manufactured locally and regionally. In result, the local economy is supported and transportation cost and fuel consumption is reduced. The project also used building products that included recycled content; over 10% of the building materials consisted of recycled content. Other green building practices include:

Site and Surroundings:

- Urban infill location near public transit
- Landscaped with native, adaptive plants that thrive with less irrigation
- Landscaping features drip irrigation system to minimize potable water use
- Paving materials at entrance are pervious, to prevent water run-off, and light-colored, to reduce the urban heat island effect
- Bike racks near the entrance with free community bike rentals

Energy and Water Efficient

- Solar reflective roof to reduce heat and cooling load
- Energy-efficient lighting and Energy Star appliances
- Improved building skin materials, such as better windows and masonry
- Hydraulic, energy-efficient elevators
- Low-flow fixtures and dual-flush toilets
- Named EPA Green Power partner for payments to fund research and investment in alternative energy sources

Indoor Environment

- Reusable gift bag with eco-friendly cleaning products for new residents
- Maintenance staff uses eco-friendly cleaning products
- Low-VOC paints, adhesives and carpets
- Individual ducts bring fresh air to each unit
- Vents sealed during construction to avoid pollution
- Non-smoking throughout the building

Construction and Outreach

- Recycled 70 percent of materials from building demolished on site before construction
- Maintenance and management staff trained in green practices
- Recycling chutes in trash room

Gables Takoma Park truly addresses the environmentally-centered desires of the local demographic, while delivering exceptional and responsible luxury rental product to the market. Building in a submarket not traditionally open to corporate development and learning and constructing to USGBC's LEED criteria posed two obstacles in developing the site. It took a thorough understanding of the neighborhood demographic and their eco-friendly needs, which was a vital element of the project's success and ultimately resulted in a more sustainable product.