



New York by the Numbers

Economic snapshots of the five boroughs

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The Center for an Urban Future is New York City's home for independent research and analysis. We're looking ahead to the issues affecting the five boroughs.

Inside

LEED-Certified Projects in NYC in Other Major Cities	p. 2
LEED-Certified Projects in Manhattan	p. 3
LEED-Certified Projects in Brooklyn	p. 3
LEED-Certified Projects in Manhattan	p. 2
LEED-Certified Projects in Queens	p. 3
LEED-Certified Projects in Staten Island	p. 3

In this Issue:

A LEEDer in Green Building?
The Number of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified buildings in New York City trails that of many other big U.S. cities.

Since at least the spring of 2007 when PlaNYC – the ambitious 127-point plan for a more sustainable city – was unveiled, Mayor Bloomberg has aggressively tried to position New York as a national leader in environmentally-friendly development. In fact, just last week, the mayor announced a new initiative, drawing on \$1.8 billion in federal stimulus funds, to retrofit the city's older, energy-hogging buildings. But, interestingly, when it comes to the number of completed LEED-certified new buildings in New York, the city is decidedly middle-of-the-pack, trailing behind Chicago, Portland, Seattle, Washington, DC, and San Francisco.

LEED certification remains the country's premier standard for top-of-the-line green construction. The U.S. Green Building Council, a DC-based non-profit that administers the certification process, grades buildings on their performance in a number of different areas, including how much energy is consumed, how the water is used or re-used and the kinds of construction materials employed. The greenest buildings earn a 'Platinum' rating, the next greenest a 'Gold' rating, and the next a 'Silver' rating, although still very green in environmental terms, the least green buildings receive a 'Certified' designation.

New York City has 41 buildings in all with one of those four LEED ratings, compared to 70 in Chicago, 63 in the comparatively tiny Portland, 55 in Seattle and 47 in Washington, DC. New York may very well fare better when measuring the overall square footage of LEED buildings, since a significant percentage of the certified projects here are tall residential and office towers.

Unsurprisingly, Manhattan has by far the most LEED-certified buildings within the five boroughs, with 31; the Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island each have two while Queens has four. Of those, five earned a 'Platinum' rating, 16 a 'Gold' certification, 14 a 'Silver' rating and six a 'Certified' designation. The city currently has 455 other projects that have registered for LEED certification, an indication that the city's total may increase significantly in the years ahead. However, many of these developments have yet to break ground and in the present financial downturn may never see the light of day.

LEED-Certified Projects in New York City,
By Borough (as of April 27, 2009)

Total LEED-Certified Projects	
Bronx	2
Brooklyn	2
Manhattan	31
Queens	4
Staten Island	2
NYC Total	41

LEED-Certified Projects in New York City,
By Certification Level

Certification Level	
Platinum	5
Gold	16
Silver	14
Certified	6
NYC Total	41

Report - April 2009

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