

LEED Rating Systems for Historical Restorations

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The objective of this study was to identify the barriers in applying Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) ratings toward historical restoration projects. In recent years, with the United States becoming more green conscious, preservationists are beginning to turn toward LEED to qualify their work – despite LEED being designed for new building construction. When working with a suite of standards that is in conflict with the designer’s goal of maintaining authenticity, obstacles tend to arise. These obstacles were extracted through a survey of architects and professionals involved in restoration projects of historical buildings. The intent of this study to compare obstacles that arose during restoration projects, which lead the architect to choose between scoring LEED points versus making restoration more authentic. Findings from the study revealed that coordinating the requirements to receive historic tax credits and the LEED certification process would result in a separate LEED system for historical preservation. Historic preservation and LEED both have the same basic intent: to restore projects in the most environmentally conscious manner. This study will be of interest to those involved with U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) in the pursuit of a separate LEED system for historical preservation.

Keywords: LEED, Historical restoration, Preservation, Authenticity, Obstacles, Conflicts