

Grinnell College

Environmentally Responsible Building Guidelines

Adopted: April 28, 2006

Grinnell College recognizes that environmentally responsible design should minimize the environmental impact and lifetime operational costs of college owned buildings. Building designs that are environmentally responsible promote energy efficiency, land stewardship and resource conservation, which, in turn, preserve the natural resources of the Grinnell community and the surrounding region. Financially, building design that incorporates life cycle cost analysis is important to responsible long-term fiscal planning for the College.

To the extent that their implementation is consistent with the mission of Grinnell College and incurs reasonable expenses, the set of building principles described below collectively provide the framework for all new major construction and major renovation of buildings on campus. Architects, contractors, engineers, landscape architects, and all others involved in building projects on Grinnell's campus are expected to follow these guidelines.

Grinnell College expects those involved in building projects on campus to:

- Design buildings to meet the “certified” standard of the United States Green Building Council’s (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. Each building project will be evaluated individually for pursuing LEED ratings beyond the “certified” level. Projects do not need to be certified through the USGBC, but must display the ability to earn the necessary points to meet certification standards. Architects and contractors should sustain a dialogue with college representatives when choosing which LEED points (i.e. environmentally responsible features) to pursue.
- Include an architect on the design team with environmentally responsible design experience. LEED Accredited Professionals are desirable. Architects with these credentials provide experience with the LEED certification process and facilitate efficient incorporation of environmentally responsible technology into building design.
- Evaluate a building’s lifecycle costs in addition to initial construction costs. Grinnell College will own and use newly constructed and renovated facilities continuously for decades. As such, the total cost of ownership, and not simply the initial cost, must be evaluated for all major building projects. Architects and engineers are expected to provide life cycle cost estimates of building systems during the earliest phase of building design. The college is particularly interested in receiving lifecycle cost estimates throughout the design process for the building envelope as well as the HVAC, lighting, and water systems.
- Use appropriate resource conservation technology to improve water and energy efficiency beyond industry baseline.

- Present for consideration building features which reduce environmental impact even if they have no economic payback. The college is willing to consider building features impacts that have no direct economic payback but reduce the negative environmental impact of the building. Examples of this type of building feature include native landscaping, using building materials made of recycled content and limiting storm water runoff.
- Use innovative technology only when a particular technology has proven itself reliable in the Midwestern climate. The college assumes all liabilities for campus buildings and seeks to limit the risks associated with ownership by using only reliable technologies specific to the college's situation.
- Recycle construction debris from both new construction and remodeling projects in an effort to minimize the waste that is sent to the landfill. All construction contractors must have plans for reducing construction waste.
- Conduct commissioning of the building energy systems throughout the design and construction process to ensure optimal efficiency.