

Benefits

Studies have shown that sustainable buildings make clear business sense while help preserving the environment; the green design attributes of buildings and indoor environments can improve worker's productivity and occupant's health and well-being, resulting in bottom-line benefits for business. Green building benefits people, the environment, and the economic bottom lines. By greening our built environment at the neighborhood and city scale, we can deliver on large-scale economic priorities such as climate change mitigation, energy security, resource conservation and job creation, long-term resilience and quality of life.

Key to Success in Building Green

Design decisions must be made at the start of a green building project in order to achieve the performance, long-term value and return on investment of a green building. The life-cycle costing approach must be taken from design through building operation and the project must be backed up by robust commissioning, effective management, and effective communication in order to achieve its predicted performance.



For more information on how you can be part of the effort to build a sustainable Brandon, please visit our website at:
<http://www.brandon.ca/building-a-sustainable-city>



What is a Green Building?

The green building concept promotes the construction of buildings that are healthier for the occupants and healthier for the environment. Sustainable or “green” building practices can reduce the impact that design, construction, operation and maintenance of buildings has on both people and nature.



Buildings generally consume 40% of the world's total energy, 25% of its wood harvest and 16% of its water. The building industry is the nation's largest manufacturing activity, representing more than 50% of the nation's wealth and 13% of its Gross Domestic Product. Energy and material consumption in buildings contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emission which impact global climate change.¹



The Big Picture

While green buildings benefit the environment, they have been shown to deliver a range of compelling financial and social benefits. This handout provides a summation of the most recent and relevant research from the report done by the World Green Building Council². Their report targets building developers, owners and investors who are the ultimate decision-makers when it comes to financing green building projects, as well as the tenants who drive market demand.

Beyond Green Buildings

Sustainable practices go beyond constructing a green building, it involves the practice of energy and water conservation, environmentally sensitive site planning, resource efficient building materials and superior indoor environmental quality. Some of the key benefits of green building practices include:

- Use of building materials with fewer chemicals and less impact on the environment
- Lower energy and water utility costs
- Enhanced health and productivity
- Long-term economic returns
- Reduced environmental impact



Costs

Green buildings can be delivered at a price comparable to those of conventional buildings, the slight increase in the upfront cost can be recouped through operational costs savings especially with cost strategies, program management and environmental strategies integrated into the development process right from the start. Conventional buildings may cost slightly less than green buildings, but they have a long-term higher operation and maintenance costs. The high costs of green building is often due to the lack of integrated design process (IDP), where sustainable features are being “bolted on” to conventional buildings which could substantially increase the original budgets. Green buildings have been shown to save money through reduced energy and water use and lower long-term operations and maintenance costs. The savings in green buildings typically exceed any design and construction premiums within a reasonable payback period.



Market Conditions

Green building is increasingly on demand by tenants, homeowners, investors and policy makers. Buildings with sustainability credentials enjoy increased marketability; they attract more buyers and command higher rents and sale prices. In markets where green buildings have become mainstream, conventional buildings may rent or sell for less.

¹U.S. Department of Energy's Center for Sustainable Development

²“The Business Case for Green Building- A Review of the Costs and Benefits for Developers, Investors and Occupants” by World Green Building Council., www.worldgbc.org