

Completed in September 2003 as part of the Prop DD Library Bond Program, the Sun Valley Branch project received LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council in recognition of its superior expression of environmentally sound design. This is the second highest level of environmental award offered for buildings in the United States.

Managed by a partnership between the Department of Los Angeles Public Library and the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, this project is part of the 1998 Prop DD Library Bond Measure, approved by the voters in 1998. The project was designed by the architectural firm of Fields Devereaux Architects & Engineers with James Weiner, AIA serving as Design Architect, and constructed by the Toby B. Hayward Construction Company.

Many aspects of the project, both in the design and construction, promote sustainable design and environmental conservation. Examples of specific features are:

- One-third of the building's electricity is generated by photovoltaic panels.
- The building has double glazed windows, high insulation, and other features, which raise the energy efficiency of the building by 60%. An integrated design approach resulted in a building that performs 40% better than required by California's stringent energy code.
- Energy efficiency measures include high-efficiency lighting with daylight and occupancy sensor controls, a well-insulated high-mass wall system, a cool roof, well-shaded windows, and high-efficiency air conditioning units.
- Non-Freon based air conditioning systems.
- Solar power provides over 20% of building's electricity needs.
- An elegant landscape design, using native and locally adapted plants, allows reduction by half of the water use in landscape irrigation compared to a conventional design.
- Water saving plumbing fixtures provide one-third reduction in the potable water used in the library compared to Federal requirements.
- A white roof, certified as a "cool roof," reduces local heat build-up that is a major problem in urban areas.
- Diversion of three-quarters of the construction waste from landfills to recycled uses.
- Recycled materials account for more than 10% of products used in the library.
- Over one-half of the products used were manufactured locally, and more than half of those materials were extracted locally within 500 miles of the project.
- Over 50% of the wood products used in the building were sourced from sustainably-managed forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Three-fifths of all of the wood used in the library came from rapidly renewable forests.
- Carpet systems, composite materials, paints, adhesives, and sealants all complied with strict standards to limit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that might irritate library staff and patrons.
- 90% of the library has natural daylight, which improves the quality of light in the reading and working areas and reduces the requirement for electrical lighting.
- All parts of the library have views to the landscape outside.

The LEED Rating System was incorporated into consultant contracts for the Bond Program with the goal that each of the projects would achieve the basic level certification. The Sun Valley Branch Library project substantially exceeded this goal and is exemplary of the mandate to demonstrate sustainable design concepts in the course of providing for enhanced library services for the City of Los Angeles.

The Sun Valley Branch Library is one of only a handful of buildings in the United States to achieve a LEED Gold Rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. It is only the fourth public library in the country to achieve Gold level. Located at 7935 Vineland Avenue, the Sun Valley Branch Library attests to how environmental responsibility is a priority for the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Public Library's vision of community library service.