

# [Beyond LEED: Living Building Challenge 2.0 Certification Unveiled](#)

by [Trey Farmer](#), 11/12/09



This week the [International Living Building Institute](#) released its [new green building standard](#) to the public at [Greenbuild 2009](#). [Version 2.0](#) expands on its already impressive focus to now cover social issues – any [Certified Living Building](#) must be [net-zero energy](#), net-zero water, non-toxic, provide for habitat restoration on sister sites, and urban agriculture is mandated. The 20 imperatives, all of which must be addressed, go well beyond the simple efficiency standards that our industry seems content to comply with before calling a project 'sustainable'. Seriously, read this thing!





## LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE™ 2.0

A Visionary Path to a Restorative Future

Jason F. McLennan and his team have done a wonderful thing in giving us the language and rules to move beyond [LEED](#). Industry spokespeople will call this ‘idoitic’, ‘unreasonable’ and ‘impossible’. Don’t be scared industry spokespeople – change happens, we move forward, let’s do it together. Remember when you said the same things about LEED, which is now mandated in cities and counties all over the world?

The [International Living Building Institute](#) was founded in 2009 by the [Cascadia Region Green Building Council](#) to promote the creation of Living Buildings, sites and communities in countries around the world. There are currently 70 projects pursuing certification in the US under the previous release.



The [Omega Center for Sustainable Living](#)

One of the most important features of LBC is that it measures the actual performance of buildings. Basically this means that a year after a building was built, measurements are taken to ensure that it is, in fact, net zero in terms of energy and water, etc. This is a big distinction from existing requirements like [LEED](#) and [CA’s Title 24](#) which measure performance models and do not hold projects accountable to live up to those models.

This is also the first standard to address social justice and equity issues. In their own words: “The intent of the Equity Petal is to correlate the impacts of design and development to its ability to foster a true sense of community. A society that embraces all sectors of humanity and allows the dignity of equal access is a civilization in the best position to make decisions that protect and restore the natural environment.”

“The simple concept of green buildings has generally produced more efficient buildings and smaller footprints. But that is no longer enough,” says McLennan. “With version 2.0 addressing issues of food, transportation and social justice, we expect a considerable leap forward will happen once again.”

We are interested to hear what you think about this new standard – sound off in the comments!

[+ International Living Building Institute](#)

[+ Living Building Challenge Version 2.0 \[pdf\]](#)

*Lead photo: the [Omega Center for Sustainable Living](#)*

This article originally appeared at this URL:

<http://www.inhabitat.com/2009/11/12/living-building-challenge-2-0-unveiled/>