

**Upper West End
4506A Maxie St.
Houston, TX**

44% Less Heat/Cool Energy
Compared to IECC 2006

33% Less Water Heat Energy
Versus std. eff. gas unit

30% Less Indoor Water Use
With low-flow fixtures

LEED[®] Facts

**4506A Maxie St.
Houston, TX**

*LEED[®] for Homes
Certified - July 13, 2009*

Silver 68 Pts

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PROJECT PROFILE

Upper West End — Houston, TX Maxie St. Townhomes

Houston's 1st LEED Spec Homes Reach Silver

PROJECT BACKGROUND

These townhouses have been planned, designed and built considering the high expectations of homeowners that like to entertain, and live in one of the most active zones of the city (Washington corridor) while having a healthy, safe and comfortable environment. The design/build team's goal was to build homes with a high level of energy savings, comfort and improved indoor environmental quality, durability, sustainability, and responsibility towards the neighbors and environment. For these reasons, very early in the planning process, the developer (Urbaniza), the architect (Parra Design Group), and the builder (Catama Builders) understood the importance of getting these houses LEED certified.

LOCATION AND LINKAGE STRATEGIES

The houses are located a couple of blocks away from the Washington Street corridor with convenient access to public transportation and community resources.

SUSTAINABLE SITE STRATEGIES

The site has a high level of permeability to minimize runoff and flooding. Drought-tolerant and native plants are used, and the turf area has been limited. Non-toxic pest control measures were also adopted such as sealing all exterior cracks and installing termite blocking devices around slab penetrations.

WATER EFFICIENCY STRATEGIES

Strategies to minimize the indoor water use have been adopted by installing low flow faucets and dual flush toilets.

ENERGY AND ATMOSPHERE STRATEGIES

The HVAC system has a very high level of efficiency (17 SEER), while providing extra comfort. Programmable thermostats and indoor humidity controls enhance the performance. This equipment, combined with tight construction, tank-less water heater, low-e windows and additional insulation (including a radiant barrier at the roof), help lower energy demand as much as 45% compared to typical construction.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES STRATEGIES

This building was the first housing project in Houston to achieve LEED credit for diverting waste from the landfills to recycling facilities (mainly wood, and cardboard). Material use and waste were limited by using detailed framing drawings, trusses, and a materials staging area on site. The staging area helped minimize waste by making it difficult for framers to scrap material (locating the dumpster in a difficult-to-reach area), encouraging the reuse of wood. Environmentally preferred products were also used during construction, such as materials extracted and produced less than 500 miles away from the project (sheetrock, aggregate, lumber). And materials with a low VOC content (Volatile Organic Compounds) such as paint and floor varnish contributed to enhanced indoor air quality.

INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY STRATEGIES

The indoor environmental quality was considered a great investment on this project, as it enhances the comfort and creates a healthy product. The homes have a fresh air intake (which mixes indoor/outdoor air before blowing it into the house through the a/c system). It also has humidity controls which allow the HVAC system to dehumidify during mild, humid weather. And, the interior air quality has been enhanced by installing high-efficiency air filters (Merv 13). Other considerations are: sealed combustion appliances, timers for exhaust fans, improved return air flow, and an exhaust fan for the garage.

AWARENESS AND EDUCATION STRATEGIES

These houses have been featured in publications such as the Houston Chronicle, television on Tele-mundo (Hispanic news channel), and the Houston Solar Tour.

ABOUT THE BUILDER AND ARCHITECT

Parra Design Group and Catama Builders are committed to enhancing the environment and comfort by developing energy-efficient, innovative projects. We aim to enhance the lifestyle of the homeowners and the neighborhoods of our city. Our services include design-build of custom homes, and more recently, multi-family residential, commercial, and institutional projects.

"We think being LEED will be an attractive feature for the home buyers." – Camilo Parra, Houston Chronicle, May 2, 2008



Owner: For Sale

Builder: Catama Builders

Architect: Camilo Parra;
Parra Design Group

LEED for Homes Provider:
David Murrah; Contacts

Project Size: 1,850 sq. ft.

HERS Index: 69

ABOUT LEED® for Homes

The LEED for Homes Green Building Rating System is the national benchmark for the design, construction, and operations of high-performance homes. Visit the U.S. Green Building Council's Web site at www.usgbc.org to learn more about how you can make LEED work for you. Visit the Greater Houston Area Chapter of USGBC at www.usgbc-houston.org to learn more about getting involved locally.