

Athens, Greece LEED Europe Conf. and LEED v5 Preview Transcripts

Welcome to Green Building Manners, the original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Your host is Charlie Cecchetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED fellow. Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice, and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. So settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee, and get ready to find out why green building matters.

Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters podcast. Today is a special episode. I want to talk about a conference I recently attended in late April in Athens, Greece. The great folks that run GVCI Europe, Kai and Nicole Kilman and their entire team. They do such a great job all year just promoting green buildings, especially programs like LEED, all through Europe. And every spring they have what they call a LEED community reunion. Three or 400 people that really practice green buildings and especially LEED get together in one amazing city each spring. This year was Athens, Greece. I had never been to Athens. It was an amazing trip. Last year was Barcelona. Two years ago I was in Munich, Germany. I want to tell you a little bit about what I saw, what I heard coming out of this amazing conference. And then one of the big topics of course, was LEED version five. I wanted to do this special episode and put some links to the latest information on LEED v five for all of you to make sure you're reading up on it right now. So GVCI circle, that is the kind of LEED community reunion every spring. It was just in Athens, Greece. There was an additional focus on healthy buildings and healthy communities and then really technical sessions on LEED version five. We were fortunate to hear from both Peter Templeton and Melissa Baker that came over from the US Green building council to give us the latest information on LEED v five. It was great to see so many friends that practice LEED throughout Europe from all kinds of countries, all in one place.

I really enjoyed the main day at the Stavros Cultural Center. It has to be one of the nicest and greenest buildings I've ever been in and an amazing view of all of Athens all the way down to the water. We're going to put a link to the Stavros cultural center and their case study as they pursued LEED certification. And make sure you click and read more about the hospitals they're doing in different regions around Greece as part of their overall programming as a nonprofit. Next GBCI Europe is growing their staff, their team, which tells me that LEED is growing in Europe. Of course, there's other programs like Bream that've been there even before LEED. In Germany, we have DGNB and Sweden, Milia Brigid and other great programs. But LEED continues to grow all through Europe. It's just great to see.

Of course, there's a lot of push for even more sustainability, even benchmarking of existing building real estate. Some of that might have started a little early, earlier in the US, places like New York City with some local laws. But now we're seeing a focus not just on new construction and major innovation, green and LEED buildings in Europe, but with EU taxonomy and green deal benchmarking of existing building real estate. I predict there will be a lot more services needed for benchmarking and energy efficiency, energy audits, and certain types of modeling. A lot of this we've already been doing in major cities in the US and then probably LEED, EB LEED for existing buildings certification on the healthy building and healthy community side. Weren't just focused on talking about great programs like, well, but just what's really happening with the design of these buildings. All through Europe, there were some inspiring conversations, and it wasn't just buildings. The team did a great job of also talking about communities, healthy communities. Make sure you check out next year's GBCI spring event in Europe. Let's shift over to LEED version five. That's why I wanted to do a special episode here. I want to make sure everybody has the latest links as LEED V five comes out. Here's some of my notes, and we're going to put a link to the USGBC website where LEED

v five, you can download the latest drafts of the new rating systems that will be commented on this year and will be rolling out next year, 2025.

But the USGBC states that LEED V five has been developed around three central areas of impact, decarbonization, quality of life, and ecological conservation and restoration. They are modifying the scorecards, modifying the weighting of the points available on a given LEED project, and a few other key takeaways. LEED is going to move to a five year development cycle. After LEED version five gets locked in again later this year, early next year, it won't update again until 2030. This is a major change for LEED, and we want to make sure we can really get into LEED V five. Plenty of feedback now, plenty of comments, and then we're good for five more years. They've said, hey, we aren't going to change too much too fast, but this one is a big update. Next, continuity across the building lifecycle, everything from design and construction through operations and performance monitoring. LEED continues to go down that road of not just designing and building green and setting it up to be a green building, but we've got to make sure we have actual green building performance. They're doubling down there. This is very fascinating. There are new requirements for platinum certification, so it's not just about getting 80 or more points and meeting all the prerequisites. Now you have to hit certain thresholds and do certain items to even be considered for LEED platinum certification. There's a big focus there, of course, still on energy efficiency, carbon emissions and renewable energy use, but check out the new requirements to be even eligible to go for platinum. Lastly, it's a strategic evolution of the user experience. I love the new category of quality of life. Some of that comes over from LEED for cities and communities, but check out the rating system draft on the [usgbc.org](https://www.usgbc.org) LEED v five website. We already had the O and M that was announced last Greenbuild in November, but the USGBC and their hardworking teams have just rolled out the drafts of the other programs that some of you may focus in on. I left Athens very inspired, not just by seeing some friends that I haven't seen in a year that do great work all through Europe and of course seeing some of the

LEEDers in this movement, but LEED v five. While there's some tweaks to be made and the comment period is open now, I'm very excited about LEED version five now don't worry, you don't need to run out and take the current LEED green associate exam if you haven't yet. The exams won't change until next year, 2025 or so. It's about catching up on where this great global program is going. There are many services that I bet you and your firm can start picking up on because there are new prerequisites around certain studies, even as we focus a little more on the ESG side of things, but coming out of our individual building projects. The comment period is open now that just opened in April. Make sure you go ahead and go to the USGBC website, read up on what's going on and just know that you can provide comments and tweet this next version of leave. This has been a special episode. Check out Athens, Greece if you haven't yet, you've got to hike up to the Acropolis and see the Parthenon and look back on this amazing city. Scout out next year for GBCI Europe's circle event, and I hope you have an awesome rest of your day.

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