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Oregon Convention Center first in country to be recertified and achieve LEED-EB Silver rating from U.S. Green Building Services Commission

The Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) announced today that its largest public venue, the Oregon Convention Center, was recertified with the LEED-EB Silver rating from the United States Green Building Services Commission (USGBC), making it the first convention center in the nation to achieve recertification at a higher rating. In 2004, the center was rated LEED-EB, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design in the Existing Buildings category, upon completion of the center's expansion. The new "silver" rating required proven sustainability accomplishments among areas of operation, maintenance and capital improvements.

"I am thrilled to be recognized as one of the first convention centers in the country to be recertified LEED-EB Silver by the leading experts in sustainability," stated Jeff Blosser, Oregon Convention Center Director. "This is a testament to the commitment shared by our employees, customers, visitors and elected officials to operate a clean, green public facility and I am extremely proud of this accomplishment."

Metro Council David Bragdon said, "I commend the efforts of Jeff and his staff to meet the rigorous demands required to achieve a silver rating for an existing building. It fits perfectly with our regional priorities of reducing our carbon footprint."

The LEED-EB Green Building Rating System addresses the following components of building operations and system upgrades: energy efficiency, recycling programs and facilities, exterior maintenance programs, cleaning and maintenance, air quality and building improvements. The Oregon Convention Center partnered with Portland-based

Green Building Systems to earn the requisite points necessary. Areas of focus in the recertification process included installation of low-flow plumbing fixtures, adjustments to HVAC systems and the purchase of 40% renewable wind power.

David Woolson, MERC Chief Executive Officer, said, “Achieving a LEED-EB Silver rating makes good business sense for the Oregon Convention Center. As the steward of the Pacific Northwest’s largest convention facility, we take pride in our environmental leadership and hope our actions will motivate other public and private facilities to do the same.”

The Oregon Convention Center is owned by Metro and operated by MERC. MERC also manages the Portland Expo Center and Portland Center for the Performing Arts and serves as a catalyst for culture, community and economic development. Visit www.mercvenues.org or www.oregoncc.org for more information.

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