Leasing space in buildings has always been about the quality of the space provided. The traditional determinants of quality have included location, building features, services provided, level of maintenance and many other factors. One factor that has not been included is the sustainability of the space and its ongoing operation. In the past sustainability performance was not included in leases because there was not a practical metric for quantifying the level of sustainability of buildings.

This has all been changed by the introduction of the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Existing Buildings rating system in 2004 which provides practical metrics for the sustainable operation of buildings and provides third-party verification of achievements under these metrics. This document brings leasing and LEED-EB sustainability metrics together to provide a very practical method for including green performance commitments in any commercial building lease by adding a simple green lease addendum to the lease.

Because LEED-EB is the only LEED rating system that rates the ongoing performance of the building it is the only LEED rating system that is important for a lease. The only statement participants in green leasing need to make about the other LEED rating systems is, “They are not useful in green leasing because they do not address the ongoing sustainable operation of the building.”

The attached Green Lease Addendum for Leases helps drive LEED-EB implementation and expands the available inventory of buildings by providing a choice of years before requirement for LEED-EB certification kicks in. Since there are many commercial buildings that can achieve LEED-EB certification within a year of starting, this enables many buildings to be available for green leasing now. This guide references that latest version of LEED-EB which is LEED-EB Operation and Maintenance 2009 (LEED-EB O&M 2009).

Leonardo Academy thanks Transwestern for generously providing sponsorship for the development of this users guide to green leasing.

Tenants, brokers, building owners, managers and service providers all have important roles to play in challenging themselves and each other to drive the greening of tenant occupied
buildings. We believe this guide is the opening gun for the green leasing races, a race to the top of the sustainability and corporate responsibility ladder, for tenants, brokers, building owners, and building managers.

If you have any comments of suggests for improving this guide or the Green Lease Addendum for Leases, please contact Leonardo Academy.
Good Greening!

Michael Arny, President
Leonardo Academy