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PUBLIC INVITED TO TAKE ‘GREEN’ TOURS OF CONVENTION CENTER

During this weekend’s opening ceremonies for the new Raleigh Convention Center, the public is invited to participate in one of the many “green tours” being offered. Hosted by Raleigh’s “Green Ambassadors,” the tours will focus on the many environmentally friendly elements of the design, construction, and operation of the convention center.

The Raleigh Convention Center is in the process of being certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building. LEED certification is part of the Green Building Rating System through the United States Green Building Council. LEED is a voluntary consensus-based national rating system for developing high performance, sustainable buildings. The five areas of LEED that the tour will highlight in the tour are sustainable site development, water savings, indoor air quality, energy efficiency, and materials and resource selection.

The tour is divided into five stops:

- Materials and resource conservation – The tour will focus on the recycled materials in the building’s frame as well as the effort to recycle the construction debris;
- Indoor air quality – The center’s carpets, adhesives and paint are all low-VOC (volatile organic compounds). The tour will point out the special care that was also made to make sure the duct work in the building is free from construction dust;
- Sustainable site – More than 20 possible locations were examined during the pre-construction phase. The City was able to turn a Brownfield redevelopment area into one of the more environmentally friendly buildings in the state;
- Energy and atmosphere – The tour will emphasize a high energy-efficient heating and air conditioning system as well as building features that reduce the overall electrical demand; and,
- Water efficiency – Using drip irrigation, low-flow fixtures, and plants which require less water, the new convention center has reduced water consumption through irrigation by 50 percent and overall water use by 20 percent.

“We’re building the most sustainable city in the southeast,” said Cindy Holmes, a staff analyst with the City of Raleigh Administrative Services Department. “We’re excited to have this opportunity to show off a little and let people see that new construction in an urban environment can be environmentally sustainable.”

Tours will be available on Friday at 2 p.m., 4 p.m., and 6 p.m. On Saturday, tours will be available at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m., and 5 p.m. Interested residents should go to the Raleigh Convention Center’s lobby and look for the “Green Tour” table.