

# ROBERT H. SMITH VISITOR EDUCATION CENTER SELF-GUIDED ECO-TOUR

**1** This brochure and the panel in front of you are part of a multi-layer plan developed with LEED Accredited Professionals to provide education about sustainable practices at this site.

**2** Abundant natural light floods the Visitor Education Center from interior and exterior windows, including the large lay light overhead in the atrium.

**5** Compact fluorescent lights, occupancy sensors, dimming switches, and task lighting minimize wasteful energy consumption.

**6** Green space was preserved by using a pre-existing parking lot, not expanding the lot for additional parking spots, and installing a bike rack to encourage staff and visitors to bike to the site.

**7** Native landscape vegetation reduced the need for potable water for irrigation. For example, the main grass used around the site is “tall fescue,” a long-lived perennial bunch-type grass that is drought resistant, disease resistant, wear tolerant, and has very low water and fertilization requirements.

**8** Meticulously restored windows contribute to the natural air flow and energy efficiency of the building, while maintaining the historic character.

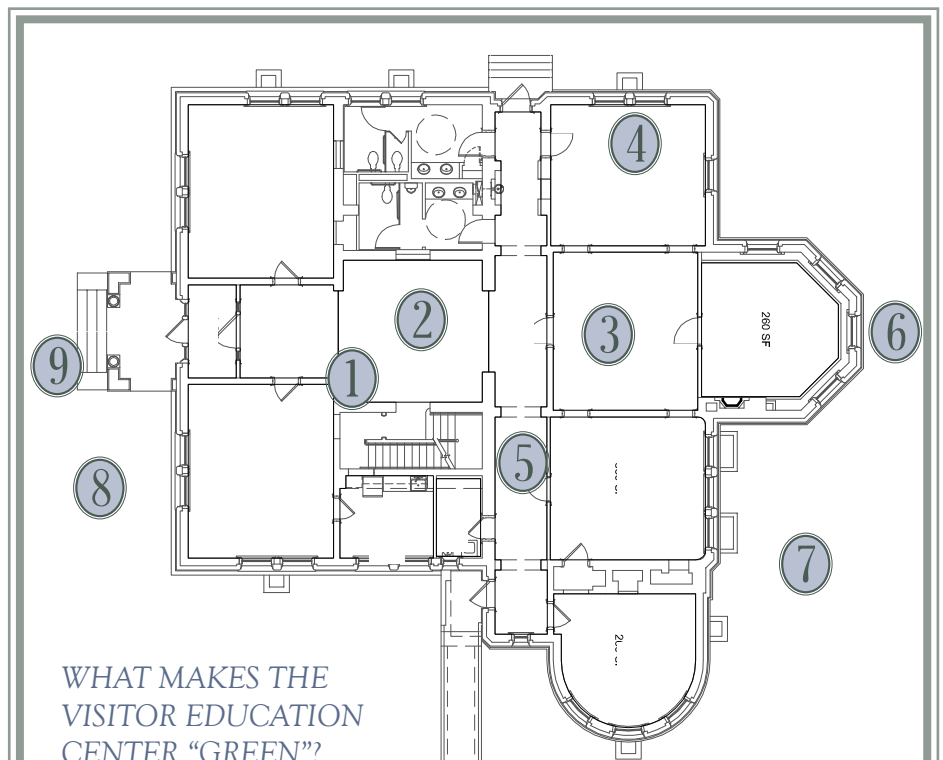
**9** Reuse of this existing, historic building avoided the impact of producing and shipping many new materials. The project reused 98% of the existing walls, roof and floors.

## ADDITIONAL ECO FACTS ABOUT THE VISITOR CENTER

- **Transportation alternatives** include a nearby Metro bus stop and a metro train stop (Green and Yellow lines).
- **Highly efficient Carrier equipment** cools this building with non-ozone depleting refrigerants. The technology consumes 40% less electricity than traditional alternatives.
- **New dual-flush, low-flow toilets** decrease water consumption. At historic sites, toilets are one of the biggest consumers of water. Low-flow toilets with two flush options are a smart way to conserve water and maintain performance.
- **Automatic aerator faucets** in the restrooms use only 0.5 gallon per minute. Aerator faucets can reduce the consumption of water by 25-50%, yet the user hardly feels a difference as a result of steady pressure.

**3** Take a deep breath, does it smell like new? All carpeting, paints, coatings, adhesives, and sealants were chosen for their low or non-existent levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The absence of VOCs eliminates the “new” smell created by off-gassing and often associated with new carpet, paint, and other finishes.

**4** UV reducing shades in the exhibit galleries and shop allow natural light in while protecting exhibits from the damaging effects of sunlight. These features can reduce electricity consumption by 10%.



### WHAT MAKES THE VISITOR EDUCATION CENTER “GREEN”?

Categories such as indoor environmental quality, materials and resources, sustainability of the site, and water and energy usage were used to evaluate the Visitor Education Center for LEED Gold Certification. Above are some of the recognized “green” features.

# ROBERT H. SMITH VISITOR EDUCATION CENTER SUSTAINABLE PRESERVATION

## About the Building

The Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center is an Italianate Renaissance Revival style building constructed in 1905 as part of the Soldiers' Home campus in northwest Washington, D.C. In 2007, the building was sustainably rehabilitated and adapted for use as the Visitor Education Center for President Lincoln's Cottage, an historic site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

## LEED Gold Status

This building received LEED Gold Certification in April 2009. The certification was issued under the LEED-NC 2.2 or "New Construction" rating system, used for both new construction and major renovations. The project received 44 credits out of a possible 69. A minimum of 39 points was required for LEED Gold.

## Team Members

*Owner* - National Trust for Historic Preservation  
*Construction Manager* - The Christman Company  
*Architect* - RMJM Hillier  
*Engineer* - Joseph R. Loring & Associates, Inc  
*Project Sponsor* - United Technologies Corporation

## A First for the National Trust for Historic Preservation

As the first building with LEED status at a National Trust Historic Site, the Visitor Education Center plays a prominent role in the National Trust's Sustainability Program, which is designed to promote the understanding of historic buildings as significant environmental, economic, social and cultural resources. Although the Cottage is not LEED certified, the National Trust is committed to integrating sustainable planning policies and sustainable preservation treatments in both the Cottage and the Visitor Education Center.

*The sustainable rehabilitation of the Visitor Education Center was made possible through the support of United Technologies Corporation.*

## Strengthening Ties between the Preservation and Sustainability Movements

The National Trust's partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has resulted in the improvement of LEED Green Building standards to better reflect the benefits of building reuse and reinvestment in existing neighborhoods. National Trust staff worked closely with USGBC in developing LEED v.3 and LEED-ND or "Neighborhood Development," which takes into account the benefits of historic preservation on a neighborhood.

### FOUR Rs OF SUSTAINABILITY

*The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 4 Principles of Sustainable Stewardship*

- Reuse of older and historic buildings
- Reinvest in our existing communities
- Retrofit older and historic buildings to conserve energy
- Respect for our heritage buildings.

## Is the Cottage "Green"?

The restoration of President Lincoln's Cottage began in 2000, around the time LEED certification was first developed. Although the Cottage is not officially LEED certified, there are many features that make the Cottage "green."

For more information, including a downloadable copy of this self-guided tour, the full LEED credit report for the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center, and links to articles and additional resources, visit: <http://www.lincolncottage.org/visit/vec.htm>.

*Admission*  
PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S COTTAGE  
AT THE SOLDIERS' HOME

NATIONAL TRUST FOR  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

