

IDENTIFYING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

By **Trevyr Meade**

With Green Garage Certification officially launched, our industry has come together to showcase the untapped potential that lies in the parking spaces we own and operate. Our work has developed an industry-specific standard that communicates to cities, campuses, and commercial real estate the contribution parking can make to institutional sustainability programs.

Green Garage Certification, produced by a collaboration of more than 200 parking professionals, aggregates more than 40 best practices that promote garage sustainability. This work was vetted by a review panel of sustainability, parking, real estate, and technology experts and refined by beta garage evaluations of Hines, Brookfield, The Ohio State University, Houston Airport, Monday Properties, Cleveland Clinic, and others' facilities.

"This process has strengthened Green Garage Certification with collective insights and perspectives from both inside and outside our industry," explains Rachel Yoka, LEED AP BD+C, CPSM, a board member of both IPI and the Green Parking Council (GPC, an affiliate of IPI), and co-chair of the GPC's Certification Committee. "It's been really amazing how much enthusiasm there is for developing this program, not to mention market potential."

Parking facilities connect mobility and the built environment. Green Garage Certification's practices and technologies leverage this unique position to deliver enhanced value, increased efficiency, and revenue diversity to parking assets. The program demonstrates how garages deliver sustainability by embracing energy efficiency, sustainable construction, mobility choice, green purchasing, and social connectivity.

"I often point to our work at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) garage in Golden, Colo., as an example of how sustainability can be accomplished in a parking facility," explains Stephen Rebora, president of DESMAN Associates. "It's wonderful that there is now a template that can be shared with clients that outlines how garages can achieve sustainability"

The Focus

Certification focuses on three approaches to ways existing and new garages can be sustainable: management, programming, and technology/structure design.

Garage management focuses on techniques that bolster operational effectiveness while limiting environmental effects, including:

- Facility recycling.
- Green cleaning.
- Sustainable purchasing.
- Credentialed management.

Garage programming is a collection of facility attributes that increase the efficiency of the parking process and equip patrons with sustainable mobility choices. Green garage programming includes:

- Rideshare.
- Carshare.
- Bicycle sharing and parking.
- Enhanced facility wayfinding.
- Reservations systems.

Finally, garage technologies/structure design are physical features of the garage that promote sustainability:

- Efficient lighting.
- Efficient ventilation.
- Recycled and repurposed construction materials.
- Electric vehicle charging.
- Automated payment systems.
- Renewable energy systems.

High-performing parking facilities that successfully embrace these and more than 20 additional sustainability initiatives will earn designation as Certified Green Garages. Certification recognizes garages owned and operated by organizations with a strong commitment to quality, innovation, and social responsibility.

"Our clients have been deploying sustainability initiatives for years," says Gary Cudney, PE, president and CEO of Carl Walker, Inc. "It's very exciting that there is now an opportunity for them to be recognized for their achievements."

The launch of Green Garage Certification June 1 demonstrates what we can accomplish as parking professionals when we come together in a collaborative environment. As certification brings to light past successes and fosters future green innovations, people beyond our industry will gain a greater understanding of how parking has and will continue to better our communities. For more information, visit greenparkingcouncil.org/certification. **P**



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