Sustainable Success Stories

Platte County Green Build Program

Project Description:
The Platte County Green Build Program is an incentive-based, voluntary program available to residents and developers who are building new homes or remodeling existing homes in unincorporated Platte County. Platte County adopted the newly created National Green Build Standard as the basis for the program. A rebate of the original building permit fee is given after a minimum number of points related to energy efficiency, indoor air quality and reduction in natural resource use are met. Minimum scores must be obtained in all categories to qualify for certification. After a final inspection, one of the four certification ratings — Bronze, Silver, Gold or Emerald — is awarded and the appropriate percentage of rebate is given (up to 90 percent). To date, Platte County has certified four Green Build homes and hopes to certify two more by the end of the year.

Goals:
The Platte County Green Build Program Committee formed a voluntary program that promotes energy efficiency, water conservation and a reduction in pollution to benefit all county citizens. The committee, made up of citizens, builders, green building advocates, utility service providers and elected officials met many times to help the county develop a successful program. At the conclusion of the committee’s work, the county commission passed an ordinance adopting the Platte County Green Build Program.

Community Benefits:
The Platte County Green Build Program Committee says this program is a “win, win, win” situation. It is a win for builders who are receiving a significant rebate on a building permit fee and gaining the skills needed to build green homes. It is a win for future homeowners who will have lower utility costs and a healthier indoor environment. And finally, it is a win for the public because a Platte County Green Build home will create less demand for power and will generate less stormwater runoff.

Funding Sources and Partnerships:
The county commission agreed to offer rebates ranging from 50 to 90 percent of the original building permit fee. To date the average rebate is $1,013.16. The county budgeted $10,000 from general revenue for rebates in FY2010. Staff estimates the allocated funds will cover Green Build rebates for 12 to 15 projects. Platte County has also used funds generated by the KCP&L Iatan II Power Plant building permit fee for marketing and building inspector training.