

CASE STUDY



Columbus Center / Coral Gables, Florida

Overview

Columbus Center is owned by Coral Gables Associates; its partners are IBM and USAA Real Estate Co. USAA Real Estate Company maintains a sustainability platform that allows themselves and their partners to achieve the goals of reducing carbon emissions, promoting tenant satisfaction and awareness and thus lowering operating costs while still enhancing property value. In keeping with this objective, Columbus Center has endeavored to apply for LEED Certification.

Columbus Center is located at 1 Alhambra Plaza, Coral Gables, FL, 33134, at the eastern gateway to Coral Gables' Central Business District. The building is conveniently located near hotels, restaurants, shopping, residential neighborhoods and major transportation resources.

The building is within walking distance of more than 50 eating establishments ranging from fast food to five star restaurants encompassing an extensive selection of international cuisine. A variety of shops and business and personal service establishments are also located within blocks of the site. The complex is served by four nearby hotels: the Hyatt Regency Coral Gables, The Colonnade Hotel, Hotel Place St. Michael and the historic Biltmore Hotel. Just four blocks from Columbus Center is the Coral Gables bus terminal and about two miles from the site is a major transportation artery linking to downtown Miami. Columbus Center is also located 6 miles from downtown Miami and 10 miles from the Miami International Airport

Quick Facts

- Reduced water usage by 377,154 gallons/year
- Reduced electricity costs by \$52,200/year
- Increased property value by \$580,000

Size

258,736 SF

Services

- Leasing/Marketing
- Project Management
- Property Management
- Strategic Accounts Group

Environmental Solutions

Sustainable Sites

- Implemented an integrated pest management and landscape policy that adequately addresses erosion and sedimentation control and reduces the use of toxic pesticides.
- Planted Florida native and adaptive plants in landscape area that require less maintenance than nonnative plants and reduce maintenance costs over the building life-cycle by minimizing use of fertilizers, pesticides and water.
- Installed a Suprema SopraStar Cool White roof to contribute to heat island reduction.

Water Conservation

- The project team specified low-flow plumbing fixtures, including toilets and faucets. As a result, the building reduced its water use by 14,500 gallons of water annually.
- Maintain multiple water meters to measure building and subsystem water performance over time to understand consumption patterns and identify opportunities for additional water savings.

Energy and Atmosphere

- Implemented a systematic process to understand the operation of the major energy-use systems, options for optimization and a plan for improvements
- Implemented no-cost and low-cost energy conservation measures as recommended by the ASHRAE level II Energy audit team
- Revised major components on BAS, chillers, AHUs
- Lowered lighting levels throughout the building
- Optimized the lighting schedule
- Implemented an energy awareness program and installed occupancy sensors
- Replaced all exits lights with LED light bulbs
- Reduced the outside air levels in the building

Materials and Resources

- Commenced a sustainable purchasing policy
- Underwent a facility alteration purchasing all sustainable products and recycling 100% of the waste generated.
- Commenced a waste reduction and recycling program with a target of reusing or recycling more than 50% of the waste stream
- Commenced a battery recycling program with a target of diverting 100% of all discarded batteries

Indoor Environmental Quality

- Commenced a green cleaning program
- Integrated and IAQ Management Program
- Provide occupants with lighting controls throughout the building

Results

As a result of USAA's efforts, Columbus Center was awarded with LEED EB: O&M Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council in April, 2010. The property earned an ENERGY STAR® rating of 96. Since 2009, electric operating cost savings are \$52,200/year and the total increase in property value is \$580,000 based on a 9% capitalization rate.