

NEWS RELEASE

Release Date:
April 21, 2011

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Gragg Building's GREEN Preservation Reaps GOLD LEED Status

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department's Gragg Building headquarters has been awarded the Gold Level in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) by the U.S. Green Building Council. The renovation of the Gragg Building was led by HarrisonKornberg Architects and LEED Consultant Rennell Associates who were tasked with bringing the 50 year old building up to date while preserving its historic design.

"As Earth Day approaches we are very pleased to add the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's headquarters, the Gragg Building, to the list of green and sustainable City of Houston buildings," said Mayor Annise Parker. "It is a wonderful example of how an older building can be retrofitted to meet green standards."

The historic Gragg Building was originally designed and built by Farnsworth and Chambers in 1956-1957 in an architectural style reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright. Since its renovation the Gragg Building has received recognition as a city landmark, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, and has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. All these honors are testaments to the thoughtful renovation that has brought the Gragg Building gracefully into the present.

"When we began the Gragg Building project in 2008 we asked the architects to preserve its historic significance while renovating it for service for the next 50 years," said Joe Turner, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "By being responsible stewards of the Gragg Building and its history we hope to serve as an example of how historic preservation can go hand in hand with sustainability and green design."

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Receiving the Gold Level in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design signifies that the Gragg building conforms to the design standards of the U.S. Green Building Council. The renovation involved re-using 100% of the original shell of the building and bringing natural light into 82% of its interior. Reclaimed mahogany paneling, original to the building was re-used where appropriate, new material used was either recycled material or recycled content material, and all new adhesives and paints contain low or no volatile organic compound promoting a healthier indoor environment for workers. Occupant sensors reduce artificial light use, and a 32.2% reduction in water use is attained through the use of low-flow fixtures. The historic Gragg Building is a masterpiece and state of the art office complex. It is a fitting home for the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, which has taken maintenance of the green spaces of the City of Houston to new levels of excellence.

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 38,992 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.