

DOI: 10.36648/2577-0586.5.11.86

Promoting Public Health with LEED Green Grading Systems

Dr. Albert Richard *

Food tech Department, Hohenheim University, Germany

Received: November 03, 2021, **Accepted:** November 17, 2021, **Published:** November 24, 2021


Design and development practitioners have an impact on population health through their ability to modify the built environment, an important factor influencing health behaviours and outcomes. Green certification offers a template for making health promotion a standard consideration and priority within the real estate industry. This study aims to identify existing opportunities for population health promotion within the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Design) framework, a widely used green building rating system. This exploratory analysis classifies three types of health promotion opportunities within LEED v4 distinguished by the level of capacity needed to identify and act upon these opportunities. The analysis identifies a variety of opportunities to promote health and well-being at specific population scales including a project's site user, surrounding community, supply chain and waste stream communities as well as the global population.

The majority of LEED v4 strategies have potential impact on human health and well-being at a population scale. LEED practitioners are able to prioritize health and well-being without sacrificing environmental considerations. However, a large number of these health promotion opportunities require additional decision-making. Green building practitioners must be intentional in their selection and application of LEED strategies in order to benefit from their full potential health value. A systematic health promotion process could help LEED practitioners identify, prioritize and implement the most relevant LEED strategies. Additional health-focused guidance and incentive structures could further increase the utility of LEED as a health promotion tool.

There is growing evidence that the built environment significantly impacts the health and well-being of both individuals and entire populations. Health has traditionally been viewed as the responsibility of the healthcare sector. However, research shows that clinical care accounts for a relatively small proportion of health outcomes (20% according to studies in the United States). Social and environmental determinants of health - physical, social, policy, and economic characteristics of the places we live, work

***Corresponding author:**

Dr. Albert Richard

 albertrichard@gmail.com

Food tech Department, Hohenheim University, Germany

Citation: Richard A (2021) Promoting Public Health with LEED Green Grading Systems. J Food Nutr Popul Health. Vol.5 No.11:86.

and play - are the predominant predictors of health outcomes; particularly when viewed at a population scale. The real estate industry is well-positioned to improve population health through its direct influence over the design, construction, and operation of the built environment. This includes aspects of the physical environment with direct impacts on health (e.g. traffic safety, air quality) as well as indirect effects on health behaviours, such as daily physical activity, which is influenced by the availability of parks, bike lanes, and public transit. However, at present, consideration and management of health and well-being impacts is not standard practice within real estate.

Increasing equitable access to health-promoting built environments is rapidly becoming a top priority for many governmental and philanthropic public health organizations. Acting alone and through traditional mechanisms, the public health sector does not have sufficient market influence to efficiently influence real estate practice on a broad scale. New partnerships and approaches are needed to drive broad-scale practice change within real estate. This analysis investigates the potential utility of adapting the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification framework to promote a new culture of health among decision makers that influence the built environment.