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Looking to LEED

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Jun 13 2007

Christine van Reeuyk's article [Brentwood Bay development public hearing set — Wednesday, May 23] about the proposed Brentwood Bay Royal Bank redevelopment touched briefly on the potential that this could be a LEED project. I work with two developments that are targeting LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) as desirable goals, Parkside Resort in Victoria and Pacific Shores near Parksville. Because I believe that this approach is beneficial for everyone I have been encouraging our municipality and developers to follow a similar course.

LEED is a point-based system for recognition of projects that strive to be sustainable, energy-efficient and environmentally responsible, and relies on third party verification. It is a voluntary program where points that are pursued suit the local conditions. Increasingly companies are proudly pursuing LEED recognition because they believe philosophically that it is the right thing to do, and many municipalities and senior levels of government are now mandating it at some level. Average costs for a LEED building that achieves "Certified" or "Silver" are now about the same as a traditionally designed building, even though they are energy-efficient, comfortable, and of high quality. With skyrocketing costs for energy, building materials, infrastructure and housing this approach only makes sense for our communities, and we as citizens should expect no less.