

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Contact:**

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**SkyRidge Building in Minnesota becomes one of less than 50 in U.S. to Achieve LEED® Platinum Certification for EB: O&M****Long-term Relationship Between Small Business Owner and Tenant Leads To Significant, Measurable Environmental Impacts**

MARCH 28, 2011, MINNETONKA, MN—The 5800 Building in the SkyRidge Business Center & Nature Preserve has received Platinum Certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance (LEED-EB: O&M) Rating System. The building is one of less than 50 in the U.S. to achieve this level, earning 75 points, including 27 out of 30 in the Energy & Atmosphere category.

The 5800 Building, home of **Bailey Properties** and the Corporate Headquarters of their tenant, **The Weidt Group**, also obtained an ENERGY STAR® Rating of 93. The energy and environmental improvements to the building were made through a collaboration between the Owners, Jerry & Mary Jo Bailey, and The Weidt Group, Energy & Sustainable Design Consultants. The building is also the 11<sup>th</sup> LEED Platinum project on which The Weidt Group has provided energy consulting services.

SkyRidge was developed by the Baileys, a husband-wife team of, Jerry, a landscape architect/land planner and Mary Jo, a commercial realtor, with cooperation from the City of Minnetonka.

Constructed in 1988, the layout and site planning of the building, by Jerry, incorporated many design principles typically employed by Landscape Architects, so the very nature of the building is "environmentally friendly." In 1986, Jerry purchased what was then a 17-acre, undesirable site that was overlooked by other developers. The site had a steep, west-facing ridge that required creative grading to provide functional vehicular access. It also had limited developable land, surrounding an abused, 7-acre protected wetland. Designed and developed with innovative and imaginative techniques, the business center itself includes uniquely-sited buildings, three storm water retention ponds, open water areas within the wetland (created with only five governmental permits), numerous pedestrian paths & amenities, and creative landscape features, all with a deep commitment to sustainable practices and protection of natural areas.



The site plan includes access to an adjacent regional bike trail and has its own pedestrian pathway system around and throughout the rejuvenated wetland (now termed Nature Preserve), a “Ring of Fire” gathering space, an amphitheater with sculptured stone tables, stage, and seating, a growing number of site sculptures and signs, and many gardens.

*“My training and experience in the profession of Landscape Architecture played a large part in the planning and design of SkyRidge,” said Bailey. “Our national association’s motto states that we are ‘Stewards of the Land’ and we try to be, but our application for LEED certification made us question everything we’ve done in the past. We thought we were operating our business sustainably before, but we were forced to basically start over—with a comprehensive review of our operations and facilities. LEED is pointing new and existing development in the right direction.”*

Mary Jo added, *“A benefit of the process is that we’ve now been verifying and documenting every aspect of our operations in an organized and disciplined manner, learning along the way that these improvements are actually saving money, not to mention making us feel that we are contributing to a cause we fervently believe in!”* And Jerry concluded, *“But we couldn’t have done all that was required without the major participation and expertise of The Weidt Group. They played the leading role in this effort.”*

The Weidt Group’s leadership, Tom McDougall, President, and David Eijadi, Vice President, found the collaboration was simply a continuation of the firm’s ongoing business practice, saying *“John Weidt founded The Weidt Group in 1977 to account for the environmental impacts of building design and construction, and the natural extension of that mandate is to be accountable for the environmental impacts of inhabiting and operating a building. So many people in our company believe in these things that not achieving LEED Platinum seemed almost unthinkable. We are all very pleased.”*

Among the project’s sustainable design and energy conservation measures that contributed to the Platinum Certification are:

- ENERGY STAR Rating of 93
- Mechanical system includes new packaged single zone RTUs, thus eliminating the need for re-heat, and a maintenance plan to replace units at life-cycle end with state-of-the-art systems
- Daylighting via east-west orientation of the building, providing natural light with automatic controls for a majority of internal spaces
- Artificial lighting is provided at low ambient levels—as low as 12 FC—evenly distributed
- 57% reduction in water use, including a Life-cycle Cost Analysis with The Weidt Group on the feasibility of replacing toilet fixtures and faucets
- Stormwater is run through a series of “NURP ponds”—retention basins that capture sediment from stormwater runoff as it is detained



- Well-insulated envelope includes extra thick, insulated block walls to ensure less thermal conditioning required inside
- Solid Waste Management Plan to reuse, recycle or compost over 70% of the ongoing consumable waste stream, therefore, diverting it from the landfill
- Sustainable cleaning products and materials including a purchasing policy that specifies only cleaning products, janitorial paper products, trash bags, and soaps that meet Green Seal criteria
- A restored wildlife habitat for many varieties of waterfowl and animals

In addition, the 5800 Building currently receives 100% of its electrical energy from Xcel Energy's Windsource® program. Renewable Energy Credits have been purchased to offset the carbon emissions from natural gas use, and future plans include the installation of PV panels on the roof.

### **About The Weidt Group**

Founded in 1977, The Weidt Group is an international energy and software consulting firm, working with architects, engineers, building owners, utilities, and state and local governments to achieve high-performance buildings. The firm provides Energy Design Assistance and Measurement & Verification services for commercial new construction, as well as Engineering Benchmarks for improving ongoing performance of existing buildings. For nearly 34 years, through seamless collaboration on more than 130 million square feet of construction, The Weidt Group has helped reduce air pollution by over 708 kilotons and save 211 peak megawatts of power each year, while saving building owners and operators more than 72 million dollars annually.

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### **About Bailey Properties**

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