



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

November 19, 2009

To Whom it May Concern:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation contracted with Innovative Design in the fall of 2003 to design our first LEED certified and environmentally sustainable rest area building. I was the Roadside Environmental Engineer for the project. Innovative was chosen from a large number of potential firms that had submitted RFP's for the project. The Department was very specific about requiring a firm that could provide us with a Gold or Platinum LEED Rating. Innovative's long experience with sustainable design practices impressed our RFP review committee. Even at that time, they had numerous LEED Certified Professionals on staff and had designed several schools utilizing varied sustainable strategies.

Innovative was very easy to work with on our project. Bac-Won Koh was the lead Architect. He is very knowledgeable regarding sustainable features. While our design is in some ways quite simple, it is also a very complicated building because of all the strategies we chose to include. Because ours is a public building that the traveling public sees up close, we wanted to showcase as many strategies as feasible in the design. It not only serves its main purpose as a rest area, but also shows the public that DOT cares about the environment and that there are many ways for people and government to make a difference.

We have photovoltaic panels that generate electricity and solar thermal panels provide all the hot water for the building. Special emphasis was placed on daylighting the main rooms. Through the use of motion detectors and dimming ballasts, we regularly use less than half the energy that it would normally take to light these rooms. Geothermal wells heat and cool the facility and we capture all the rainwater from the roof in order to flush the toilets (26), in the building. The building was opened to the public on October 1, 2009. In the first 3 months that records have been kept, the building has already offset 1,484 lbs of carbon dioxide emissions. We have a sustainability monitoring system that has been operational since August.

We could not have asked for better or more attentive construction administration provided by Innovative. Jon Zubizaretta attended almost every meeting over the 21 month construction period and was proactive on any issue that came up regarding the plans, specifications, or administrative issues with regard to the building contractor. All in all, we had a very good working relationship between Innovative Design, the Department, and the Contractor that built the building.

We are currently finalizing the submission information for the LEED certification, but fully expect to receive a Gold rating. We highly recommend the firm of Innovative Design to anyone interested in high quality architecture with an emphasis on sustainable design.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Pitts
Roadside Environmental Engineer
NCDOT

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Pitts".

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