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**University of Utah's Net-Zero Project to be Presented at Sustainable Building Conference**

*Salt Lake City Mayor and U's Dean of Architecture + Planning Discuss Benefits of Sustainable Building*

SALT LAKE CITY – Addressing Salt Lake City's ongoing efforts to utilize environmentally sustainable construction techniques, Mayor Ralph Becker and Brenda Scheer, Dean at the University of Utah College of Architecture + Planning today discussed the benefits of net-zero energy building.

Currently exploring the potential for renovating the College's 40-year old building into the nation's first institutional facility to meet net-zero standards, Scheer and Associate Professor Joerg Ruegemer will be presenting the project at the City's Sustainable Building Conference Thursday, April 8 at the Salt Lake Convention Center. The College's Director of the Integrated Technology in the School of Architecture Ryan Smith will also be speaking on "Designing for Building Re-use" at the one-day conference.

A net-zero energy (NZE) state of operations utilizes environmentally progressive strategies relating to energy conservation, power generation, building management and resource management so that a facility consumes the least possible amount of energy and generates its own energy on-site. A renovation on the scale of the College of Architecture building would result in considerable savings of materials and energy, with positive economic and environmental consequences.

"We envision the Net-Zero Project as a living laboratory for students, faculty, and the community to engage in education, research, and hands-on experience with the tools and technologies necessary for energy efficient buildings," said Scheer. "It is our hope that the process and end results of taking our facility to a net-zero energy state will encourage other institutions to reach for the same goals with their own building projects." "

The College engaged a volunteer technical committee of architects, planners, engineers, and policy and facilities experts to serve as advisors on the planning process and provide technical expertise on the more challenging aspects of the project. In addition, the College hosted a workshop last November attended by 150 building industry professionals and more than 50 students to investigate the potential of a net-zero building renovation and to stimulate further discussion in the community about energy efficiency in our built environment. Information gleaned from the workshop is being utilized in the study conducted on the College's building to prepare for the renovation.

“The construction of a net-zero energy facility at the University of Utah will be a model for sustainable development for the entire Intermountain West,” said Mayor Becker. “Progressive thought leaders in architecture and planning are needed as we plan our cities of tomorrow. Salt Lake City’s rich landscape – and City residents – will benefit from renewable energy projects.”

For more information about the College’s net-zero energy project, visit <http://www.arch.utah.edu/netZero> or contact Brad Baird at the College of Architecture + Planning at [baird@arch.utah.edu](mailto:baird@arch.utah.edu).

For more information about Salt Lake City’s Sustainable Business Conference, contact Bridget Stuchly at [bridget.stuchly@slcgov.com](mailto:bridget.stuchly@slcgov.com). To RSVP for the one-day conference, go to <https://ww2.eventrebels.com/er/Registration/RegistrationForm.jsp?ActivityID=4550&ItemID=16553>

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