

design team expects the building to receive a Silver rating under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

The new SPUR Urban Center allows the organization to expand its programs and link to similar groups internationally with the help of a simple design that welcomes discourse and invites new members to join the dialogue.

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Condos Measure Resource Consumption

The South 5th condominium community, an urban project in south Austin, Texas, comprising 32 units on a two-acre (0.8-ha) lot with 100-year-old oak trees, has set out to quantify sustainable development through measurable performance.

To maximize insulating capacity, reduce noise transmission, improve indoor air quality, and increase structural strength, the builder used insulated concrete forms for the primary wall system

The condominiums at South 5th in Austin will feature electricity-monitoring devices to determine how lifestyle and operational habits affect resource consumption.

and light-gauge metal-stud construction insulated with open-cell polyurethane spray foam. All interiors use 100 percent concrete flooring; staircases, made from structural steel fabricated on site, serve as thermal chimneys to the rooftop terrace. Previous concrete pavement was used to control stormwater runoff and help recharge groundwater and aquifers.

The tight building envelope not only reduces energy demand, but in combination with the heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system, also reduces the infiltration of outside pollutants. Separate HVAC systems and zoning for sleeping and living areas increase energy efficiency. Fresh air exchangers bring outside air into the interior while humidity-controlled thermostats turn on fans when humidity reaches levels determined by the occupant.

Energy and water conservation was a key consideration in the

selection of all appliances, lighting, and plumbing fixtures. Each unit has a privately owned three-kilowatt photovoltaic system with two electric meters, one measuring consumption and the other generation. Each unit will undergo a series of third-party inspections, including balancing, and duct and blower-door testing to measure the air tightness and anticipated energy efficiency of the building envelope.

Devices that homeowners can access via the Internet will provide real-time data of electricity consumption and generation in the units, and identify and correct problems. This long-term monitoring will provide the developer, homeowners, and community at large a better understanding of how lifestyle and operational habits affect resource consumption.

South 5th, designed, built, and developed by Acero Construction, is expected to achieve both the high-

composting area. The modern design combines stucco, glass, locally sourced cypress, and metal siding. Each 3,200-square-foot (300-sq-m) unit has three bedrooms, three and a half baths, a master suite, a two-car garage, a gourmet kitchen, and a 700-square-foot (65-sq-m) rooftop terrace with wet bar.

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Chinese Tourism: A Bright Spot for California

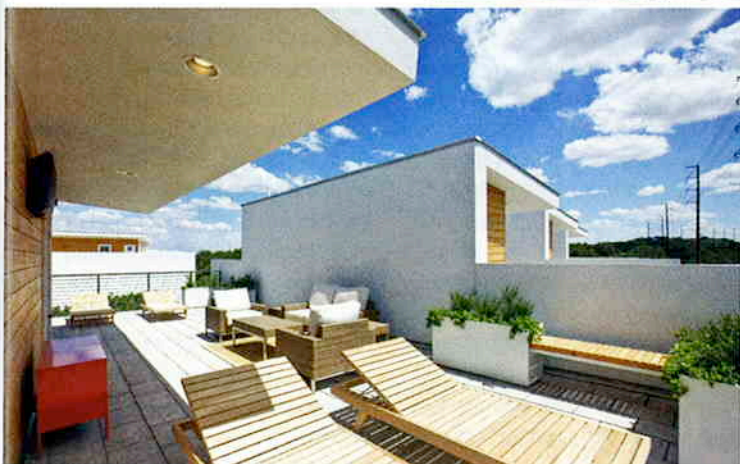
A new accord between the United States and China to promote cross-national tourism leaves California poised to capture a larger share of mainland China's 46 million outbound international travelers, giving the state an opportunity to create additional value at hotels, retail centers, and other tourism-related real estate assets.

International travel represents a badge of sophistication among China's growing middle class, which constitutes an estimated 175 million to 250 million people. This, combined with a decade-long policy to promote international tourism, has led to explosive growth in the number of Chinese tourists. China is projected to be the world's largest source of outbound travelers by next year, and is expected to follow the pattern set by Japan and South Korea, with tourists visiting ever more distant locations.

In December 2007, China granted the United States modified approved destination status (ADS), which expands the ability of Chinese tourists to visit. Four of ten income-qualified mainland Chinese say they likely will visit the United States in the near future now that the ADS is in place, the U.S. Travel Association reported recently. As a result, the California Tourism Commission projects that



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est rating attainable through Austin Energy's Green Building Program and Gold certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. It also is 30 percent more energy efficient than required by Energy Star for Homes. Each unit is expected to save 3,598 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions per year compared to a standard house of the same size.

Amenities include a central courtyard with a pool and cooking area, and a small communal garden and