



Utility Resilience: Ajax Builds A Net-Zero Operations Hub ... And An Ocean Reef



Setting a New Standard for Sustainable Utility Operations

Ajax, a member of the STO Building Group family of builders and a leader in sustainable construction, undertook the ambitious Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC) Fleet Operations & Maintenance project in St. Cloud, Florida.

This multi-functional utility hub was designed not just for operational excellence but also as a beacon of environmental stewardship, aiming for a net-zero energy footprint and multiple prestigious green building certifications: LEED Gold, WELL Building Standard, and Fitwel.

Jacobs, a global leader in consulting, engineering, and construction, was the architect, engineer, and sustainability leader on the project. Close collaboration among Jacobs, Ajax Operations Manager Cranston Harris, and STO Building Group's corporate sustainability team ensured a coordinated and ambitious approach to achieving the project's high-performance goals.

AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Net-Zero Project
- Multiple Buildings
- Multiple Certifications
- Extensive Documentation
- Tight Deadline

Green Badger Services Used

- LEED Project Software
- Green Badger Resources
- Green Badger Consulting

Certifications

- LEED Gold
- WELL Building Standard
- Fitwel

General Contractor

Ajax - STO Building Group

Architect

Jacobs

Location

St Cloud, FL



The Challenge: Juggling Complexity, Certifications, and Deadlines

Delivering a net-zero project across a multi-building site—encompassing administrative offices, a warehouse, fleet maintenance areas, and public-facing sections—came with a unique set of hurdles. The Ajax team faced several key challenges:

- **Coordinating Sustainability Across Multiple Facilities:** Ensuring consistency in energy performance, material selection, and documentation across diverse building types required meticulous planning.
- **Aligning Design Intent with Field Execution:** Balancing aggressive energy goals, such as integrating Building-Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV) and high-efficiency systems, with constructability and budget constraints was a constant focus.
- **Managing High-Volume Submittals:** With numerous disciplines and subcontractors involved, the sheer volume of submittals made accurate and timely green building certification documentation a significant potential risk. This could easily lead to project delays if not managed efficiently.



“Their team ensured all LEED documentation was accurate, complete, and aligned with the most up-to-date credit interpretations — reducing risk and saving hours of internal review.”

Jennifer Taranto - *Vice President of Sustainability* at STO Building Group



The Sustainability Vision: Net-Zero, LEED Gold, and Community Impact

The primary sustainability goal for the OUC project was achieving a net-zero carbon footprint. This ambitious target was supported by a range of tactics, including:

- Extensive Building-Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV)
- Sunshade systems to reduce heat load
- A comprehensive waste diversion strategy
- High-efficiency MEP systems
- EV charging stations

A standout element was the project's innovative approach to construction waste. Nearly 400 tons of leftover concrete and granite—354 bin blocks and pipes—were repurposed to create the Starship II Reef, an artificial reef off Florida's Atlantic coast, extending the project's positive impact far offsite to improve marine habitat regeneration. Other waste materials were diverted to create confined-space training exercise areas for local firefighters, further supporting community and sustainability goals. Over 800,000 pounds of materials in total were diverted from landfills.



"They took what's often the most tedious part of green building and turned it into a streamlined, stress-free process. If you want to spend less time chasing paperwork and more time focusing on delivering high-performance, sustainable buildings, then Green Badger is the partner you want in your corner."

Jennifer Taranto - Vice President of Sustainability at STO Building Group

The Solution: Green Badger's Dual Power of Software and Expertise

To navigate the complexities of LEED documentation and ensure certification success, Ajax turned to Green Badger. "Green Badger played a dual role in supporting this project: as both a digital documentation platform and a consulting partner," states Taranto.

- **LEED Automation Software:** Green Badger's software streamlined the tracking of construction credits, helping the team log materials, manage indoor air quality compliance, and maintain real-time oversight of project progress.
- **Expert Consulting Support:** Beyond the platform, Green Badger's consulting was critical. "Their team ensured all LEED documentation was accurate, complete, and aligned with the most up-to-date credit interpretations — reducing risk and saving hours of internal review," Taranto notes.

This combined approach provided Ajax with greater confidence and clarity on its path to LEED Gold.

The Experience: Efficiency, Stress Reduction, and Enhanced Focus

Taranto highlights the significant advantages of using Green Badger compared to previous methods:

"Compared to manual spreadsheets or fragmented tools, Green Badger made the LEED process significantly more efficient and less stressful, especially valuable on a high-profile, multi-certification project like this one."

Pros Identified by Ajax and STO Building Group

- A single, intuitive platform for real-time LEED credit tracking
- Dedicated consulting support providing expert QA/QC
- Faster turnaround for submittal review and issue resolution
- Reduced internal burden, especially for complex credits



The Results: Measurable Gains and Mission Accomplished

The OUC Fleet Operations & Warehouse project is on track to achieve its targeted LEED Gold, WELL, and Fitwel certifications, contributing significantly to OUC's climate leadership goals. The consolidation of utility services is already enhancing logistics and reducing fleet emissions.

The impact of Green Badger was clearly measurable:

- **100+ Hours Saved:** "Green Badger's automation tools and expert consulting support saved the project team an estimated 100+ hours in administrative time," says Taranto, particularly in compiling product documentation, verifying submittal compliance, and preparing for LEED review.
- **Proactive Issue Prevention:** The platform helped flag documentation gaps early, preventing potential delays during LEED submission.
- **Eliminated Rework:** With Green Badger's guidance, the team was able to eliminate the need for rework on credit documentation, which is often a major source of frustration and lost time in the LEED certification process.

A Game-Changing Partnership for Sustainable Construction

Taranto enthusiastically recommends Green Badger: "Absolutely, without hesitation! Green Badger was a game-changer for this project." She adds, "From the intuitive platform that kept our LEED documentation organized and accessible, to the knowledgeable consulting support that gave us peace of mind, the entire experience was smooth, efficient, and even enjoyable—yes, we said enjoyable!" The key takeaway, according to Taranto, is that "technology plus expertise equals better outcomes." By leveraging Green Badger, Ajax could "avoid costly documentation errors, and devote more attention to meaningful sustainability strategies — like the innovative reuse of concrete for the Starship II Reef."

Her advice to other project teams is clear: "Don't just aim to check the boxes — equip yourself with the right tools and support to do it well. The result is a smoother certification path and the ability to pursue creative, impactful environmental solutions without getting bogged down in paperwork."

Conclusion: Building a Greener Future, More Efficiently

Ajax's success on the OUC Fleet Operations & Warehouse project demonstrates that ambitious sustainability goals are achievable, even on complex, multi-certification projects. By partnering with Green Badger, they not only streamlined the often tedious LEED documentation process but also freed up valuable time and resources to focus on innovative environmental solutions and community co-benefits. For construction firms looking to enhance their sustainability efforts, reduce administrative burdens, and achieve green building certifications with greater confidence, Green Badger proves to be an invaluable ally.

