

The mark of mindfulness

MEREDITH WOO

THOSE who frequent Singapore's Civic District would have noticed Grand Park City Hall currently undergoing a facelift to be completed at the end of this year.

Built in 1995, the hotel was designed by RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (RSP), and is coincidentally being rejuvenated in phases by the same architectural firm.

RSP used its knowledge and understanding of the physical aspects of the building and the hotel operator's historical operational consumption to extract data, examine the performance of the various energy aspects and provide the most optimum solution to achieve an efficient building.

This not only synchronised with Park Hotel Group's corporate sustainability drive, but also led RSP to clinch the Green Mark Platinum accolade for the project at the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) Awards this year.

In addition, RSP also clinched the Green Mark Gold^{PLUS} for Farrer Square and the Design and Engineering Safety Excellent Award (Merit) for its intra-island cableway project at Sentosa Island.

Huge energy savings

A whole host of sustainable initiatives were implemented for Grand Park City Hall, says

Mr Sonny Chionh, associate director of RSP's Architectural Department.

These include the use of a highly efficient centralised water-cooled chilled water system, the extensive use of energy-saving LED lights, water-efficient fittings, the use of NEWater for non-potable uses, as well as sustainable building products.

A state-of-the-art room occupancy sensor accurately determines guest room usage and adjusts energy consumption to prevent wastage when the air-conditioning, lights and television are inadvertently left running.

The sun's natural renewable energy is also harnessed.

Photovoltaic panels cover the entire roof of one of the hotel's blocks. These also serve a dual purpose — they conceal and shade the mechanical and electrical services below.

"The energy harnessed, together with the expected energy savings from the many sustainable initiatives, is about 2,850,000kWh a year — which can fully power up approximately 600 four-room flats for a whole year," says Mr Chionh.

Green push

Prior to the launch of the BCA Green Mark Scheme in 2005, RSP and a few other firms in Singapore had already started their green journey.

RSP was recognised for its

efforts as early as 2001, with the Asean Energy Award for projects such as URA Centre, Capital Tower and Clarke Quay.

Says Mr Chionh: "There is so much urgency given the rate of damage that human populations are causing to the Earth. We are now at the forefront of showing the world that sustainability can be achieved not just in buildings or precincts but in a city.

"One of the pillars under the Singapore's Future Economy is the Future City — the challenge is for our industry to provide the infrastructure that is sustainable and to overcome resource constraints."

He hopes to see more photovoltaic cells being implemented islandwide and the use of data and smart applications to reduce energy consumption further.



Mr Chionh wants to show the world that sustainability can be achieved not just in buildings or precincts but in a city.



RSP clinched the BCA Green Mark Platinum award for its Grand Park City Hall project.

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION AND PHOTO: RSP ARCHITECTS PLANNERS & ENGINEERS

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