



CPRN Centre for Green Development

EXPLORING THE LINKS
BETWEEN GREEN BUILDING
AND DEVELOPMENT,
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

CPRN CANADIAN POLICY
RESEARCH NETWORKS

Leaders in socio-economic policy research and engagement

Why a CPRN Centre for Green Development?

The Canadian economy is currently estimated to be 1.6 trillion dollars. The economy is now almost seven times larger and the population is nearly double what it was 50 years ago. This growth has led to a surge in industrial processes, resource use, energy consumption and transportation that together have put critical pressure on our natural environment.

From an energy and environmental point of view, our construction, renovation and use of homes and buildings plays a critical role in these consumption and production processes. Interestingly, Canadians spend almost 90% of their time in buildings. There are currently 12.5 million residential homes and approximately 500,000 commercial and institutional buildings in Canada. Recent estimates suggest that buildings in Canada account for:

- 33% of Canada's energy demand;
- 50% of the extracted natural resources;
- 25% of our landfill waste;
- 10% of our airborne particulates; and
- 35% of our greenhouse gas emissions.



There is an obvious need to improve the efficiency of our buildings. In fact, there is a strong business case for green buildings in Canada particularly when a longer-term view of real building costs is included. Although there is an up-front premium for building green, the long-term savings in operating costs, insurance rates, increased property value, improved health and increased productivity greatly offset these premiums. In fact the green premium is diminishing all the time.

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, property values rise on average by \$20 for every \$1 of utility savings. This suggests that building envelope and energy generation/recovery systems have immediate payback beyond energy savings even without factoring in rising energy costs. This movement is only in its infancy and there exists substantial learning opportunities going forward.

Green development is about more than individual buildings. It is also about environmentally-sensitive planning and development including healthy and environmentally responsible communities with walkways, fused and efficient transportation corridors, public transit, mixed land uses and green spaces.

There are huge opportunities for Canada to live up to its reputation of being a wealthy, environmentally and socially responsible nation. The advancement of green development is a critical element of this.

The CPRN Centre for Green Development (CCGD) is an idea whose time has come. The CCGD is a member-driven network of leaders designed to help municipalities, industry, architects, designers, builders, developers and others interested in urban and regional development to navigate the emerging information on green development with an interest in effecting positive change.



"Green development has the potential to improve our quality of life, the environment and the economy" Professor Ted Kesik, University of Toronto

The Purpose of the Centre

The purpose of the CCGD is to develop and exchange expertise, knowledge and better practices in urban design, growth and development in order to create effective and responsive policies. This will happen through the sharing of perspectives, the development of focused research designed for maximum impact and the timely exchange of relevant information. The CCGD is an inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary network of leaders focused on ways to plan for and

improve green development in Canada – locally, regionally, provincially and nationally.

Meetings of the CCGD will happen three times a year. At these meetings, members will be introduced to leading practitioners, researchers, administrators and experts as a way to engage the group in focussed discussion. The dialogue will aim to stimulate learning and create new knowledge through a member-driven research agenda. Once each year, the members will embark on a study tour of a selected better

practice organization or jurisdiction as a way to learn about and share emerging ideas.



CCGD Member Benefits

Members of the CPRN Centre for Green Development will benefit from the brand, reputation and objectivity of Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) in the areas of environment and housing, socio-economic policy research and engagement, economic analysis, organizational performance and corporate social responsibility. CPRN has a history of bringing leaders together to share and shape better practices, facilitate knowledge exchange and create new ideas.

Local/municipal/provincial/national and international experts will help make sure that members are up-to-date with the latest information on green development. Furthermore, CPRN's reputation of delivering high quality research will ensure credibility, uptake and impact of CCGD products and services.

The CCGD will give its members an opportunity to:

- Engage in open and confidential discussion with peers on issues related to green development;
- Develop original research in the area of green building and development based on the interests of network members;
- Discuss various policy options and create opportunities to influence its future development;
- Network with leading experts in green building and development to address the most important issues emerging in Canada and abroad; and
- Collaborate with other leaders in the area of green building and development from an inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary perspective.

“By 2020, emissions from building energy use can be reduced by 29 per cent at no additional cost.”

International Panel on Climate Change, 4th Assessment Report 2007

Potential Areas of Focus

There are many areas where the CCGD can focus its efforts. A few of the key areas that might be explored by the CCGD include:

- What are the relative strengths of alternative green building standards?
- Where do we go to learn about and develop better practices?
- What do citizens want? How do they choose?
- What are the liability and risk dimensions of green building and development for builders/developers, municipalities/regions, product manufacturers, designers and consumers?
- How do we reconcile building codes and zoning by-laws with known sustainable, built environments that go beyond or fall outside of the “code”?
- How do enterprises adapt to green development such as training construction trades to incorporate and work with green technologies and processes?
- Are the builders and developers at odds with cities?



Who Should Join?

- Builders, developers, renovators and related associations
- Cities and regional, provincial and federal governments
- Green building/development organizations and associations
- Crown corporations and NGOs interested in green development
- Architects and designers
- Planners
- Labour organizations
- Citizen/consumer groups

For more information on the CPRN Centre for Green Development, contact:

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