



# **BuildingGreen, Inc.** *2021 Benefit Report*

# Part 1: Specific goals and outcomes identified by BuildingGreen for creating general public benefit during 2021

## BuildingGreen's purpose:

BuildingGreen champions the changemakers in sustainable design and building in the United States and around the world.

## BuildingGreen's mission:

We champion these changemakers in advocating, driving, and transforming the sustainable building industry by delivering trusted insight and industry knowledge, unparalleled sustainability education, and peer communities of industry leaders where they can support one another and work together toward sustainable solutions.

## How BuildingGreen's mission was addressed during 2021:

### 1. We champion communities of professionals within the building industry

*"Today's ideas can be tomorrow's reality."*

- Peer Networks

Our Peer Networks facilitate the sharing of expertise and experience among sustainability leaders in architecture, engineering, and construction firms nationwide in service of creating better buildings and communities for public and planetary health.

Through our peer communities and training, BuildingGreen advances and advocates for the progressive edge between a healthy and resilient built environment and a thriving, equitable world. We seek to be the essential source where trusted industry insight resides, where unparalleled education is taking place, and where sustainability thought leaders can interact with one another in transforming the movement.

#### Quotes from our Peer Network members

- From the Peer Networks that BuildingGreen facilitates comes "a sense of collective purpose across the AEC [architecture, engineering, and construction] industry."
- The Peer Networks demonstrate that "Today's ideas can be tomorrow's reality."

#### Our 2021 Winter Summit

More than 100 sustainability leaders gathered online for our sixth annual Winter Summit and the first cross-network Summit-Palooza which included designers, engineers, construction professionals, and consultants all focused on the building industry. (Winter 2021 [SUSTAINABILITY LEADERS SUMMIT REPORT](#))

Takeaways and impacts from our 2021 Peer Network Events:

- "I am re-thinking training at our firm, considering some very non-traditional approaches to how we get staff on board."
- I can now build out "capacity for tackling the topic of material reuse more holistically."
- "Embodied carbon action"

- “Harmonizing indoor air quality standards”
- “Make positive change through working groups”
- “Determining receivers for used construction materials”
- “Work together on building decarbonization strategies”

### *Build-Back-Better (BBB) letter*

A 32-member working group from BuildingGreen’s Peer Network community of Sustainable Architecture, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) Leaders wrote a Build-Back-Better (BBB) letter to the Biden administration outlining a robust list of first-100-days actions and built-environment-focused executive actions for the incoming administration to consider. They brought their collective expertise to bear on the cross-agency built environment challenges and transformations that are foundational to the Biden-Harris Build Back Better plan. The signatories comprised more than 100 organizations from across the country that provide design, engineering, and construction services across the country and around the world. PRESS RELEASE: [Architecture, Engineering and Construction Leaders Call on Biden to Take Action on Green Building](#)

### *The letter’s impact:*

Following the Executive Order on Federal Sustainability issued on December 8, 2021, Gina McCarthy, the White House National Climate Advisor, thanked BuildingGreen’s Peer Network community of Sustainable Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Leaders for “getting the ball rolling so quickly” with the Build-Back-Better letter.

## 2. We champion sustainable building knowledge through digital publishing

“No More Red Lines: Undoing Our Legacy of Urban Segregation.”

– BuildingGreen

We deliver rigorous, trusted strategic thinking and viewpoints that help our members break down and explain complex sustainability issues—in ways that are not only digestible but also actionable. We help them develop the context for making more sustainable design decisions.

Throughout the year, we publish thoroughly researched, accurate, unbiased information on sustainable design and construction, always with an eye toward racial diversity, social justice, and equity. Our research routinely references multiple interviews with industry experts working at the progressive edge of their fields.

*An example of content published in 2021 that reflects BuildingGreen’s ‘finger on the pulse’ of key issues for the AEC industry:*

- “[Net-Zero Energy Isn’t the Real Goal: 8 Reasons Why](#)”
- The net-zero article generated a LOT of conversation, including a guest op-ed by a longtime reader titled “[Why Net-Zero Energy Is a Metric We Can All Get Behind.](#)”

*Examples of content published in 2021 that reflect BuildingGreen’s perspective on the relevance of social justice and green building:*

- “[No More Red Lines: Undoing Our Legacy of Urban Segregation](#)”
- “[Is BuildingGreen Getting Too Political?](#)”
- The op-ed also generated conversation, including a NESEA post by a longtime reader titled “BuildingGreen isn’t taking any sh\*t.”

### 3. We champion sustainability education via university libraries and professional credential maintenance opportunities (CW and CEUs)

*“We inspire critical thinking and collaboration that can move the industry toward a deeper focus on a healthy, resilient, and more equitable world.”*

– BuildingGreen

We support the sustainability leader’s path from accredited degree granting programs all the way through their professional career and ongoing development in the sustainable design and construction industry. We serve faculty and students at more than 150 colleges and universities with our online resources and deliver a library of content approved for accreditation and maintenance of professional standing.

We are regularly assisting faculty in learning and sharing high-performance, sustainable and resilient building knowledge, and we curate our content for use in college courses.

- [Sustainable Design 101: A Syllabus Supplement](#)
- [LEED 101: A Syllabus Supplement for Green Building Coursework](#)
- [Green Building Materials 101: A Syllabus Supplement](#)

We offer a library of quality content for professionals who need to maintain their credentials.

- [Continuing Education Library](#)

We foster insight and shared dialogue that accelerates a regenerative and resilient built environment as a force for change—just as we inspire critical thinking and collaboration that can move the industry toward a deeper focus on a healthy, resilient, and more equitable world.

### 4. We champion industry transformation

*“We are helping a large developer of mixed-use neighborhoods adopt measures for adapting to climate change that integrate with advanced decarbonization and sustainability goals.”*

– BuildingGreen

As champions of the practice of sustainable building and design, we help leaders in large corporations and higher education institutions drive transformative change within and across their organizations. Through our consulting services, together with our clients, we are driving the industry forward in many critical areas:

#### *Building products and materials*

Working with an industry-leading corporation, we are pioneering processes for product selection that integrate health (avoiding hazardous ingredients), embodied carbon, and circularity. These processes are being built into the platforms of service providers that support many organizations and are therefore helping establish best practices across the design and construction professions.

On a more local level, we are advising the designers of an addition and renovation to a local public school on measures to improve energy efficiency, daylighting, and healthier, lower-carbon-footprint products. This project is getting media attention in the community and inspiring an interest in pursuing similar efforts throughout the school district.

#### *Resilience at the intersection of adaptation and climate-change mitigation*

Working with a small team of leading resilient design consultants, we are helping a large developer of mixed-use neighborhoods adopt measures for adapting to climate change that integrate with advanced decarbonization and sustainability goals, including ecological and social sustainability. Because of the scale of these developments, they are having a meaningful impact on climate resil-

ience choices throughout the region. They have the potential to improve resilience outcomes for thousands of people who will live and work in these neighborhoods and in the surrounding area.

### *Strategic planning for sustainability*

By facilitating workshops for the sustainability team within the real estate arm of a major corporation, we are helping them improve their processes and increase their leverage, leading to more sustainable decisions for design, construction, and operations. This engagement also includes helping to coordinate sustainability strategies between the real estate arm and the corporate procurement team.

### *Supporting innovation in the window industry*

We're advising a pioneering new window manufacturer on how to position its product for adoption throughout the industry, improving availability of windows that are needed to help decarbonize the built environment.

## Part 2: **Specific actions BuildingGreen took to improve our social and environmental performance**

In October 2019, BuildingGreen received B Corp certification, an achievement that inspires continual improvement.

Internal social and environmental performance improvements during 2021 include:

### **A new paid parental leave policy**

BuildingGreen provides 12 weeks of paid parental leave per year and 4 weeks of unpaid parental leave per year. Each week of paid parental leave is compensated at 100 percent of the employee's average weekly pay. During the parental leave period, the employee's job will be protected, and BuildingGreen will maintain all benefits for employees.

### **The formation of an internal JEDI Action Team**

BuildingGreen's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Action Team aims to support BuildingGreen's mission by advancing social equity at the company in the following ways:

- creating a brave space
- identifying where any oppression manifests in the strategy and mission of our organization, in the way we govern and direct our business, in the policies and practices of our company, or in interactions between individuals
- setting clear objectives and comparing our performance over time against those objectives
- integrating our lessons learned into BuildingGreen's internal culture and external activities

The JEDI Action Team made a recommendation to the staff—met with unanimous approval—to contribute budgeted funds for donations to local BIPOC organizations.

The JEDI Action Team also established a goal of creating an anti-oppression policy. We expect to work with a consultant and engage the entire staff in this initiative. We also are inviting local BIPOC speakers to our staff lunches in an effort to learn more about relevant activities and organizations in our own community.

## Part 3A: Looking back: Goals and outcomes from last year's Benefit report

“Develop detailed plans for scaling up peer networks and consulting, and creating a data-driven content strategy to maximize editorial ROI.”

- Peer networks: The peer networks saw steady, modest growth in 2021. We focused on restructuring internal roles to more efficiently and effectively serve our members. The continued pressure of the pandemic negatively impacted our plans for in-person events.
- Consulting: We expanded our practice by subcontracting more work to partners with complementary skills but have not yet grown our in-house team.
- Editorial: Our new marketing director has established regular metrics and reporting that informs editorial content.

“Shape and explore a process for a rebranding effort, including identifying our requirements, budget, and potential partners, to clarify the value of our services and their role in helping building professionals create more sustainable communities and buildings.”

- Rebranding efforts have moved a big step forward. Having specific language to describe the value of our services and launching visual brand guidelines allow us to bring consistency to our communication and promotional channels.

“Develop a process for how we can integrate customer information into a systematized and ongoing feedback loop that informs key decisions in BuildingGreen's business planning.”

- We are developing and implementing surveys and regular feedback channels for our members and subscribers.

“Further work with longstanding university and corporate clients to strengthen their ability to deliver on their sustainability, health, and resilience aspirations in their real estate projects.”

- Consulting work continued at a high pace. Although it stretched our team's capacities, the output met or exceeded expectations, and contracts were renewed at even higher rates.

“Engage with eight to twelve of our top architecture firm customers to benchmark their designers' sustainability literacy and provide resources and support to improve on that benchmark, which will (hopefully) result in more sustainable outcomes on the projects they design.”

- The beta sustainability literacy effort revealed that the process needs to be reimaged. The lessons learned, once summarized, will help to point us in a new direction.

## Part 3B: Looking ahead: Specific goals and outcomes for BuildingGreen related to public benefit during 2022

Our 10-year Strategic Plan calls for us to continue initiatives to:

- Clarify our core value proposition & brand identity for visibility
- Synchronize our offerings to be mutually reinforcing, efficient, & valued
- Reinforce our foundation to support our team for the future

The process we employed for BuildingGreen's strategic planning activity stimulated broad employee engagement. We have established regular status reports to the full staff with the intention of increasing awareness of the connection between each person's roles/responsibilities and the elements of the plan.

The following initiatives will foster BuildingGreen's ability to realize our mission and purpose to help drive change and transform the building industry to be more sustainable, resilient, and equitable.

### 2022 initiatives:

- Achieve recertification of BuildingGreen's B Corp status.
- Improve and strengthen our brand to increase BuildingGreen's visibility with industry leaders.
- Integrate our sustainability content with Peer Network member benefits to raise their level of competency to help drive achievement of carbon targets.
- Improve structure and user experience of the BuildingGreen website to more effectively support the expertise of industry professionals in designing sustainable and resilient buildings.

## Part 4: Name and address of BuildingGreen's benefit director/officer:

Janice Warren

50 Eaton Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301

Compensation: None

## Part 5: BuildingGreen owners

Jerelyn Wilson:

- 47 shares
- 61.84 percent

Nadav Malin:

- 19 shares
- 25 percent

Alex Wilson:

- 10 shares
- 13.16 percent

## Part 6: Benefit director statement

As a Vermont benefit corporation, BuildingGreen, Inc. acted in accordance with the requirements of the Vermont statute, “Vermont Benefit Corporations Act.” This includes acting in alignment with its general public benefit purpose and any specific public benefit purposes in all material respects during the period covered by the report.

As a Certified B Corporation, Building Green presents its second impact report. I believe that this report fairly represents the activities and outcomes aligned with the corporation’s mission and public benefit purpose. The company is committed to continually assessing its objectives and how best to report on its social and environmental performance, while conforming to the governance requirements of a benefit corporation. The initial third-party B Impact Assessment was completed in 2019. During 2022, the company plans to pursue the recertification process, which includes completion of the current version of the B Impact Assessment, and meeting minimum performance and transparency requirements.

There is no connection between our benefit corporation director and the organization that established the third-party standard (B Lab) or its directors, officers or any holder of 5 percent or more of the governance interests in the organization that might materially affect the credibility of the use of the third-party standard. Furthermore, as the benefit director, I have no holdings in, receive no payment from, and am independent of the owners of the corporation.

Janice Warren  
Benefit Director  
March 29, 2022





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**Last Update: 04-25-2022**