

Consultant Services – Research Briefs to Accelerate Market Transformation in Green Buildings

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Procurement Details	Details
Issue Date	8 August 2025
Submission Deadline	5 September 2025
Reference	25-034

Where no notice is given, the Canada Green Building Council (CAGBC) copyrights all information contained herein.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Canada Green Building Council (CAGBC) is a non-profit organization that collaborates with the building, real estate, finance, and government sectors to realize the value of green buildings. At CAGBC, we work with these interested parties to accelerate their sustainability efforts and mitigate climate change risks for new and existing buildings. As a member-driven organization, we provide tools, training, research, and services to integrate sustainability, resilience, and carbon reductions into real estate decision-making.

1.2 Purpose

CAGBC seeks to commission a series of concise, evidence-based Research Briefs that will inform investment decisions and market transformation strategies for green buildings, both new construction and retrofit. The Research Briefs are intended to:

1. Quantify the cost premium and return on investment (ROI) for green design, construction, and retrofit practices across key building typologies.
2. Identify real-world financial strategies and practices used by owners, developers, and investors to build compelling business cases for green building investments and measure financial outcomes, such as:
 1. Net operating income
 2. Capitalization rate
 3. Return on investment
 4. Asset value change

3. Identify certification metrics in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design® (LEED), and the Zero Carbon Building™ (ZCB) Standards which would enable improved valuation, financial risk mitigation, and capital planning.
 4. Highlight co-benefits—financial and non-financial—that influence decision-making and drive value creation.
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2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Description

CAGBC plans to publish five Research Briefs (ie, short, clear and market-oriented research papers) covering LEED or ZCB certified buildings, with one Research Brief for each of the following asset classes:

- Non-market/affordable multi-unit purpose built rental housing (ie, in which the majority of units are affordable and/or administered by a municipality or non-profit entity)
- Market-based multi-unit purpose built rental housing (which may include a small number of affordable units)
- Commercial real estate office buildings (public & private)
- Warehouses and logistics buildings
- Institutional buildings (schools, post-secondary educational buildings)

Note: final number and type of buildings covered will be determined collaboratively between CAGBC and proponent in Step 1, Scope of Work. Please refer to guidance in section 2.3.

The Research Briefs should answer the questions, “**how do owners and investors make the math work and develop a business case for green buildings?**” for the relevant building type. The executive briefs should draw on real buildings and information from the last 5-15 years so that building owners across Canada can understand a realistic green premium, based on actual case studies, and how building owners have developed clear, actionable business cases for sustainable buildings. Emission reductions will be considered as part of the business case, along with other factors relevant for green buildings as determined between the successful proponent and CAGBC. The proponent should also be prepared to use surveys and interviews with building owners to analyse qualitative factors that contribute to the business case for green buildings, including risk assessment, future proofing, tenant concerns, occupant health, and others, and to lead the drafting of findings for the Research Briefs and compendium.

In addition to the Briefs, the proponent will develop a **Research Compendium** that details the methodology used and provides clear insights and recommendations for industry and policymakers relevant to all asset classes.

CAGBC will support access to project-level data from its portfolio of LEED and Zero Carbon Building (ZCB) certified projects (Design and Performance), including technical and performance-related information. Financial data will be obtained through structured interviews

and/or surveys with building owners and developers. CAGBC expects that financial information will include both:

- A narrative summary from owners about how they made the decision to certify and to cover the cost premium associated with it, and
- Quantitative financial information on the cost premium, if any, and financing.

Each Research Brief will cover one asset class and provide an analysis of how owners have developed a business case for building/retrofitting a green building that sufficiently covers costs and ensures a return on investment. CAGBC expects the proponent to draw from a sample of 10-15 certified buildings for each asset class/brief – a total of 50-75 buildings. The sample of buildings will be selected by the Proponent based on data provided by CAGBC, and should include a mix of geographic regions and retrofit and new build projects. Building data will be drawn primarily from the last 5 years for new and retrofit buildings (and a maximum of 15 years).

Within the asset classes, proponents should detail plans for identifying a relevant sample of buildings. CAGBC expects that the Research Briefs on non-market and market-based housing will primarily focus on new construction samples (with a case study or small sample on retrofit), while commercial office will focus primarily on retrofits (with a case study or small sample on new construction).

Information will be aggregated to protect confidentiality as appropriate. CAGBC expects to work collaboratively with the proponent and participating building owners to confirm the type of information to include.

2.1.1 Green Building Definition

This research will focus on green buildings, which:

- Reduce emissions (operational carbon, as well as in some cases embodied carbon)
- Improve energy efficiency
- Improve water efficiency
- Support resilience, and
- Provide a quality indoor environment

It will focus on LEED Gold and Platinum and/or Zero Carbon – Design or Performance certified buildings that have demonstrated energy and emissions savings.

2.1.2 Business Case Definition and Framing

To ensure consistency across building typologies, CAGBC and the proponent will co-develop a working definition of the "business case" for green building from the perspective of an owner, which may include:

- Capital costs for green certification vs. code minimum/current construction practices without certification.
- Operational cost savings.
- ROI and/or simple payback periods.
- Cap rate compression and asset valuation impacts.
- ESG scoring relevance.
- Tenant demand, occupancy trends, and reputational gains impacting ability to lease and rent returns.
- Financing options.
- Insurance considerations; and

- Risk mitigation (e.g., climate risk, carbon pricing, brown discount, obsolescence).

The business case definition will then be used to analyze information from owners, investors, and/or developers to identify quantitative metrics and data, and qualitative assumptions, that led to the decision to pursue different levels of certification, ie LEED Platinum vs other levels, or ZCB- Design or Performance. Preliminary performance results from buildings will also be assessed.

2.2 Milestones & Timeline

- Initial data collection and analysis for both market-based and non-market multi-unit residential housing should be completed by the end of October 2025.
- Draft briefs for both market-based and non-market multi-unit residential housing must be submitted by mid-December 2025 with publication in March 2026.
- All remaining draft briefs and the Compendium are expected to be delivered in March 2026, with publication in May 2026.

Note: Additional internal milestones and deadlines will be confirmed in consultation with the successful proponent.

2.3 Budget

The total budget allocated for the full scope of work outlined in this RFP is \$75,000-\$100,000 CAD. Based on potential external funding, additional budget may be available– for a total envelope of \$175,000-\$200,000.

Proponents should detail their required budgets in their financial proposal and clearly demonstrate a “minimum” budget based on the lower threshold, and a “maximum” budget based on the higher threshold.

Proponents should clearly state what factors can be scaled up or down in a short budget narrative.

Factors that applicants should consider are:

- Asset class types (adding additional asset class types to the 5 identified, or prioritization of specific asset class types within a minimum budget)
- Number of buildings included in data analysis
- Number of owners engaged in interviews

3. Scope & Stages of Work and Requirements

3.1 Scope & Stages of Work

Stage 1: Define the Need and Data Collection

- Clarify expected outputs, approval timelines, and key audiences for research.
- Clarify definitions of “green building” and “current construction practices” (baseline) to be used in the analysis.
- Confirm definitions of co-benefits, value drivers, and business case metrics.
- Review the internal CAGBC database of LEED and ZCB certified (both design & performance) projects to identify potential case studies.

- Ensure case study selection reflects geographic, typology, and development-stage diversity.
- Develop standardized interview/survey tools that allow for comparability across briefs.
- Conduct structured interviews and/or surveys with building owners and/or developers, ensuring alignment with the project's objectives. The proponent is expected to lead outreach to selected parties on behalf of CAGBC.
- Collect quantitative and qualitative data needed and curate.
- Gather any supporting materials or documentation from certification submissions.

Stage 2: Data Analysis and Synthesis

- Analyze and identify trends across building types in cost premiums, ROI, and value creation.
- Assess the consistency of ROI or valuation impact across typologies and investment models.
- Identify key parameters in successful business cases for green building investments.
- Identify co-benefits and their impact on investment decisions.
- Identify factors that could impact valuation and incorporating sustainability into valuation and appraisal (may be qualitative or quantitative)
- Identify recommendations, by building type, for proven examples of green cost premiums that resulted in actual premiums and/or savings (i.e. cap rate compression).

Stage 3: Development of Research Briefs

- Prepare graphically designed, visually engaging, concise and informative Research Briefs, one for each building type outlined in section 2 Purpose/Objectives, while complying with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements for digital assets.
- Ensure each brief includes visuals (e.g., images, charts, tables, data trends), key findings, and actionable insights for building owners.
- Leverage CAGBC-provided brand guidance for final briefs.
- Create a cross-cutting compendium that compares insights across all typologies and provides actionable recommendations for policy, finance, and real estate stakeholders.

Stage 4: Engagement

- Participate in at least one industry roundtable or briefing to share findings, which will be organized by CAGBC or industry partners.
- Support CAGBC in translating findings into advocacy materials or programmatic opportunities.

3.2 Requirements

The success of this project will be measured by:

- Delivery of high-quality, well-researched, visually engaging briefs tailored to both technical and executive-level audiences;
- Actionability of insights for key stakeholders (owners, investors, policymakers, financial institutions);
- Validation of findings through real-world examples and industry engagement;
- Timely and professional collaboration with CAGBC's internal team and external stakeholders

Fundamental Requirements:

To be considered for this work, the successful proponent must demonstrate a deep understanding of real estate finance and accounting practices relevant to business operations in the Canadian real estate sector. Proponents must demonstrate expertise in applying financial valuation methodologies, cost-benefit analysis, and business case development. It must be evident that the team has the capacity to link performance and financial metrics across building typologies and to interpret and model real-world data accordingly. While engineering and building science expertise may be subcontracted, financial analysis and valuation expertise must be core to the proponent's service portfolio.

In addition, the successful team will demonstrate a strong track record delivering high-quality research and advisory services in the Canadian commercial real estate sector. The project requires a multi-disciplinary team with demonstrated expertise in the following areas:

1. Market Intelligence & Subject Matter Expertise

- Proven ability to deliver rigorous market intelligence and financial analysis relevant to commercial real estate and green building practices.
- Demonstrated knowledge of accounting and finance as it applies to asset valuation, ROI modeling, and total cost of ownership in real estate.
- In-house, affiliated, or sub-contracted expertise in engineering, architecture, or building systems to ensure integration of technical and financial insights.
- Deep understanding of financial drivers and constraints influencing investment decisions in green building projects.
- Experience applying scenario modeling, life-cycle cost analysis, and valuation frameworks for high-performance or certified buildings (e.g., LEED, ZCB).

2. Research & Content Development

- Demonstrated capacity to produce concise, evidence-based reports, briefs, primers, or tools tailored to both technical and non-technical stakeholders in commercial real estate.
- Experience creating knowledge products that support market transformation or policy change.
- Ability to distill findings into clear, accessible language and visual outputs tailored to both investor and developer audiences.
- Experience or subcontracted support in graphic design.

3. Project Management & Communication

- Strong project leadership and coordination capacity to manage timelines, budgets, and communications across multiple stakeholders and workstreams.
- Demonstrated experience managing collaborative projects involving funders, government agencies, and industry partners.

4. Data Management & Compliance

- Expertise in handling market-sensitive and proprietary data, with systems in place for secure storage, processing, and privacy compliance.
- Ability to translate complex data into accessible and actionable insights.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

- Demonstrated experience designing and delivering inclusive consultation processes—interviews, focus groups, or surveys—targeted to building owners, developers, and investors.
- Capacity to ensure representation across regions, sectors, and building typologies.

6. Canadian Market Expertise & Availability

- A minimum of five (5) years delivering research or advisory services in the Canadian building and real estate sectors.
- Availability for in-person meetings in Ottawa and/or Toronto as required.

4. Submission Guidelines

4.1 Key Dates

CAGBC reserves the right to adjust these dates as its sole discretion

Index	Procurement Activity	Date & Time
1	Issue Date (Merx & CAGBC Website)	August 8 2025 5 PM ET
2	Clarification Question(s) Deadline	August 25, 2025 5 PM ET
3	Addenda Posting	August 28, 2025 12 PM ET
4	Submission Deadline	September 5, 2025 5 PM ET
5	Anticipated Notification Date	September 19, 2025, 12 PM ET

4.2 Submission Method

All proposal submissions for this Request for Proposal (RFP) must be **emailed** to corporateservices@cagbc.org no later than **September 5, 2025**, at 5:00 PM ET.

4.3 Required Submission Format

The Technical Proposal and required Appendices are to be submitted in **PDF format**; and will be considered separate from the Financial Proposal to be submitted as an **Excel** file.

4.4 Inquiries

Interested Proponents can submit clarification questions related to this RFP by email to corporateservices@cagbc.org up to and including **August 25, 2025**, at 5:00 PM ET.

In its sole discretion, CAGBC may choose to consolidate responses or not address submitted questions for any reason whatsoever.

5. Terms & Conditions

1. Information provided throughout the application process will be treated as confidential by CAGBC.
 2. Upon selection, the successful Proponent(s) will be provided CAGBC's Master Service Agreement (MSA) to establish a contract for services.
 3. All information, recommendations and reports will become the exclusive property of CAGBC. Proponents should be prepared to provide copyright to CAGBC of any materials used and created during the term of the agreement.
 4. CAGBC is not bound to choose any of the submitted proposals.
 5. Successful Proponent(s) may be required to sign a Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure agreement at CAGBC's discretion.
 6. Key success factors include on-time and on-budget delivery, responsiveness, and approval of the quality of work from CAGBC senior management.
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6. Evaluation Process

General Submission Requirements

In general, any proposal submitted under this RFP must details how the proponent will;

- Obtain and use qualitative information from building owners to support financial analysis
- Identify and request the appropriate financial and performance data from building owner
- Incorporate this data in to cohesive financial narratives and analysis
- Specify inputs or support required from CAGBC for each stage outlined in the scope of work including any additional stages proposed by the proponent.

Note: Points mentioned above relate for technical analysis as well.

Proponents must also outline the specific role they will play at each stage, and the role they expect CAGBC to perform, including the timing and nature of required inputs. If alternative or additional stages are proposed, the proposal must clearly describe how they support project objectives and what resources will be needed from CAGC and I general.

The proposed team mist include individuals with strong project management capabilities and experience managing stakeholder engagement, particularly in real estate. The team structure and member CVs should reflect a balance of financial and technical expertise.

6.1 Stage 1 - Format & Submission Requirements

Stage 1: Mandatory Submission Requirements		(Pass/Fail)
<p><i>Proponents must receive a PASS in Stage 1 to proceed to Stage 2.</i></p> <p><i>To receive a PASS in this evaluation stage, the Proponent's Proposal must be complete and compliant with the Mandatory Submission Requirements below.</i></p>		
1. RFP Proposal Submission Form – Appendix A PDF		
Submission File 1: Procurement Proposal Submission Form (satisfactorily completed and signed, presenting no risks to CAGBC). See Appendix A.		Pass
2. Technical Proposal PDF		
Submission File 2: Technical Proposal submitted as a single PDF.		Pass
Important: The Technical Proposal File 1 – Must <u>not</u> contain Financial Proposal information or the Proponent's Proposal will be disqualified.		
3. Curriculum Vitae – Appendix B PDF		
Submission File 3: Please include the CVs of any pertinent Team Members consolidated into a single PDF file.		Pass
Note: Proposal submissions must clearly identify the roles of team members, highlighting those with core financial valuation and real estate accounting expertise. Where subcontracting is proposed (e.g., for building science support), this must be disclosed in the organizational chart and CV submission.		
4. Financial Proposal – Appendix C Excel		
Submission File 4: Financial Proposal – must be submitted using the provided Appendix C template.		Pass

6.2 Stage 2 – Technical Evaluation Criteria

The selection process will be based on a balance of criteria, including expertise, experience, and cost. CAGBC will evaluate all submissions using the following weighted system:

Stage 2: Technical Proposal Evaluation	Weight
Section A: Executive Summary	10%
<p>A1: Provide the Proponent's team's background. Please include/consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) This section should not exceed two (2) pages. b) Include an introduction and a brief history, including the year the business/organization was established. 	

<p>c) Provide a description of your organization's customer service approach and general mission statement.</p> <p>d) Clearly list any core competencies and services that can be provided by the Proponent.</p> <p>Please note: <i>If the delivery of the Services will involve the use of <u>subcontractors</u> or if the Proposal is presented as a potential <u>joint venture or partnership</u> between two or more partners or companies, then please provide the information requested from this section for ALL/ANY related parties</i></p>	
<p>A2: Provide an organizational chart of the Proponent's team.</p> <p>a) This section should not exceed one (1) page.</p> <p>b) Please include the reporting relationships between all team members (Team Lead and all Key Team Members including sub-contractors if applicable.)</p> <p>Please note: <i>If the Proponent is an individual/sole proprietor this requirement may be waived.</i></p>	
<p>Section B: Qualifications</p>	<p>15%</p>
<p>B1: Example Projects</p> <p>a) This section should not exceed two (2) pages.</p> <p>b) Provide summaries of two (2) relevant projects completed in the last 5 years.</p> <p>c) All examples should be Canadian based projects.</p> <p>d) The examples provided should demonstrate considerable, direct, expertise with desired services and/or outputs listed in the project scope.</p> <p>e) A brief narrative summary should be provided to explain how the Proponent's experience and approach were instrumental in the success of their example project deliverables.</p>	
<p>B2: References</p> <p>a) This section should not exceed one (1) page.</p> <p>b) Provide three (3) appropriate references and their contact information.</p> <p>Please Note: <i>References are not required to correspond with the example projects in section B1. These can be <u>any</u> clients the Proponent has worked with whose contact information is accurate and up to date.</i></p>	
<p>Section C: Functional Approach</p>	<p>30%</p>
<p>C1: Workplan</p> <p>a) This section should not exceed ten (10) pages.</p>	

<p>b) Present a workplan on how services are generally delivered. Be sure to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. An overview on the ability to meet CAGBC needs. ii. Clear outputs to be delivered for each phase. iii. Clearly specify what support or inputs are expected from CAGBC for each of the stages defined in the RFP—and for any additional stages proposed by the proponent. iv. Outline how the proponent will approach the integration of financial and building performance data, and identify what financial metrics and performance indicators will be used to assess ROI, value creation, and risk mitigation. v. Include proposed methods to engage building owners and extract meaningful qualitative and quantitative data (including interviews, surveys, etc.). vi. Describe how the proponent will use their industry knowledge to shape the Research Briefs and guide CAGBC in framing the market-facing outputs. <p>c) Include any appropriate methodologies and/or tools and explain how they are aligned with best practices or industry standards.</p> <p>d) List any efficiencies, innovations, or added-value elements that are unique to the Proponent and/or demonstrates capacity to handle the project scope.</p> <p>e) Include a brief budget narrative that details what factors will be scaled up or down to align with a minimum and maximum budget per Section 2.3, budget. The narrative should not include the specific value (which go into the Financial Proposal, excel) but should provide a narrative explanation of what will be scaled up or down.</p>	
<p>C2: Communications and Reporting</p> <p>This content should be integrated into Section C1 (Workplan). A separate section on communications is not required. Instead, the Workplan should describe how the team will manage communications, reporting, and collaboration with CAGBC throughout the project lifecycle.</p>	
<p>C3: Quality Control</p> <p>This content should also be integrated into Section C1 (Workplan). Proponents should address their quality control methods, risk mitigation strategies, and coordination processes as part of the overall approach. A standalone quality control section is not required.</p>	
<p>Section D: Team Member Qualifications</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>D1: Please provide the Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of any Team Members that will be engaged on projects.</p> <p>a) CVs should not exceed two (2) pages for each Team Member.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) All CVs should be consolidated into a single PDF and submitted as a separate file, listed as Appendix B. c) CVs should include a LinkedIn profile for the Team Member, if available. d) CVs of subcontractor firms should be included if available. 	
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6.3 Stage 3 – Threshold Assessment

Once the technical proposals have been scored individually by the evaluators, the procurement facilitator will tally the scores using the indicated weighted system. A minimum threshold must be achieved to move into the fourth stage of the evaluation.

Stage 3: Minimum Threshold Assessment	Threshold
For Proponents that satisfy all mandatory and minimum scoring threshold requirements, their financial proposals (Appendix C) will be forwarded and evaluated by the review committee.	60%+

6.4 Stage 4 – Financial Evaluation Criteria

The inclusion of a two-envelope approach in the procurement process is a structured method designed to assess proposals fairly and objectively. CAGBC prioritizes technical merits and quality over cost-driven decisions. CAGBC will evaluate all budget submissions using the following weighted system:

Stage 4: Financial Proposal Evaluation	Weight
Section E: Project Costs & Budget	20%
E1: Budget Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Summary of overall cost per stage/phase of the project, minimum budget and maximum budget clearly delineated. (Tab 1) b) Roles and hourly rates for all project team members. (Tab 2) 	
E2: Detailed Budget (Tab 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide a detailed budget for each stage/phase of the project, showing the method and basis of compensation. b) Demonstrate clearly in the budget how the work can be scaled up based on an increase in budget per guidance in Section 2.3, Budget, by providing a minimum and maximum budget. This section should detail clear costs and the High and Low value. c) Include any additional costs, such as transportation, accommodation, per diems, etc. anticipated for the delivery of the scope of work. 	

6.5 Stage 5 – Consensus Review & Ranking

Once the technical & financial proposals have been scored individually by the evaluators a consensus review will be conducted to ensure that scores and comments are accurate and free of errors.

Stage 5: Final Rankings	Total Score
For Proponents that satisfy all mandatory and minimum scoring threshold requirements, their technical & financial scores will be combined. A ranking of Stage 4 Proponents will be generated based on their respective total scores. ALL Proponents will then be notified of their status in the procurement process. See section 7. Notifications & Debrief Meetings for more details.	100%

7. Notification & Debrief Meetings

7.1 Status Notifications

All Proponents will be notified by email, addressed to the main contact listed in Appendix A, on the status of their proposal once the evaluation period is completed. *Please note that the notification date provided is subject to change dependent on the volume of proposals received.

7.2 Debrief Meeting Requests

Unsuccessful Proponents can request a debrief meeting via email to corporate@agbc.org within **30** days of notification.

8. Next Steps

The successful Proponent will be retained using CAGBC's Master Service Agreement (MSA) to establish a formal contract for services. MSAs will cover detailed Terms & Conditions for contract, including but not exclusive to compliance requirements for insurance, confidentiality, intellectual property, and conflicts of interest. Rates, deliverables, and timelines will be based on information provided in the submitted proposal.

8.1 Disclosure

Copies of the MSA are not distributed in advance as we wish to keep focus on the procurement process and avoid any attempts at pre-mature negotiations.

8.2 Negotiations

To streamline the contracting process and minimize legal review time and cost, the MSA has been developed as a standardized document and is not typically subject to extensive

negotiation. Proponents are advised that material changes to the terms and conditions may not be accommodated.

8.3 Contracting Process

If the highest-ranked (successful) proponent is unwilling or unable to execute the MSA within a reasonable timeframe, or requests material changes that cannot be accommodated, CAGBC reserves the right to withdraw the offer and initiate negotiations with the next highest-ranked proponent.

9. Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Submission Form as PDF
- **Appendix B:** Curriculum Vitae of Team Member(s) as PDF
- **Appendix C:** Financial Proposal as Excel

10. Definitions

- **CAGBC:** *Canada Green Building Council.*
- **Proponent:** *A person or entity submitting a proposal.*
- **Master Service Agreement (MSA):** *A contract developed by CAGBC and signed off by successful Proponents.*

We sincerely thank all proponents for taking the time to prepare and submit a proposal in response to this RFP. We appreciate your interest in working with CAGBC and the effort invested in your submission. All proposals will be reviewed carefully in accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined in this document. We look forward to receiving your proposal.