



November 21, 2025

Councillor Lisa Dominato
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Sent by email

Dear Councillor Dominato,

The Canada Green Building Council (CAGBC) is a national, not-for-profit, industry-led organization founded in Vancouver in 2002. We represent over 800 member companies across the entire green building supply chain—ranging from developers, building owners, and investors to architects and manufacturers.

In British Columbia, the green building sector is a vital part of the economy, generating \$13.3 billion in GDP in 2024 and supporting over 80,000 jobs. Nationwide, the sector employs over 500,000 Canadians and contributes \$81 billion annually to the economy.

It is very concerning that Vancouver is considering cutting or weakening its climate and sustainability department. This decision would severely impact the city's reputation as a global leader in innovation and hinder its ability to attract investments in real estate, technology, and innovation. We urge the city to reconsider.

1. Vancouver is a national hub for Innovation and economic development.

Vancouver's leadership in sustainability has established one of Canada's strongest innovation hubs in building and clean tech. Clear policies have helped local companies gain international expertise. This cluster exists because Vancouver prioritizes sustainability, climate action, and resilience. Weakening the sustainability department could cause policy uncertainty, harm investor confidence, and slow growth in a sector that provides thousands of skilled, well-paying jobs. Strong sustainability leadership also attracts federal and private capital, as programs like CMHC financing, sustainable finance, and innovation pilots favour jurisdictions with stable, performance-based policies. Cities without strong sustainability policies risk losing future investments and clean-economy opportunities.

2. Climate action is an economic and affordability strategy.

High-performance buildings cut operating costs for heating, cooling, and electricity—benefits that support public budgets and household finances. They also prevent the costly “pay-twice” scenario: building cheaply and quickly today, only to upgrade later at high expense. The misconception that low building standards, lack of skills, and pressure to deliver housing are acceptable is supported by history. The British Columbia Leaky Condo Crisis, which cost up to \$5 billion, demonstrated the consequences of neglecting quality, performance, and resilience from the start. Currently, the shortage of affordable housing combined with climate risks threatens to lead to similar mistakes if sustainability is not prioritized. Meanwhile, the cost of inaction is increasing, with the Insurance Bureau of Canada reporting that severe weather caused over \$8 billion in insured damages in 2024, including more than



\$300 million in B.C. Keeping Vancouver's sustainability department active ensures homes, workplaces, and community facilities are built for resilience and efficiency, reducing future costs for taxpayers and easing the strain on infrastructure and emergency services.

3. Vancouver's reputation and competitive advantage are at stake.

Since the 1970s, Vancouver has built a strong credibility and leadership in livability, sustainability, and, more recently, climate leadership. Initiatives like the Greenest City Action Plan, Climate Emergency Action Plan, and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy have established Vancouver as a global leader in urban sustainability. The city was also an early adopter of green building standards, now boasting around 400 LEED and zero-carbon certified buildings. Additionally, the Olympic Village serves as a prominent example of sustainability leadership, solidifying Vancouver's international standing.

Weakening the sustainability department would:

- Undermine institutional expertise, creating gaps across planning, housing, and infrastructure decisions.
- Send a negative market signal that Vancouver is backing away from its leadership role
- Reduce competitiveness relative to cities accelerating their climate commitments
- Weaken a thriving innovation cluster, risking loss of firms, talent, and future investments

Cities like Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal are all enhancing their climate and resiliency strategies. Vancouver cannot afford to fall behind.

Our call to action

We respectfully urge the City of Vancouver to uphold the full capacity of its climate and sustainability department. This is not just about safeguarding past achievements; it is about ensuring Vancouver continues to lead in innovation, attract investment, and maintain long-term economic resilience and affordability.

CAGBC is ready to work with the city to promote shared goals in energy efficiency, climate resilience, innovation, and sustainable economic growth. I look forward to discussing how our organizations can continue collaborating.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering our perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Mueller'.

Thomas Mueller
President and CEO
Canada Green Building Council (CAGBC)