

Recap of CAGBC's National Embodied Carbon Summit 2025

June 10, 2026



UBC Brock Commons Tallwood House
Photo credit: University of British Columbia

In June 2025, the Canada Green Building Council (CAGBC) reconvened a group of industry leaders for its National Embodied Carbon Summit with the goal of determining how national progress can be made in reducing embodied carbon in buildings.

The focus of this event was to build on the work of the first Summit: In June 2024, at the behest of the industry, CAGBC brought together 60 embodied carbon experts to identify the gaps and barriers to reducing embodied carbon in buildings and suggest ideas for a national approach to addressing those problems. The findings were released in [Reducing Embodied Carbon in Canada's Buildings](#).

Following that report, CAGBC members committed to reconvening to discuss progress and advance priorities and action. The goal of the second summit was to identify the next steps and milestones, suggest responsibility, and determine frameworks. This recap identifies the key findings from that day.

Charting a path forward

The Goal: Establish a coordinated “made-in-Canada” approach to reducing embodied carbon in building construction.

The 2025 National Embodied Carbon Summit brought together 80 experts to further chart a path forward on embodied carbon reductions. Participants represented all levels of government as well as professionals from academia, education, the design and development industry, crown corporations, and non-profit organizations. The group also included builders, contractors, developers, manufacturers, software providers, property owners, and representatives from industry, professional, and trade associations.

The discussions focused on next steps and milestones, potential responsibilities, funding needs, and consideration of political resiliency. This recap summarizes the critical points raised and also proposes potential next steps to assist with continued progress in advancing the agenda, despite the absence of a formal plan or coordinating body.

Where do we focus?

Following the 2024 summit, the resulting report “[Reducing embodied carbon in Canada's buildings](#)” identified seven areas as the most critically important to resolve, which were discussed at the 2025 event. Topic leaders then worked independently to refine and summarize ideas next steps guidance, including the identification of possible working groups. The results are summarized below with potential next steps.

2025 Embodied Carbon Summit

1. *What's needed to establish a National whole building Life Cycle Assessment (wbLCA) results database?*
2. *How can we ensure all wbLCA software tools align on default modelling assumptions and relevant data to produce consistent and comparable results?*
3. *What's needed to implement a harmonized wbLCA framework for Canada?*
4. *Embodied carbon in the national code: what guidance can we provide and how do we address objections to adoption?*
5. *How can we facilitate the collection and use of costing data for low carbon materials/products and design.*
6. *How to proactively drive increased awareness and understanding amongst industry stakeholders, not just of the importance of embodied carbon but that solutions are achievable.*
7. *How to ensure all impacted professionals have sufficient knowledge, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and resources to effect reductions in embodied carbon.*
8. *Wildcard Topic: "Blue sky" thinking for other critical topics not outlined in the above.*

Of note, summit participants encouraged “political resiliency” in the development of systems and programs to ensure they can withstand policy changes and continue to work towards their objective even if support from one level of government is removed. We urge those pushing for embodied carbon reductions to work towards broad industry support.

1. What's needed to establish a National whole building Life Cycle Assessment (wbLCA) results database?

There is strong interest in a centralized, accessible repository of comparable wbLCA results for benchmarking and target setting. Key considerations include governance, privacy, access, requirements, user needs, funding, and support – a significant barrier to understanding embodied carbon outcomes.

The discussion resolved that a centralized database of wbLCA results could:

- provide a dashboard to visualize and analyze data at project, portfolio, regional, provincial, and national scales;
- provide user-based access, including an anonymized publicly available database;
- allow flexibility for regional policy requirements, with built in functionality to recalibrate with aligned assumptions and scope to ensure comparability for cross-regional benchmarking;
- conduct automated quality assurance/control to identify outliers; and,
- include Bill of Materials (BoM) and Global Warming Potential (GWP) raw data from all commonly used embodied carbon and wbLCA tools and project metadata.

Potential Next Steps:

The Government of Canada is working with the City of Vancouver on the procurement of a digital tool to support the tracking and analysis of whole building life cycle assessment (wbLCA) and material-specific embodied carbon reporting. A joint Request for Proposals is planned for Spring 2026. Engagement from industry would be solicited, for example, through the establishment of a technical advisory committee.

2. How can we ensure all wbLCA software tools align on default modelling assumptions and relevant data to produce consistent and comparable results?

Concerns persist about the lack of consistency among wbLCA tools and the LCI/EPD databases supporting them. The goal is for tools to provide comparable results aligned with a national wbLCA framework and be supported by updated, regionally appropriate data. The earlier 2024 Embodied Carbon Summit emphasized the need for tools to consistently evaluate and compare different products and methods, and there is interest in addressing that need.

The participants identified that three key steps were needed:

1. Alignment is needed on guidance and standards that direct the wbLCA and embodied carbon tools. These are the current/upcoming tools:
 - [*NRC's National guidelines for whole-building life cycle assessment*](#) (2022)
 - [*NRC's National whole-building life cycle assessment practitioner's guide*](#) (2024)
 - *ASHRAE/ICC Standard 240P – Quantification of Life Cycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions of Buildings* –second public comment period completed July 2025.
 - [*RESNET 1550, Embodied Carbon*](#) (designed for residential buildings, focused mainly on Part 9 buildings but covering single family homes to about 6 storeys) – approved March 2026.
2. Alignment is needed on baseline material definition (GWP A1-A3), referencing the latest industry average EPDs per material category as defined in the [*Carbon Leadership Forum Material Baselines for North America 2025*](#) report.
3. Develop national default modelling assumptions that all tool providers use for the following:
 - A4 - transport mode GWP
 - A4 - default transport distances and mode per material category
 - A5 - A5.3 - construction waste percentage per material category
 - B4 - service lifespan per material category
 - C1 to C4 - end of life per material category (potentially)
 - D (potentially)

Potential Next Steps:

The [Embodied Carbon Software Tool Database Comparison report](#), developed by Priopta and funded by the National Research Council (NRC), was released February 17, 2026. The study analyzes and compares the data and modeling assumptions of One Click LCA, Athena, Tally, EC3, and BEAM, including Global Warming Potential (GWP) (A1-A3) values and default life cycle stage assumptions (A4, A5, B3, C1-C4) across a broad range of material categories. A follow-up research project is anticipated to further align baseline material data and national default life cycle stage assumptions (A4, A5, B4, C1-C4) across all tools. Funding and leadership are yet to be determined but a follow-up project would establish a working group including a research lead, tool providers, Government of Canada representatives, and other subject matter experts.

3. What's needed to implement a harmonized wbLCA framework for Canada?

Significant progress has been made with the [ECHO Project's recommendations](#) and the [NRC's National wbLCA Practitioner's Guide](#) addressing metrics, methodologies, and definitions. The focus now shifts to adoption, coordinated updates, and reporting alignment.

It was recognized that three objectives were related to harmonized wbLCA framework for Canada:

1. **Policy alignment and information exchange:** There is considerable work that has already been done to assess and determine alignment of policies and wbLCA reporting. However, to be relevant and useful, continued conversation and updated assessments are needed. Two ideas were suggested:
 - An **ongoing quarterly, national exchange platform**, open to any jurisdiction setting embodied carbon reporting requirements. This could be similar to an exchange that Carbon Leadership Forum (CLF) BC currently runs for BC municipalities and universities. It would allow for continued conversation on this topic.
 - A **working group to assemble a Canadian ready-to-adopt policy package**, similar to the policy work of the US CLF's policy toolkit. Considerations included ensuring that the NRC National wbLCA Practitioner's Guide is used for consistent reporting. It was also suggested that any material created be visually appealing and succinct. If it is not easy to adopt and properly pitched, it will not be used.
2. **A single national Canadian standard for wbLCA:** The launch of the NRC National wbLCA Practitioner Guide in 2024 was a large step forward in alignment of methodology for Canadian project teams conducting wbLCAs. However, as a practitioner's guide, it is not a standard that can be adopted into code. Additionally, other methodologies are emerging onto the market in the form of upcoming standards from ASHRAE and RESNET (see section 2). It was suggested that a standard development committee be struck to establish a formal wbLCA standard for Canada, which may include adoption of other standards.

To ensure success, broad industry buy-in would be needed from relevant parties and organizations, to ensure it represents the voice of industry, avoiding later opposition.

3. **Alignment on proxy data to support a harmonized framework:** Participants suggested improving the current estimates used for calculating A4, A5, B1-5, C1-4, provided within the NRC National wbLCA Practitioner Guide. They also determined that we need agreement on data assumptions for interiors and mechanical-electrical-plumbing (MEP). However, it was determined that this objective falls within the second category topic above; that is, ensuring wbLCA databases align.

Potential Next Steps

1. **Policy Exchange and Alignment:** It is recognized that an ongoing national exchange platform needs to be created. Additionally, a working group could be assembled to create a Canadian ready-to-adopt policy package for local governments and organizations. Leadership still needs to be identified, however. The work could potentially be hosted using CAGBC's committee-support infrastructure.
2. **Supporting the Development of a National Standard of Canada for wbLCA:** The creation of a wbLCA standard is needed to support adoption of the future national building code embodied emission reduction targets; a practitioner guide is not appropriate for this purpose. Therefore, it was determined that a formal Technical Committee should be launched to create a wbLCA methodology standard for Canada, building on the work of NRC's *National guidelines for whole-building life cycle assessment* (2022) and NRC's *National whole-building life cycle assessment practitioner's guide* (2024), ASHRAE 240p (in draft) and RESNET 1550. In October 2025, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Group [indicated their intent](#) to create such a standard.

4. Embodied carbon in the national code: what guidance can we provide and how do we address objections to adoption?

Embodied carbon is expected to be addressed in the 2030 national code, but there's a push for earlier action and a need to address industry resistance. Additionally, the 2024 Summit noted that the 2030 timeframe may not be sufficient for near-term reductions. We need to identify the top objections to having embodied carbon in the code and assemble a cohesive strategy to address these concerns and scale rapid change.

The National Model Code Committee on Climate Change Mitigation (Miti), reporting to the Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes (CBHCC), has been established to advance code changes related to energy efficiency and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in accordance with the CBHCC-approved work plan. Among its priorities, Miti is addressing the development of requirements to minimize excessive embodied GHG emissions in new Part 3 and Part 9 buildings.

To support this effort, Miti has formed a Task Group on Embodied GHG Emissions responsible for drafting proposed changes to introduce embodied carbon provisions into the National Model Codes.

It was noted that interested individuals may participate in this work as observers within the Task Group, the parent committee (Miti), and other code development groups (e.g., CBHCC), as well as through policy consultations, Public Reviews of proposed code changes, etc.

During the 2025 summit, participants discussed establishing an informal, ad-hoc network of technical contributors to allow for broader engagement and input. This group would operate on a flexible, voluntary basis to provide focused technical research and foundational work supporting code development and to help remove barriers related to cost, consistency, and implementation.

Immediate Goal:

- The timing of the Summit overlapped with the public comment period for the [Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes](#)’ (CBHCC) draft policy positions paper on the approach to addressing embodied greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for new houses and buildings in the National Model Codes. The purpose of the draft policy positions paper was to present the (draft) approach for inclusions of embodied greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the National Model Codes and to support the development of technical provisions in the 2030 code cycle. Summit participants focused much of their discussion on that draft policy positions paper, coordinating messaging for feedback that was completed after the Summit. In December 2025, CBHCC released their final [Phase 1: Embodied GHG Policy Positions paper](#), confirming the continued intent to address embodied GHG emission reductions within the 2030 code.

Potential Next Steps

Establishing an informal, ad-hoc technical network—similar in concept to a “Tiger Team”—would provide additional research and analytical support related to embodied GHG emissions. This effort would complement the ongoing research and technical support already provided by the NRC and help strengthen coordination across the broader embodied carbon community. The intent would not be to duplicate existing NRC work, but to enhance collaboration by drawing on external expertise and perspectives that can inform and reinforce NRC’s evidence-based foundation for code development.

5. How can we facilitate the collection and use of costing data for low carbon materials/products and design.

The industry lacks a standardized costing framework for low-carbon options, making it hard to benchmark and compare costs. Improved RFP/bidding templates and shared tools informed by cost estimators are needed. Recent research suggests many low-carbon

material equivalents are available at similar costs, and design efficiencies can further reduce overall project costs.

The recent Clean Energy Canada report: [Building Toward Low Cost and Carbon: Clean construction doesn't have to mean costly construction](#) (April 2025) revealed no or negligible cost increases for low carbon material. However, more work needs to be done to demonstrate these finding across different regions and building archetypes. Recognizing that the industry lacks sufficient public data to fully understand if there are additional costs to lower-carbon construction, the brainstorming discussion focused on ideas to enable accurate costing of project-level carbon performance through integration of carbon data in bidding processes and wbLCAs. Sharing that data would be critical. Secondly, the discussion also recognized any potential costs could be reduced by integrating embodied carbon optimization “early” in project cycles with all critical stakeholders; participants discussed how that could be done.

Potential Next Steps

Participants felt the ideas and suggestions raised to tackle costing data could be handed to a subcommittee of a broader industry awareness working group. Additionally, there are existing Buy Clean groups (e.g., [Buyers for Climate Action](#)) that could integrate low (embodied) carbon costing within their mandate. There is an interest in seeing specific tools developed, such as project budgeting templates and RFP language for bids, but these might need additional funding.

6. How to proactively drive increased awareness and understanding amongst industry stakeholders, not just of the importance of embodied carbon but that solutions are achievable.

A lack of awareness about the importance and achievability of embodied carbon reductions persists among some stakeholders. How do we amplify knowledge sharing and drive increased awareness and understanding amongst various interest holders? A cohesive business case and a centralized information source are needed.

Two types of needs were identified:

1. **Supporting current advocates of embodied carbon reductions:** As a first step, there is interest in finding a way to bring the embodied carbon industry together in the absence of a national organization focused on embodied carbon. Initially, it could be a piloting of some best practices used by other organizations, such as a quarterly, national exchange call where, like US Carbon Leadership Forum (CLF) quarterly exchange calls, organizations can apply to be on the agenda to provide a three-minute update to the group; or, like CLF British Columbia’s Embodied Carbon Exchange meetings, there could be break out rooms for specific topics. The

summary could be distributed to all interested parties as a quarterly newsletter for those interested in staying engaged on embodied carbon.

2. **Extending awareness to the broader industry:** There is a need to engage the wider industry beyond those already engaged in embodied carbon. The [Low Carbon Training Program](#) could be used as a model. Further, there is a need to explore how to consider embodied carbon in tandem with operational carbon.

Potential Next Steps

Organizations with the potential to host such industry conversations are encouraged to consider opportunities within their planning cycles. Going forward, CAGBC commits to hosting a third National Embodied Carbon Summit in Montréal, June 2026, to continue the national conversation on these topics.

7. How to ensure all impacted professionals have sufficient knowledge, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and resources to effect reductions in embodied carbon.

Across the whole industry, there is a shortage of professionals skilled in implementing embodied carbon reductions. Additionally, there is a need to grow technical expertise in conducting wbLCAs. Standardized, cross-country education and potentially credentialing are needed, building on existing programs like BCIT's micro-credential series.

Proper and aligned training is critically important but exceptionally challenging to create. A full training, credentialing, and professional program is an ambitious target. Summit participants indicated a desire for the industry to be prepared to support embodied carbon reductions, but at the same time recognized that we do not want excessive training burdens (cost and time) to be put on practitioners. It was also recognized that there is a difference between university education, professional development skills training, professional development updates, credentialing, and trade education. Professional responsibilities are separate from ongoing professional development as well. Lastly, where course material has been developed, intellectual property issues must be considered. While there is an interest in cross-country consistency, it is also recognized that sharing materials between training bodies has its challenges.

Potential Next Steps

There is interest in developing standardized curricula and integrating them into professional development processes. In time, they could inform a broader credentialing program. However, the cost and effort needed for this is considerable. Additionally, it was noted that the federal government is likely to develop training material to support the incorporation of embodied carbon in the 2030 code. Therefore, it was recommended that this initiative be put on hold; it can be revisited at a future Summit.

8. Wildcard Topic: "Blue sky" thinking for other critical topics not outlined in the above.

The Wildcard Table allowed participants to raise other critical concerns not otherwise covered. It served as a vital mechanism to identify emergent priorities or validate the completeness of the other seven topics. The question posed was what are we critically missing with our current focus?

Participants highlighted a wide range of topics, such as leveraging circular economy principles, broadening metrics, recognizing diverging interests (e.g., resiliency and durability), ensuring as-built data collection, and incentivizing procurement models. Additionally, the concept of devising programs that are "political resilient" was also highlighted.

Potential Next Steps

While no specific action item was generated from this "Wild Card" table topic discussion, it did consider a wide range of ideas and concepts that should not be forgotten in future efforts. Most important among these is to recognize that there is broad interest in embodied carbon reduction efforts and the established networks created by CLF's Regional Hubs should be leveraged.

Thank you

The CAGBC thanks all Sponsors, Planning Committee, and Participants, who together made the event successful through their enthusiastic participation. Industry representatives who are interested in further discussing the outcomes of the event are welcome to reach out to CAGBC at info@cagbc.org

Sponsors



PROVENCHER_ROY

In Kind Sponsor (Facilitation)



Planning Committee

- Anthony Pak, Priopta
- Ben Amor, NRC
- Colleen Loader, CAGBC
- Heather Knudsen, NRC
- Kelly Alvarez Doran, Half Climate Design
- Laura Husak, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Natalie Douglas, Zero Emissions Innovation Centre (ZEIC) – Facilitator
- Paul Steenhof, CSA
- Ryan Zizzo, Mantle Developments
- Ryley Picken, Treasury Board Secretariat
- Stephanie Dalo, CLF BC
- Zahra Teshnizi, City of Vancouver

Additional supporting table leads/co-leads:

- Bronwyn McIlroy-Young, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
- Forest Borch, City of Vancouver
- Guillaume Martel, Provencher_Roy
- Ryan Heays, CAGBC





Participants

Organization	Name	Position
Advicas	Charlie Kesteloo	Principal
aedify	Brenda Martens	Principal
Arup	Li-Anne Sayegh	Senior Sustainability Engineer
Athena Institute	Jennifer O'Connor	President
BC Office of Mass Timber Implementation	Kika Mueller	Senior Policy Analyst
BCFII	Brad Doff	Senior Manager, Innovation and Sustainability
BCIT ZEB Learning Centre	Melissa Hamer	Project Lead
Bosa Properties	Vincent Delfaud	Vice President, Design & Sustainability – Architecte DE
Builders for Climate Action	Mélanie Trotter	Embodied Carbon Analyst
Builders for Climate Action	Jacob Deva Racusin	Lead Embodied Carbon Researcher and BEAM Developer
Building Transparency	Don Davies	Interim Executive Director
C.Scale	Steph Carlisle	LCA Practice Lead
CAGBC	Diana Mokhallati	Vice President, Market Growth
CAGBC	Colleen Loader	Director, Technical Solutions
CAGBC	Ryan Heays	Certification Reviewer II
CAGBC	Thomas Mueller	President and CEO
Canadian Wood Council	Natasha Jeremic	Manager Codes & Standards - Sustainability
Carbon Leadership Forum	Meghan Lewis	Program Director
Carbon Wise	Elisabeth Baudinaud	Principal
Cecobois	Gabrielle Pichette	Technical advisor
Cement Association of Canada	Rob Cooney	VP Construction Innovation
Chandos Construction	Audrina Lim	Director Sustainable Construction
CIMA+	Jason Packer	Director
CISC	Chris Weckesser	Manager, Business Initiatives
City of Nelson	Alex Leffelaar	Low Carbon Building Specialist
City of Richmond	Marcos Alejandro Badra	Program Manager, Circular Economy
City of Toronto	Lisa King	Sr. Policy Planner, City Planning Division
City of Vancouver	Forest Borch	Planner, Embodied Carbon
City of Vancouver	Zahra Teshnizi	Senior Planner, Embodied Carbon
Clean Energy Canada	Jana Elbrecht	Senior Policy Advisor
CLF BC ZEIC	Stephanie Dalo	Program Manager, CLF CB
Concert Properties	Cris Nitz	Manager, Sustainability & Climate
Concrete Ontario	Alen Keri	Director of Technical Services

CSA Group	Paul Steenhof	Manager, Strategic Initiatives - Environment and Business Excellence Sector
Daniels	Adam Molson	Vice-President
DIALOG	Stephanie Fargas	Associate Sustainable Materials Specialist
EllisDon Corporation	Navisa Jain	Director, Climate and Sustainability
Engineers & Geoscientists BC	Harshan Radhakrishnan, P.Eng.	Manager, Climate Change and Sustainability Initiatives
Entuitive	Oscar Valdes	Senior Decarbonization Consultant
Evoke Buildings	Patrick Roppel	Building Science Specialist
FCM	Matthew Yarmon	Buildings Lead / Energy Engineer
Fengate Asset Management	Della Wang	Director, Responsible Investment
Footprint	Lyle Scott	Principal
Glotman Simpson	Rory Roberts	Project Engineer & Director of Sustainability
Groupe AGÉCO	Rosalie St-Arnaud	Director of Economic Studies
Ha/f Climate Design	Rashmi Sirkar	Partner, Ha/f Climate Design
Heidelberg Materials	Shane Mulligan	Sustainability Market Manager
Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada	Bronwyn McIlroy-Young	Policy Analyst
Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada	Laura Husak	Manager, GHG Mitigation
Introba	Jeremy Field	Associate
KIRKOR Architects & Planners CARBON COALITION	Lara Gumushdjan	Director of Sustainability Architect
Lafarge Canada Inc	Matt Dalkie	Senior Sustainability Manager
Ledcor Construction Ltd.	Marsha Gentile	Director, Sustainability
Local Practice Architecture + Design	Michel Labrie	Principal, Architect AIBC
Mantle Developments	Ryan Zizzo	Founder & CEO
Mattamy Homes	Mohammad Haque	Sustainability Manager
NRC	Heather Knudsen	Senior Research Officer
NRC	Jieying Jane Zhang	Principal Research Officer, Team Lead, Construction LCA
One Click LCA	Raina Halabi	LCA & EPD Consultant
Perkins&Will	Amy Brander	Regenerative Design Advisor
Priopta	Anthony Pak	Principal
Provencher_Roy Architect	Guillaume Martel	Architect
Public Services and Procurement Canada	George Strazicich	Regional Structural Engineer
Purpose Building	Kamilia Vaneck	Project Delivery Manager
RDH Building Science Inc.	Torsten Ely	Associate, Senior Energy and Sustainability Analyst
REALPAC	Darryl Neate	VP, Sustainability
RGS Consultants	Iain MacFadyen	Owner
RJC Engineers	Dominic Mattman	Technical Resource Development Leader

Royal Architectural Institute of Canada	Mona Lemoine	British Columbia / Yukon Director
Saint-Gobain CertainTeed Canada Inc.	Bob Hartogsveld	Building & Materials Science Specialist
Solterre Design	Joshua Stromberg	Architect
Standards Council of Canada	Arden Waugh	Senior Policy Analyst
Stantec	Ivan Lee	Senior Building Science Engineer
Treasury Board Secretariat	Ryley Picken	Policy Analyst
University of British Columbia	Penny Martyn	Green Building Manager
UBC Wood Science	Haibo Feng	Assistant Professor
University of British Columbia	Megan Badri	Research Manager
Ville de Montréal	Joël Courchesne	Architecte
WSP	Michelle Christopherson	Embodied Carbon Practice Lead
Zero Emissions Innovation Centre (ZEIC)	Natalie Douglas	ZEBx Program Manager

