

## CARBON LEADERSHIP FORUM SPRING 2023 DONOR UPDATE

Reducing embodied carbon in buildings and infrastructure has been gaining dramatic momentum as a top priority in the climate movement. So far, 2023 has been no exception.

Thanks to you, CLF is well positioned to fuel this momentum. Through collaborative work with an extensive network of construction industry stakeholders over the past thirteen years, we have built a reputation as a trusted partner at the leading edge of research and collaboration on decarbonizing building materials. This has enabled us to develop actionable resources and reports while providing direct support to key decision makers.

In February we finalized a three-year strategic plan (public version attached) which provides us with necessary goalposts to drive impactful embodied carbon reductions. At a time when so many new policymakers, practitioners and others are motivated to act, we're working to ensure that our research and resources can enable scientifically-informed action now while building the necessary conditions for dramatically reduced embodied carbon reductions by 2050. We have a significant role to play, and are grateful for your trust in us to carry out this important work.

Read on to learn about some exciting recent highlights, made possible by you.

### **Policy**

The Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act both included historic directives (and funding) to establish embodied carbon reduction programs across federal agencies like the EPA, the General Services Administration (GSA), FEMA, and the DOT. This opportunity is BIG and now the pressure is on for these programs to be effectively implemented to achieve their intended impact. Over the past few months, you have enabled our team of researchers to meet with these agencies and provide direct feedback on how to structure new carbon reduction requirements, incentive programs, grantmaking and more. And on the back end, we're developing research and guidance to ensure that these stakeholders have a clear understanding of how data can best be used to drive transparency and carbon reductions.

At the state level, you've enabled us to provide guidance to legislators, advocacy groups and other stakeholders in states like Washington where they are considering requirements for construction projects to build with lower-carbon products and designs.

At the local level, you helped us develop [new case studies](#) on embodied carbon reduction programs across the Pacific Coast. Policymakers and others are eager to better understand existing initiatives. This collection of 10 case studies complements other research to ensure that new programs can leverage lessons learned and enable greater embodied carbon reductions.

## **Data**

CLF is currently developing applied research that will enable building sector actors to prioritize the most impactful strategies to reduce embodied carbon in buildings and infrastructure. Two highlights from the past few months include:

### **New Baseline Data for Embodied Carbon in Construction Materials**

The CLF Material Baselines report includes estimates of industry-average Greenhouse Gas emissions for construction materials manufactured in North America. This publication is part of an ongoing project to track the estimated carbon impacts of building materials and the growth of embodied carbon data. We publish this report annually and expect the updated information will be used by a diverse audience, including:

- policymakers who set embodied carbon targets and establish reduction plans
- architects, engineers, and contractors working to build with lower-carbon materials
- material manufacturers
- LCA and building material researchers
- tool developers who incorporate this data into digital embodied carbon reduction tools
- building sector rating systems that can require embodied carbon disclosure and reductions

### **Embodied Carbon Evaluation and Reduction Recommendations for DOTs**

In collaboration with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), our team developed a report that estimated the embodied carbon impact of WSDOT's current construction materials and explored opportunities to drive down these emissions. As you likely know, the emissions associated with producing concrete, asphalt and steel are enormous. For WSDOT, we found that their emissions associated with materials and construction are especially significant because they likely outweigh direct emissions from sources including running the country's largest ferry system as well as their indirect emissions from purchased electricity.

As dozens of state policymakers and DOTs across the country are currently considering (or already implementing) programs to reduce embodied carbon, this report provides impactful data as well as recommendations for how to reduce their impact.

### **CLF Growth**

Five new staff have either accepted offers or started working at CLF this year. These new team members will support CLF operations as well as research on the carbon storing impacts of novel building materials. We'll also soon be hiring staff to scale our support for public and private embodied carbon policies and to improve our communications.



## **THANK YOU!**

Your generous support of the Carbon Leadership Forum makes these success stories possible. You are helping make buildings and infrastructure a key solution to climate change.

In deep gratitude,  
Anthony Hickling, Managing Director

P.s. Our public facing version of the strategic plan is attached to this email– I'd love for you to take a look. And please let me know if you'd like to set up a call to hear more about our upcoming plans.