

# Okanagan College News

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Wednesday, February 19, 2020

## Pushing the green building envelope: builders and educators working together

Posted by: Public Affairs

Okanagan College Media Release

### ***Okanagan College, UBC, City of Kelowna co-host net zero life cycle workshop***

Workshops often involve questions and answers; this one focused on the real-world queries and solutions that may unlock a greener future for us all.



Okanagan College, the University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBC

Okanagan), the City of Kelowna and a host of industry partners convened in Kelowna at the Innovation Centre on Tuesday.

Building Net Zero was a one-day workshop designed to bring together building and energy innovators to tackle an ambitious green agenda. It offered attendees a behind-the-scenes look into the growing number of collaborations that are advancing affordable high-efficiency buildings in the Okanagan.

Speakers shared new research, technologies, materials and building techniques aimed not only at advancing sustainability, but also bringing it within reach for more builders and occupants across a host of settings – from smarter schools and other high-performance buildings to greener, healthier homes.

“This workshop was all about creating a forum to learn more about some of the exciting partnerships that are driving advancements in green building across the region,” says Andrew Hay, Vice President Education for Okanagan College.

“As an institution, we’re committed to continuing to raise the bar for ourselves and the Okanagan when it comes to building the most sustainable buildings possible on our campuses. We’ve added new programming to help train the leaders of tomorrow, such as our Sustainable Construction Management Technology program. We are working with local builders on several applied research projects. The key aspect is effective collaboration and communication, and that is what the workshop was all about.”

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James Allen, Program Manager, Conservation and Energy Management for FortisBC, delivered a presentation on achieving cost effective applications of the Energy Step Code in multi-unit buildings.

Tim McLennan, Director of Design and Operations for Faction Projects Inc., spoke about the evolution of sustainable design and construction standards for institutional buildings.

Kasun Hewage of UBC Okanagan's School of Engineering discussed life-cycle-thinking-based green construction.

Dr. Sharia Aam of UBC Okanagan's School of Engineering and Ashley Lubyk, a professor in the College's Sustainable Construction Management Technology program highlighted goals and early work coming out of the Green Construction Research and Training Centre, which was [launched as a partnership between OC and UBCO](#) in July 2019.

Key learnings from the Wilden Living Lab were also shared. That project is a [pioneering collaborative three-year learning and research undertaking](#) by Wilden developer Blenk Development Corp., AuthenTech Homes, UBC Okanagan, Okanagan College and FortisBC.

The Lab was designed by professors and students from UBC Okanagan's School of Engineering, while Okanagan College trades students and staff lent their hands to the project, completed in late 2016. It involved two homes – one built to current building code utilizing today's standard building materials, and a second “the home of tomorrow” which incorporated the latest and emerging green building techniques and materials. Since completed, UBC Okanagan researchers have collected and examined extensive data to showcase how much better the home of tomorrow has performed – and how those learnings can be applied to future builds not just in the Okanagan but around the world.

Peter Robinson, Chief Technology Officer for Community Energy Association and Christian Cianfrone, Executive Director of ZEBx offered insights into what a number of organizations outside of the region are doing, and how those learnings can be used to continue to advance the Okanagan's green construction industry.

The event concluded with a panel discussion on opportunities in regional Energy STEP Code implementation. Making up the panel was Ashley Lubyk of OC and Kasun Hewage of UBCO; joined by Trevor Butler, President of Archineers; Charles Cullen, Project Manager for Team Construction Management Ltd., Chris Ray, Community Energy Specialist for the City of Kelowna and Kim Larson, Director of All Elements Design.Manage.Build.

Peter Robinson, who moderated the panel, was encouraged by the packed theatre in the Innovation Centre and abundance of dialogue and questions throughout the day.

“It's amazing how much innovation is happening around the valley in green construction,” he says. “Days like today help us continue to build on the momentum, to foster new collaborations and, above all, to help spread the word that green building is thriving. It is not just viable, but thriving in the Okanagan.”

The workshop was made possible by support from BC Hydro, FortisBC, and The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). Workshop partners included ZEBx, Team Construction Management Ltd., All Elements Design.Manage.Build, Archineers, Innovation Okanagan Network, Community Energy Association and the Canadian Home Builder's Association Central Okanagan.

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