



Sustainability Solutions Group

About SSG

SSG is a consulting cooperative that works with our clients to develop unique, creative strategies for ecologically, economically and socially responsible decision-making and action. Our team prides ourselves in working with our clients to achieve real, on the ground social and ecological change. SSG understands sustainability as a process, rather than a static outcome, and as such we seek human-driven solutions to today's greatest challenges. We use sustainability as a lens to create an integrated and effective approach to addressing these challenges including climate change, economic and social inequities, human health, ecosystem decline, and sustainable community development. As a team we demonstrate that the whole is much more than the sum of its parts – we build on each other's experiences, enthusiasm, skills and innovation to create projects of unusual integrity.

Services

SSG brings a broad and inclusive set of disciplines and expertise together in all of the services that we offer. In every project we build a transdisciplinary team and approach suited to its unique challenges and opportunities. We have practices in:

1. Green and sustainable buildings. This includes Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED tm) consulting and project management, integrated design process (IDP) facilitation and training, and operations planning.
2. Organizational Sustainability. This includes multistakeholder approaches, indicator development, measurement and assessment of impacts, strategy development and implementation planning, sustainability reporting, green and sustainable operations planning, policy development and overall creation of sustainability management systems.
3. Climate change research and mitigation. This includes policy research, microgeneration, carbon off-setting, land use planning, organizational GHG impacts, energy planning, and building related energy use.
4. Food security. This includes policy development, land use planning, facilitation and networking, alternative models of land tenure, business planning and market development, and indicator development and reporting on food and health issues.
5. Sustainable communities. This includes integrated community sustainability planning (ICSP), community energy planning, co-op and social enterprise development, affordable housing research and development, community economic development, facilitation, research and policy development, and sustainability indicator development and reporting.

Cooperative Difference

SSG is a federally incorporated worker's cooperative, which means that we differ from other businesses in three key ways:

- The purpose for our organization is to provide stable and meaningful work for our members (i.e. our full time staff)
- Each member has an equal say in decision-making
- Surplus (i.e. profit) is invested into improving the well-being of communities.

SSG currently has five full time members in Victoria, Montreal and Nova Scotia as well as a pool of associate members located from Victoria to Halifax.





Firm Profile

Experience

SOG team members bring a wealth of skills in sustainability assessing/planning, process design and facilitation, green building, food security, and climate change strategies, acquired from many years of diverse experiences:

- Implementation and design of comprehensive sustainability assessments and management systems for universities, NGOs and small businesses.
- Integrated design process (IDP) and design charette facilitation for over 30 LEED and other green building projects, from beginning to end.
- Facilitation of over 40 multi-stakeholder sustainability strategic planning and visioning sessions with university groups and non-profits across Canada.
- Facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes to engage diverse community organizations in food security and protection of farmland planning.
- GHG emission inventories, GHG reductions planning, and development of a energy microgeneration strategy for Canada.

SOG Clients

1. Sustainability Strategy

This area of work includes projects relating to sustainability management systems, policy analysis and community planning.

- *BC Government*- Review of best practices internationally pertaining to capital asset management and recommendations for strategies to implement leading practices with respect to sustainable development.

- *Algonquin College*- Ottawa's community college seeks to be the leader in sustainability. SOG was hired to develop a sustainability framework, strategy and business case while engaging the college community in the process.

- *City of Kelowna*- the development of Central Green Master Plan with BKDI architects.

- *Discovery Channel*- SOG has been the environmental consultant for a new reality television show titled *Wasted*. With Global Footprinting Network and Bioregional, SOG developed the methodology and conducted house audits in the New York Region.

- *One Planet Living*, 2006-present. SOG provides support to OPL for their projects in North America. This includes providing sustainable community design and implementation consulting, facilitation and integrated design support, and green building advice.

- *Cooperative housing project management, Roofs and Roots Housing Co-op*, 2006-present. SOG has supported this innovative housing cooperative located in Victoria BC through providing project management support in their purchase of their first building. SOG assisted with property searches, real estate negotiations, property assessments and building inspections, and legal issues.

- *Case study research and development, Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Communities*, 2006-7. SOG is a research partner, and completed case studies on green building strategies in Vancouver and Calgary, wind energy on Prince Edward Island, innovative direct marketing strategies by farmers across Canada,





Firm Profile

deep water cooling in Halifax, and innovative leadership by Quest Food Exchange in Vancouver.

2. Green and Sustainable Buildings

SSG has extensive experience with LEED certification, green and sustainable building projects, and with integrated design process facilitation. We have more than 30 LEED projects either completed or currently underway, making us one of the most experienced LEED consulting firms in Canada. Here are a few project highlights:

- LEED and sustainability consulting on various BC Housing projects including *M'Akola Housing Society Assisted Living* project, Duncan BC, targeting LEED gold, *St. Vincent de Paul Society* project, Saanich BC, targeting LEED gold, *BC Housing 12 Sites*, Vancouver BC, targeting LEED gold and GHG neutral, *Garfield Assisted Living* project, New Westminster BC, targeting LEED gold and GHG neutral. SSG is also on the consulting team undertaking the *Provincial Homelessness Initiative Guideline* review for LEED gold and GHG neutral.
- Government of Canada, *Public Works and Government Services*. Review of GGO Sustainable Building Policies and Policy Instruments.
- *Green Buildings BC Roundtable*, 2007-present. SSG developed and delivered the Integrated Design Process (IDP) Information Session and Facilitation Training courses. This project drew upon SSG's expertise in adult education, LEED, green and sustainable buildings and communities, facilitation, and IDP. Project results were one full day and one half day course, a resource guide, and an on-line community.
- *Windmill Development Group*, 2003-present. SSG provides LEED consulting and LEED project management services for the Vento in Calgary seeking LEED platinum, the Acqua in Calgary seeking LEED gold, and the Currents in Ottawa seeking LEED gold. SSG also provides high level LEED, green building, and sustainable community consulting for Docksider Green in Victoria.
- *Corporation Proment*, 2006-present. SSG is the LEED project manager for Corporation Proment's first LEED project – a residential high-rise in Montreal seeking LEED gold certification.
- *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*, 2006. SSG provided facilitation support for CMHC's Net Zero Healthy Housing Initiative in the first phase of this project. This involved support in working with their advisory committee and implementing project selection protocols to move the project into its' second phase.
- *Canada Green Building Council*, 2006. SSG worked with several partners to develop a green building training course for public sector project managers, code officials, policy makers and decision makers.

Other LEED, green, and sustainable building projects that our team has worked on include:

- Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion Project, Vancouver BC. Seeking LEED Gold and Green Globes certifications. 2005-present
- UVic Engineering/Computer Science Centre, Victoria BC. Seeking LEED Gold certification. 2004-present
- Water Centre, Calgary AB. Seeking LEED Gold certification. 2005-present
- BC Housing, locations throughout Vancouver BC. Seeking LEED Silver certifications. 2007-present





Firm Profile

- Holy Trinity School, Okotoks AB. Seeking LEED Silver certification. 2005-7
- Beach Club, Spa, Village Homes, and Phase 1 and 2 master planning, Loreto Bay Mexico. Seeking varies levels of certification. 2005-6.
- Falls Brook Centre, New Brunswick, net zero energy home. 2006
- Acera Office project, Calgary AB. Seeking LEED Gold certification. 2006.
- Environmental Education and Ethics Centre, Calgary AB. Seeking LEED Gold certification. 2006.
- Country Hills Multi-services Centre, Calgary AB. LEED Silver certified. 2005.
- Manchester Stores, Calgary AB. Seeking LEED Silver certification. 2005-present.
- Vancouver Island Technology Park, Victoria BC. LEED Gold certified. 2002-3.
- UBC Life Sciences Centre, Vancouver BC. LEED Gold certified. 2003-6.
- Shawnessy/Somerset School, Calgary AB. Seeking LEED Silver certification. 2006.
- Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. LEED consulting for various Olympic venues. 2005-6.
- LEED Guide for Contractors, team member, 2005
- Multi Unit Residential Building Application Guide for the CaGBC, 2005
- Green Value Study, team member, 2005

3. Organizational Sustainability

SOG has supported clients working to transform their organizations in order to move them toward sustainability. This work takes many forms, ranging from facilitating strategic planning sessions right through to detailed implementation planning and feasibility study work. Project highlights include:

- Sustainability program implementation, *Concordia University*, 2004-present. SOG has worked with Concordia on a wide range of different activities, including sustainability report research and writing, and implementation planning. Current work includes development of strategic direction and priorities for the Sustainable Concordia program.
- Green operations planning for *Dockside Green*, Victoria BC, 2007-present. SOG is researching and writing guides for sustainable living and working at Dockside, a new 15 acre sustainable community development. Audiences for the guides include homeowners and strata councils, retail/commercial space owners and tenants, and the strata councils. The guides cover a wide range of topics from water, waste and energy management through to sustainable purchasing.
- Sustainable living education program for *Le Vistal*, Montreal QC, 2006-present. SOG is designing and implementing a sustainable living program for residents and neighbours of this high rise residential project. The program includes a green living guide for residents, community education seminars, and other education and communication tools including video and newspaper articles.
- Food security and health related indicator development, *Vancouver Island Health Authority*, 2007. Developed community food security atlas indicators and strategic directions for VIHA using a multi-stakeholder process.
- Project evaluation, *EOS Eco-Energy*, 2007. Evaluated an energy efficiency project using a 360 degree analysis and qualitative surveys.
- Sustainability report and green operations for *Loreto Bay*, Mexico, 2005-6. SOG worked with Loreto Bay





Firm Profile

Company to develop the foundations for their sustainability reporting work, and also created an extensive green operations strategy to help guide their operations planning work at the early stages of design and construction of the project.

- Sustainability report for *Sierra Club of Canada*, BC Chapter, 2006. Researched and wrote their first sustainability assessment using a multi-stakeholder approach to the process.
- Strategic visioning, *Ashtanga Yoga Montreal*, 2006. Facilitation of vision, mission and strategic planning sessions for Montreal's largest yoga studio.

4. Climate Change Research and Mitigation.

SSG is deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change, and is working with clients, and also on advocacy projects, related to finding strategies to reduce greenhouse gas impacts and also begin planning for mitigation. Some of our projects include:

- Greenhouse gas emissions strategy for buildings, 2009. SSG developed a greenhouse gas emissions baseline for the *Cooperators* building portfolio and is helping guide a retrofit program.
- Greenhouse gas land use planning options for *Salt Spring Island*, Islands Trust, 2007. SSG worked with Holland Barrs Planning Group to evaluate future energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions that would result from the residential build-out of the island. Various land use planning options were created, the greenhouse gas implications of each strategy were modeled, and recommendations and strategies to reduce emissions were proposed.
- Microgeneration strategy for Canada, SSG project, 2006-7. With funding from the *Climate Action Network Canada*, SSG initiated a scoping study for a national microgeneration strategy. Microgeneration refers to renewable energy technologies that are appropriate for deployment at the household or community scale.
- Microgeneration – empowering BC municipalities, SSG project, 2007. SSG prepared a background paper identifying the opportunities for BC-based municipalities to support microgeneration in their communities. SSG then partnered with the *Community Energy Association* to develop and facilitate a workshop in Vancouver for municipal staff and elected officials.
- Renewable energy report, *Loreto Bay Company*, 2005. SSG developed a report on potential renewable energy strategies and technologies to include in their sustainable community development project in Mexico. The report focused on technologies and strategies that would be highly visible, and would serve significant education functions for residents of, and visitors to, the community.

5. Food Security

SSG members work on food security issues in many ways, as consultants, as citizens, and as activists and advocates. Food is fundamental to life, and also serves to build community in many interesting and unique ways, and this compels us to work on this issue. Some highlights from our work on food include:

- Vancouver Island coordination, *Farm Folk/City Folk*, 2005-present. SSG works on a wide range of food security issues on Vancouver Island, and in BC, with our partner organization. Work includes research and facilitation for projects related to the Agricultural Land Reserve, alternative models of land tenure to support community based agricultural production, and ongoing fundraising, networking, facilitation,





Firm Profile

and education work.

- Feast of Fields organizing, *Farm Folk/City Folk*, 2006-present. SSG helps to coordinate the annual Feast of Fields event for south Vancouver Island. SSG also developed a carbon neutral strategy for this event in 2006.
- Social enterprise development, *Lifecycles Project Society*, 2006-present. SSG works with Lifecycles to help them develop their business model and marketing plan for their Fruit Tree Project. The aim of this work is to help Lifecycles support their ongoing non-profit activities with a revenue generating business that also helps them to achieve their organizational mission.

