

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting

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Business Ethics, CSR and Business Environment Analysis

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A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting (300-350 words)

Sustainable design and urban planning have become the central points of focus for the real estate industry in Canada, as environmental concerns and government regulations have increased towards green building practices. Developers, investors and urban planners are now tasked with balancing the short-term financial profitability of the projects with long-term sustainable goals. The swift progress towards achieving **net-zero emissions** and complying with certifications like **LEED** are placing giant pressure on real estate stakeholders who are mandated to adopt more environmentally responsible practices. These factors have made the integration of business ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) crucial in the real estate industry.

This report discusses the ethical challenges faced by A to Z Urban Sustainable Consulting, a fictitious company, a mid-size firm based in Vancouver that specializes in sustainable urban development. This paper explores how the industry navigates one of its major ethical issues, balancing profitability with sustainability and its implications for the community, a critical challenge for developers in today's market. This firm provides consulting services that help developers align with environmental regulations,

requirements from the perspective of business ethics and CSR analysis, examining the ethical challenges faced by a consulting firm in the real estate industry in Vancouver, British Columbia. The analysis will focus on an effort to balance a major issue in the industry: the

balance between profitability and sustainable development and the implications for the community.

This paper will discuss the company's profile, including the scope of operations and services, the real estate industry dynamics and life cycle, and the key major issues with a particular emphasis on the main issue of the consulting company faces.

Following this examination, a detailed stakeholder analysis will be presented in relation to the key issue, highlighting the variety of interests and the power dynamics of the stakeholders and a corporate social responsibility strategy of how the company can address these ethical challenges.

By outlining these dimensions, this report tends to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how business ethics and CSR principles can be applied to real-life scenarios, particularly in industries where economic and environmental goals balance are a concern, like Canada.

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting Company Profile (400-450 words)

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting is headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and focuses on urban planning, design and real estate project evaluation. The company was founded in 2021 due to the increased demand for sustainable practices in the real estate industry and the increasing regulation policies required by the City of Vancouver. (Green Building Policy and the Zero Emissions Building Plan, Vancouver)

The company's goal is to bridge the gap between developers' and investors' profitability goals with government policies and the community. Its vision is to be the country's first holistic, urban, sustainable consulting company and provide 360-degree services to all stakeholders involved.

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting assists primarily in the Greater Vancouver area but intends to expand to other parts of BC and other Canadian provinces. The company is a mid-size consulting firm with 45 employees, and it has a versatile team of specialists, including urban planners and designers, architects, civil engineers, sustainable consultants, green financial analysts, real estate lawyers, and community engagement specialists.

Core Business Services

The core business services include consulting services for the public and private sectors in the real estate industry as well as the communities involved; its primary services include:

Project Evaluations For Government Approvals

The company offers detailed project assessment strategies to developers, the government, and the community to ensure the proposed designs and developments meet the Green Building Policy requirements, sustainability, building code requirements, energy savings, and any other regulations set by the authorities. This includes compliance with the LEED certification process and Net Zero Building (Canadian Green Building Council, 2023).

Profitability and Sustainability Analysis, Green Finance

Services of dual analysis that evaluate the financial profitability of a project and its sustainability Green Finance services (Department of Finance Canada, 2024).

Community Impact Assessments

The company conducts social responsibility impact assessments of real estate projects that evaluate how a new development will affect the local community.

Industry Dynamics

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting functions in a rapidly growing industry since government and new global strategies towards a Zero Net goal are constantly being reshaped.

New environmental regulations, technological advancements, and swift societal expectations regarding sustainability are at pace. For example, the city of Vancouver's regulations in the Zero Emission Building Plan 2022 (Vancouver, 2022). state that new building developments must comply by 2030 with the Zero emissions plan, energy, water, and zero waste, among many policies, for these buildings to be sustainable. So, consulting services for design and development to comply with these policies are becoming increasingly available. LEED certifications and other green building standards are also in the trend phase and adopted by the market expectations.

On the other hand, the real estate sector is starting to recognize the long-term profitability of sustainable developments as projects that not only reduce operational costs through energy efficiency but are also on the rise in premium market valuations and the general interest of investors. Stakeholders are starting to recognize the risks of global warming and the need to invest in green buildings to address global warming. (Mathur et al., 2007). However, developers still face an ethical dilemma, as the upfront costs of implementing this strategy can be high, and this is the aspect where the company plays a crucial role by providing a clear map of the benefits and long-term reduction in monetary and not monetary cost involved that can elevate the value of the asset.

Industry Life Cycle

Based on the Industry Life Cycle Model, Karakowsky and Guriel (2014), The sustainable green building industry is in its growth cycle; considering the factors increased demand for LEED and Green building certifications and government approval factors for construction, technological advancements, such as sustainable software and virtual reality models that asses the projects through time, considering the Zero waste implications in relation with the

community, or new construction techniques and materials. (Resourcify, 2024), the market expansion, regulatory support and tax incentives (Canada, 2024) and the vast competition increase from other similar consulting companies.

This growth also implies challenges, such as maintaining innovation and scaling operations, which should be strategically planned, as the increase in competition for the company, especially considering that huge consulting players like KPMG and Deloitte are implementing particular areas for this type of service, as leading competitors. (“Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG),” 2022). A tailor-made and built-to-suit strategy with mid-size clients is needed for the company to stay in the market.

Clients and Collaborations

Across its holistic approach, the firm collaborates with real estate developers and investors, architects, building contractors, municipalities and government agencies, sustainable and environmental groups, non-profit organizations and the community.

The goal is to support economically viable, socially and ethically responsible urban growth that meets environmental sustainability and promotes change in understanding the benefits of green building design and implementation while delivering corporate social responsibility CSR strategies.

Ethical Issues / Challenges (600-650 words)

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting faces several ethical challenges, especially concerning Vancouver's reaching sustainable goals and the rise in demand for green building developments. (Vancouver, 2022)

Overview of Ethical Challenges

Several concerns arise in the context of sustainable urban planning, for example:

Issues of Environmental Responsibility

Developers must consider the long-term ecological impacts of their projects, including carbon emissions, energy consumption, and resource management. Vancouver's regulations in the Zero Emission Building Plan 2022 (Vancouver, 2022) state strict requirements for new buildings to adopt energy-efficient technologies and reduce their carbon footprint; this leads to a higher upfront cost investment in green infrastructure.

Social Impact of the New Real Estate Development

This challenge is related to gentrification and affordable housing. The rapid pace of new urbanization projects and the high upfront costs related to the strict sustainable policies have led to the displacement of low-income residents as the neighbourhoods have redeveloped. This raises an ethical dilemma in society about the role of developers and the new housing cost in Vancouver. Community assessments and inclusive developments that provide mixed types of housing, retail, and office space are issues that need to be addressed with an incentive taxation guide from the government. It is proven that gentrification and rising costs can increase crime when communities are displaced, and the mix-use and type of crime can lower the risk.

(Campanella, 2011)

Main Issue Profitability and Sustainability

With the above-mentioned issues, the main critical core issue at this phase of the industry life cycle for A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting is the balance between profitability and sustainability in urban projects regarding the Zero Net policies, and from this issue develops many of the issues the City of Vancouver is facing regarding building projects, between the stakeholders, building developers, investors, architects and contractors, real estate clients, the government, the community and many others.

Balancing the Profitability and the Sustainability Issue

The conflict between profitability and sustainability balance is the central issue in the real estate industry in Vancouver at the moment. While developers are driven to maximize returns for investors, incorporating sustainable practices such as an energy-efficient design, renewal energy systems, and eco-friendly local materials can increase the project cost significantly.

For example, LEED certification can require costly investments in renewal energy resources, like solar panels, geothermal energy solutions, advanced technology, design, high-performance isolation, and the need to use local materials. This can push to an increase in the initial budget. (Canada Green Building Council, 2022)

If the initial investment is not issued with a detailed long-term consulting strategy and conscientization to the investors,

Stakeholders and Their Interest (Matrix) (700-750 words)

In A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting, efficient stakeholder management analysis is essential when addressing the ethical challenges of balancing profitability issues with sustainability. For this purpose, the company uses the stakeholder matrix to categorize and prioritize stakeholders based on their power and interest in the developer's project. In parallel, we use a framework analysis that has become especially useful in urban project evaluation.

This matrix helps the firm navigate the complex relationships between developers/investors, government agencies, community members and environmental groups.

Stakeholders Figure

Analysis of Stakeholders Interesta

1. Developers /Investors:

These stakeholders are the ones that most influence the project since they are the ones that control the capital. Their primary concern is profitability, and they are the ones that evaluate and weigh the initial costs of sustainability features against short-term and long-term returns. So, our form aims to engage and concentrate effectively on the financial benefits of sustainable projects, such as increased property value and reduced operational costs. Cite

2. Government Agencies:

Regulatory bodies, such as the City of Vancouver and the BC Government, play crucial roles in enforcing sustainability policies and standards. Their private interest is ensuring the projects align with urban planning regulations and meet environmental goals. The firm works closely with these agencies to ensure compliance, which is essential for project approval (Vancouver, 2022)

3. Community Residents:

Urban developments often directly impact residents, especially in terms of gentrification, equal access to affordable access and security issues. While they often support sustainable projects, concerns about displacement, the increased living cost of the area, or the crime increase can lead to opposition. To address these concerns, the company has engaged the community since the project's first stage through public forums, mediation and engaging the community with the feeling that they have something to say. Spacewally with affordable housing and green public spaces.

4. *Environmental NGO's:*

These organizations advocate for stringent environmental standards and often oppose projects prioritizing profit over sustainability. The firm maintains this group's informed about the project's environmental benefits and collaborates with them on initiatives promoting environmental protection.

5. *Employees:*

The company's consultants, planners, lawyers and analysts are interested in working on innovative, ethically responsible projects. The firm fosters a collaborative work environment where employees can contribute to the design and strategic decision-making process, ensuring sustainability is embedded in the company's approach.

6. *Futures Clients /Customers:*

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (600-650 words)

According to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting, CRS's strategy addresses the ethical challenge of balancing profitability with sustainability, with its community impact as the main issue. The firm's CSR approach is threefold: ensuring that real estate projects are economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible.

1. Sustainable Profitability Model

Since the company's foundation, the CSR strategy has been its Sustainable Profitability Model, which integrates green financial analysis with sustainable metrics. By demonstrating the long-term financial benefits of green buildings, such as energy savings, tax incentives, and the increase in market value, the company helps developers see sustainability as an asset rather than a cost. (Chandler, 2021)

2. Community Engagement

According to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting, community engagement is prioritized to address concerns about gentrification and displacement. Through public forums and surveys, the firm gathers feedback from residents and incorporates their input into project designs. This ensures that developments benefit the community by including affordable housing, public green spaces and local amenities and services. Additionally, the company provides pro bono consulting services to non-profit housing projects aimed at low-income communities. (Canadian Urban Intitute, 2022)

3. Partnerships with Environmental NGOs

The firm collaborates with environmental NGOs on sustainability initiatives to further enhance its CSR efforts. These partnerships help ensure that the firm's projects meet regulatory standards and exceed them regarding environmental protection. Working with organizations such as the Foundation, According to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting, contributes to broader environmental goals while maintaining profitability for developers. (Canada Green Building Council, 2022).

Conclusion (300-350 words)

A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting exemplifies how a medium-sized consulting firm can balance profitability with sustainability in the competitive urban planning and real estate consulting industry. BY addressing the ethical challenge of reconciling developers' financial goals with the need for environmentally responsible and community-oriented projects.

The company has positioned itself as one of the key players in sustainable urban development by focusing on stakeholder engagement, profitability analysis, and community impact, ensuring that its projects are both financially viable and socially beneficial.

The urban development industry continues to evolve in response to environmental and societal pressures. A to Z Urban and Sustainable Consulting's approach to sustainable urban planning is a model for how businesses can ethically navigate the complexities of profitability and sustainability. Through its CSR strategy, the company demonstrates that achieving economic success while contributing to society and the environment is possible.

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