

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE | SHIFT ZERO, Zero Net Carbon Building Alliance

who we are

We are an alliance of organizations, each with its own mission and approach to sustainability in the built environment. While our individual groups work on issues like the water/energy nexus, the land-use/transportation connection, the embodied energy of buildings, the toxicity of materials, and more, as an alliance we promote one goal: the *equitable* adoption of Zero Net Carbon buildings at scale. Today the alliance's efforts focus within the state of Washington, but may extend past those borders in the future.

the climate crisis and buildings

The climate crisis poses the most urgent threat to the planet's ecosystems and its people, with disproportionate impacts on frontline communities, yet:

- We are not decarbonizing the built environment—both new and existing buildings—fast enough to limit global warming to “well below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels” as outlined in the Paris climate accord;
- Our advocacy for a disparate array of green building approaches and certifications confuses elected officials and staff;
- Our varied green building agendas lack cohesion and can obscure common ground and common cause, limiting our ability to transform the built environment into part of the climate solution.

our purpose

Shift Zero, the Zero Net Carbon Building Alliance starts from common ground – our alarm about the climate crisis – to work for common cause: a Zero Net Carbon built environment for all *members of our communities*. We draw from the collaborative spirit of integrated design to change how we work together and advocate for policy. Recognizing the urgency to decarbonize, we focus only on impacts that are ambitious, scalable, equitable, and quantifiable:

- Given the right policy catalysts, ZNC Buildings of all types can scale and equitably transform the market. We have cost-effective means to build and retrofit buildings that are Zero Net Carbon;
- We will unite around our common ground and common cause to speak to policymakers with the power of collective voice;
- We will advocate for policies, programs, and incentives that produce Zero Net Carbon buildings. *“A ZNC building (ZNC) is defined as a highly energy efficient building that produces on-site, or procures, enough carbon-free renewable energy to meet building operations energy consumption annually. To reach ZNC, these buildings first maximize energy efficiency, then maximize on-site renewable energy generation as practical, and then procure off-site renewable energy that is additional, local, equitable, and legally assigned to the building.”*
- We will work creatively and proactively to address historic and ongoing inequities in access to healthy and efficient buildings, while minimizing displacement.
- We will be certain that the benefits of creating ZNC buildings—economic activity, wealth creation, improved health outcomes, jobs and career pathways, and improved living and working conditions—are equitably shared by all members of our communities.