

Grant Peters, LEED Fellow - Fluent Group Consulting Engineers Inc.

Introduction ([00:01](#)):

Welcome to Green Building Matters. The original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED Fellow. Each week Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice, and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. Settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee and get ready to find out why Green Building Matters.

Charlie ([00:34](#)):

Hi everybody. Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters Podcast. I'm your host Charlie Cicchetti. This week I got to interview a green building professional, just north of Toronto up in Ontario, Canada. I've got Grant Peters on. Grant, thanks for joining us today.

Grant ([00:46](#)):

Yeah, certainly Charlie, glad to be here.

Charlie ([00:48](#)):

I know you're a LEED Fellow. I think we actually got invited to the club at the same time last year. I want to talk about that. I want to figure out how you even get to be a green building professional? If you would just take us back. Where'd you grow up and where'd you go to school?

Grant ([01:01](#)):

I grew up in the suburbs of Toronto. Elementary, high school in the Pickering area. I've always sort of had that city life, if you will. Went for a civil engineering at the University of Waterloo, which is a pretty highly recognized engineering university in Canada and actually also overseas, mostly in China as well. . Got my undergrad there and also started my career there.

Charlie ([01:27](#)):

Fantastic. Did you want to get into buildings? At what point did you want to get into green buildings?

Grant ([01:35](#)):

Yeah, that just kind of happened in reverse. I was always interested in buildings and construction. Went through for civil engineering, but wasn't sure exactly what stream. There's structural, there's traffic, there's stormwater, all sorts of different subcategories, if you will, of civil. Didn't really specialize in university and through a co-op placement, Waterloo has a co-op program where you have six, four month terms, to seek various job opportunities while you're doing your undergraduate degree. I ended up doing three out of the six of my terms at a firm called Intermodal Engineering out of Kitchener, which at the time was probably the only, and certainly the premier green building firm in Canada. By being placed there and getting that opportunity was really how the green building thing found me, Rather than the other way around.

Charlie ([02:26](#)):

Good to get that experience at a firm like that. Did you have any mentors or anybody you looked up to along the way, or maybe someone that opened a door for you as you're early in your career?

Grant ([02:37](#)):

A hundred percent. At the time Intermodal, was a hotbed for the top green building professionals in Canada. The firm's president and founder, Steve Carpenter is a very well known figure in Canada and in the states for green buildings. Actually he has an order of Canada award, if you want to call it that, LEED Fellow, this kind of thing. His leadership definitely opened a lot of doors for me, but there's a whole slew of other people there at sort of the management level that really guided me and took me under their wing. Guys, like Braden Kurzrock and Steve Kemp who were also LEED Fellows. My eventual business partner, Mike Pelton was probably the biggest influence on me. We've worked really well together now for over 15 years.

Charlie ([03:24](#)):

Thanks for giving all of them a shout out. I think it's so important to recognize those good influences on us. We've had Steve Camp on the podcast before, too. It was a good talk. I enjoyed it. What were some of the

green building projects before you got involved with LEED? Was it just energy efficiency? What are some of the priorities early in your green design career?

Grant ([03:48](#)):

I was very fortunate my entry into the green building world coincided very closely with the entry of LEED in Canada. The Canada Green Building Council adopted LEED in 2004. My co-op terms started in 2005. Intermodal being one of those first firms that jumped on to that rating system and applying it to projects in Ontario really coincided well. I didn't know much of the green building world prior to LEED, but to me it covered all the bases. It was a very diverse rating system. It came with a strong history. It has been around for about six years in the states and I'm very much about being organized. I'm sort of a stats guy, efficiency, this kind of thing. The rating system with it's tiered approach and it's third party verification and it's categories and it's points, everything sort of lined up to me. There still are some shortfalls as we all know the green building industry has exploded since then. A lot more topics are being covered by various rating systems. But for me finding that sense of organization, that sense of direction in the green building world and being able to take that to the clients, to the projects was just a natural fit.

Charlie ([05:07](#)):

You're an engineer, you're going to like science, you're going to like the numbers, and the data makes sense for those that don't know. We've got a lot of listeners, thankfully. Thank you to all the listeners every week that listen to a green building professional. How is it different with the Canadian GVC and LEED? Are you doing the same version of LEED we're doing here in the US? Is it slightly different? Can you just demystify that?

Grant ([05:33](#)):

Certainly, there's a history here and I often have to walk people through it because they've heard of one version of it or another along the way. I think one of the strengths in my career has been being able to keep track of the differences at any given time. I may have projects with three different rating systems going and I don't just mean existing buildings versus new construction. I mean, three different new construction rating systems. Canada took the US system in 2004 and sort of modified it to the Canadian

market. Updated it with some more relevant energy standards and construction practices and that kind of thing. They came out with an agenda to that, which they call version 1.1. And that sort of lined up with version 2.2 for your US counterparts.

Grant ([06:21](#)):

We were running fairly parallel for a while. I was lucky enough actually to be helping in the development of LEED 2009 in Canada. Again, mirrored 95%, what the US standard was at the time with some key differences to reflect, our climate and energy needs and that kind of thing. Getting in on the ground floor on that rating system was another way that I was able to build up the knowledge of that rating system and be able to deliver it effectively to the clients. Since version four we're sort of gonna tag along scenarios. The Canada Green Building Council didn't have the opportunity to update and modify that standard to the Canadian marketplace outside of some influence on some of the international compliance fats. At this point, we're running at 99%, the same rating system as you guys are.

Charlie ([07:14](#)):

Thanks for demystifying that. It's gotta be tough to juggle different rating systems. We recently had Greenbuild. I know there'll be some 4.1 LEED 4.1 tweaks. As consultants or in your case, consulting engineers we've got to navigate it. We got to know what's going on, how best to apply it to our projects. Tell us about 13 years at Fluent. Tell us about your firm? What kind of work do you do there?

Grant ([07:42](#)):

Most of what we do is LEED consulting and energy modeling. In Ontario, there is a requirement for larger buildings to have an energy model done as part of their code compliance, their permit procedure. We do a lot of that. That's sort of the bread and butter, the stuff that pays the bills, if you will. What really gets us up in the morning is those clients that want to take it further and they're pursuing LEED, or WELL, or in Toronto it has its own standard called the Toronto Green Standard. It takes elements from these rating systems and applies it to every building that's built in the city. That was a big move. One of the sort of big municipal moves in terms of mandating green, building performance above code, as code tries its best to

catch up a little bit, but systems like LEED are always going to be ahead if they're effective, they will remain ahead of the curve in that regard.

Grant ([08:39](#)):

We try to stay on that leading edge of the curve as well. We have some really interesting LEED projects that we're working on. There's a lot of funding for net zero and zero carbon. The Canada Green Building Council has a zero carbon standard. That's been out a couple years now, just fairly unique in the industry. There are a lot of projects pursuing that direction and sort of melding the green building with the energy performance. When you start looking at the carbon piece there's been a lot of municipal facilities, especially emergency police and fire, that pursue that type of performance. A lot of long-term care facilities are being built in Ontario. Certainly, the pandemic has opened people's eyes to that style of facility and the whole aging in place and focusing on the elder and the seniors and those that need care. A lot of those projects are hitting our plate recently and they're fun to work on because they're buildings people experience day in and day out. You come into an office, you leave an office, but if you're at a long-term care facility, you're there for the long haul. If you're in a fire hall, you're working really, really long shifts. The more people interact with the building, the more important it is for that building to be green.

Charlie ([09:53](#)):

I can tell you really enjoy your work. Those are great building types. You're right. We need to really understand who it's influencing, even those visitors coming to see someone that's maybe in that long-term care. It's great to hear about the net zero and a little bit. I'll ask you more about what else you think we should be reading up on Grant, but let's just pause here for a minute and look back at what are you most proud of? What's on the achievement list for you?

Grant ([10:19](#)):

Yeah, yeah. I mean, the LEED Fellow, I was over the moon about that. It sort of validated a long career in this industry. I have to put that first as the token example, but the things I'm when I look back, the things I'm most proud of is I really, I like to root for the underdog. We know we've had some projects clawing and scraping their way to get to LEED and not for lack of effort, but as things in this industry can go sideways and construction can

be difficult and budgets are tight. The projects that we really got a lot of buy-in from the client that they really wanted to do and we got them there as effectively as possible.

Grant ([10:59](#)):

Sometimes with some struggles along the way, but finding those compliance paths that best suit a client. Finding those measures, that'll improve the building so you're not just point chasing. These are the things that give the industry a very good name. We obviously want to uphold the integrity of the industry, so that more people will latch on and that kind of thing. A specific example when we have clients that don't necessarily know much about, Nevermind the green building industry, just the building industry in general. We had six different Toyota dealerships that all pursued LEED, and most of them got gold. This was a big move because of the decision makers, or salespeople, the people that own and run dealerships are not contractors. They're not developers, they're not architects. Getting them on board with LEED and what it represents and what it can do for them, and then seeing the results and how proud they were, those buildings that was a good, a good news story for sure.

Charlie ([11:59](#)):

That's great. I wouldn't have guessed that. I'm happy to hear that. It sounds like you do quite a bit of LEED work, probably some other rating systems too. Let's just get back to where we're at and maybe where we're going, but tell us a little more about what you've done. I know you're very active in your town. Tell us more about what's going on there. Is there some sustainability happening there locally? Can you speak to that?

Grant ([12:22](#)):

Sure. Yeah. Anyone who's passionate about sustainability ideally finds a job in that field, which I have, but you don't leave it at the office. You take it home at night. Locally here in Orangeville there has been a sustainability committee for quite a bit of time. I sat on that for a while. And then through that involvement and understanding sort of what municipalities, what influence they have on the world and the built environment and people's everyday lives. I actually decided to run for office and in 2018 I was elected to town council. I really did that with the intent of bringing more of these sustainable features and mindsets to the town. We're not large, we're about

30,000 people. We don't have experts in all these fields. We're not doing monster projects with life-changing impacts on the built environment, but everybody should be striving to do this stuff. As we implement a few different things at the policy level you can feel like those are, those have been established and they will continue long after you or I are hanging around. Getting those policy level directions in place for a municipality is important. Whether your town is big or smaller, whether you're in a huge city or a rural area, there's always something that you can do to drive the sustainable needle forward.

Charlie ([13:47](#)):

What was that like going through actually getting elected? Putting yourself out there? You've got to really believe in wanting to make some change and help your community.

Grant ([13:56](#)):

It wasn't something I ever thought I would do. I still get jokes about being a politician, but I counter with, I'm not a politician, I'm a municipal decision maker. That's the spin I prefer to put on it, which I guess makes me a politician. I'm not there to rub elbows in and be on TV and this kind of thing, I want to see good policy. I want to see the town move forward. We have a very large budget compared to everyday people in households. The municipalities run water systems and emergency services and roads and libraries and all these things that touch on people's lives. The opportunity to have an influence on those. I hope a positive one just sort of got to me and the same way I had some mentors in the green building field there were some people here that sat on previous councils or committees with me.

Grant ([14:50](#)):

They were very encouraging. We needed a younger presence on council. We needed a more technical presence on council, and we needed someone with some drive in the sustainability world. And that's what took me there. The election process itself was wild. My team must have knocked on, without exaggeration 10,000 doors. The reactions you get are everything from, "We're very happy, you're running, and you've got my vote" to things I can't say on this podcast. I generated more stories in six months there than I have in 15 years in the green building world. But they're more stories over beers rather than stories over podcasts.

Charlie ([15:34](#)):

I look forward to doing that with you sometime soon. To the podcast listeners I think Grant volunteers a lot with the trade organizations, the Canada Green Building Council, but also the pro tip, put yourself out there, get involved in your community. I really think that's great you've done that.

Grant ([15:53](#)):

If I could just touch on one more thing there, another person I mentioned that I used to work with, Michael Perez, said, "if you're not uncomfortable on a fairly regular basis, you're probably not making progress or enjoying your life." Like you said, put yourself out there. This was not something I was geared up to do at the time. Taking the plunge, sometimes it can be really rewarding.

Charlie ([16:18](#)):

That's a great nugget in there. That's good. Let's get back to the green buildings. What about healthy buildings at Fluent one? Clarifying question, does your team also do some design engineering work or are you focused on the green building side of things?

Grant ([16:31](#)):

We're entirely on the green building side of things. At one point there was some consideration of getting into design. We've done a little commissioning in the past, but where the industry needed the focus and where our internal personnel sort of emerged was on the energy modeling and consulting side. Green building side. One thing that we pride ourselves on is working very well with the design engineers and the architects. We have a very good rapport with a lot of really great firms in the area and a lot of mutual respect there. Was one thing that was tough to overcome early in my career being getting into it so young and getting into what might be considered an old field. If you consider engineering. A lot of guys who've been around for a long time and didn't really want to listen to the young kid, tell them how they could improve their designs. You get there over time and you need to have the confidence in yourself to make those recommendations and start those dialogues. A lot of them come around and there's always a few that are some stalwarts that don't want to change, but

as the industry changes, they're going to find themselves out of work eventually.

Charlie ([17:44](#)):

Let's talk about healthy buildings for a minute. We'll even talk about that in the future. Obviously, pandemic hits and speeds up the need. Is this a healthy building or not we're still trying to get out of this thing. What's going on with healthy buildings?

Grant ([18:00](#)):

Everyone's kind of taken a different take on it. I'm sure you found this as well. I think you can point to different milestones in history. Sick building syndrome came in this is sort of a repeat of that. Building's tightened up and then they had poor ventilation. We had to look at bringing in fresh air and we got to a point where we thought things were pretty healthy and then the pandemic hits and there's a new emphasis put on this stuff and different sanitizing methods, filtration, and outdoor air and increasing ventilation capacity, stuff like this. We see it most in the long-term care sector and the municipal sector where public health is top priority. Not to say it's not in the private world, but they have,igger shoes to fill in the public world, so to speak.

Grant ([18:46](#)):

It's a bit haphazard because nobody knows exactly what the best solution is. Everyone just knows the solution has to be better than it was. I don't think we've quite nailed it down. There is a lot of talk about it, as you said, and operationally, there is a lot of talk about it. The new construction side, I don't think has been influenced quite as heavily by it, but certainly mechanical systems. Some of those design features that lend themselves to better cleaning later on in terms of surfaces and architectural finishes, stuff like that, that started to creep into the conversation. Being focused more on the energy side, we're going to have to strike that balance between providing an abundance of fresh air and really heavy filtration that increases fan power and all these things that could have harmed the energy performance in the interest of health. Some of the green building aspects become a bit so conflicting in that way. Those are the issues we're trying to navigate at the moment.

Charlie ([19:44](#)):

We've got that energy and a trade-off. Sometimes the air quality is a trade-off there too. Thanks for showing us that. Now let's talk about the future. If you had a crystal ball grant what's next? What should we be reading up on now?

Grant ([19:58](#)):

It has been interesting to see everything evolve. I haven't been in the industry as long as some for sure, but it has progressed in leaps and bounds in the last 15 years. We're seeing a lot more emphasis on carbon. We're seeing more emphasis on materials as we start to max out the energy pieces without some really fundamental breakthroughs in the mechanical electrical world. We're getting close to the ceiling in some of these systems. Renewables have jumped on a lot more than they used to. Optimizing those and integrating those. They're not just panels on a roof, we're seeing a lot more buildings, integrated PV, parking structures, stuff like that. The carbon accounting and materials piece has really flown in the last few years.

Grant ([20:43](#)):

A couple of years ago, you'd suggest doing a life cycle assessment to apply it, "never of it, not interested, no value there" but especially for clients with large portfolios the better understanding they have on those decisions. Now when these carbon markets come into place and grow and become very expensive and you pursue things like the zero carbon standard out of Canada there is a carbon accounting piece and the embodied energy piece is part of that compliance. Those decisions are starting to come into the mix where they haven't existed before. The last piece I'll mention on the energy side is the envelope. As you cap out on these mechanical system decisions Toronto's famous, we have more construction cranes than any other city in the world at any given time.

Grant ([21:28](#)):

There are literally dozens and dozens of 40 story glass towers being built every day in Toronto. They have a certain look to them that the industry needs to get away from, in my opinion, the big glass pinnacle there. As the energy efficiency piece becomes more relevant and carbon and fossil fuel consumption becomes more expensive. The envelope really needs to be prioritized. We're starting to see those window to wall ratios come down. We're starting to see better details in spandrel sections and other opaque

assemblies. The building science experts are starting to have their day and really come to be a key player at the table the same way say a LEED consultant has, 0 years ago that we started to get a serious spot in the design process. Now the building science world, I think, is experiencing that same progression.

Charlie ([22:26](#)):

A lot of tower cranes that is when things are going well, it's not a tower cranes on the horizon. I just want to double down on that shift towards embodied carbon and just everything else you said there. I think you're spot on. Let's go through some rapid fire questions, get to know you a little more. What would you say is your specialty?

Grant ([22:47](#)):

Yeah, I was sort of trying to think of this ahead of time and because I never really specialized in a certain area of engineering. I found I had to be a very good problem solver and what I to allude to some of those projects I talked about before getting projects across the line and being a bit scrappy, I suppose, in the approach I think being tenacious and finding those paths to best suit the clients and getting those underdogs across the finish line is what I'm good at and what I feel proud of.

Charlie ([23:24](#)):

Would you say it's problem solving then? Or you just the obstacle is the way cannabis, stoic mindset. Unpack that a little bit for us.

Grant ([23:34](#)):

I think most, a lot of engineering breaks down to problem solving. Obviously you need a technical background to get yourself there. Going back to those co-ops in university, I did a couple at General Motors at headquarters in Canada and looked at supplier quality. We were going to factories and manufacturers that were building all the parts that go into the cars and trying to improve their efficiency and find the issues that were causing the imperfections that we're getting these parts preventing them from making it through the quality process. Breaking down a problem into its components and finding the solutions if you look at LEED credits people say, "Oh, construction waste is construction waste. It's either recycled or it's not", but there's a lot of different ways the materials can be processed. How

they're sorted on site. Even if you look at the compliance paths and LEED, whether you're going for a, a reduction source reduction percentage or a diversion percentage. Each of these opportunities within LEED gives you a chance to find a very project centric solution and solve those problems and get through the humps by breaking them down a lot of the credits you get into space by space calculations. One or two of those may give you an issue, but in the other five or 10, okay, so finding those little pieces that are causing the hurdles or the delays or tripping up the engineers in their design. Getting down to that level of detail, getting through that individual sub problem, if you will. On the macro level things, things turn out a lot better,

Charlie ([25:17](#)):

Habits. Do you have any good routines, rituals or habits?

Grant ([25:21](#)):

I don't think any of that stands out really. I am a creature of habit. I come in at the same time. I have my tea at the same time. Professionally, the one thing that I think really helps me see a lot of professionals that don't subscribe to this policy, but is really keeping a clean inbox. It sounds very boring or tedious, but just not having that constant stress of a thousand emails weighing on you in this world, every email is a to do item, essentially. I forget who said it, but someone basically said "your inbox is for other people to do item lists for you". That people are always requesting something or giving you information that you need to use to do something else in an email. As boring as it sounds keeping it trim, I think takes away it allows you to be more focused on other times

Charlie ([26:19](#)):

There's other people's to do list. You've got to manage that. Let's talk about a bucket list. As we get to know each other Grant, I'm a fan of a bucket list. What are one or two things maybe on your bucket list, any travel or adventure? Do you want to write a book? I don't know what else I should get there.

Grant ([26:35](#)):

There's no sorta huge items that I've been fairly fortunate to be able to travel, have a family and even try bizarre things like running for council.

There's still definitely a list of places I like to go to. Internationally places like Spain and Japan are on the list. I've been to some parts of South America, but some sort of South American history interests me. Places like Machu Picchu and places like that would be fantastic to check out, especially as they deteriorate with more and more commercial activity. I would be one of those visitors. Obviously I'm contributing perhaps to its deterioration, but things like that would be great to see before they're done domestically. I'm a big baseball fan.

Grant ([27:22](#)):

I'd like to see all the major league stadiums. I'm only about six or seven out of the 30 there. They update themselves every once in a while so that list will probably never end. Those are some of the travel pieces. I guess a few sort of little, just weird things. If you think about when I wind down in this industry and other things I might do there's sort of little opportunities. Obviously it's one thing to build up a level of expertise and have a very successful career. I feel very fortunate that that's been the case so far. There's little inklings of other things you could do in totally different industries. Just working more with my hands and being outdoors a little more, the one downside of this industry is that you're in the office all day. There's a bit of a reprieve when you get out on site and start start working in the construction world. I could see myself doing something outdoors and more physical at some point.

Charlie ([28:22](#)):

No, that's good stuff, man. A couple of things there, if you ever come to Atlanta, I want to go to the LEED Gold stadium where the Braves play.

Grant ([28:31](#)):

I've heard that one hasn't been there yet.

Charlie ([28:33](#)):

It's a great stadium. When you go to Spain, I've got to connect you with a good friend of mine who do some education together, Emanuel Powells, and outside of Barcelona, he renovated a several hundred year old home and it's a LEED platinum and a living building home and you gotta go, you gotta go see it.

Grant ([28:54](#)):

On that topic. It's a bit of a sidebar here, but when I did Greenbuild in 2018 Chicago. I had to drive through from Toronto. I actually stopped at the Living Building home in Michigan, outside. I forget if it's Anarbor. I cold called them and said "I'm a green building professional, I'm going to Greenbuild. You're on the way. I know this is a bit of a stretch, but would you take me for a tour?" They were so welcoming and open. I had the whole family with me. We kind of turned it into a bit of a vacation. The great part about green buildings is there's some competition in terms of outdoing and performing and that kind of thing.

Grant ([29:38](#)):

I love the collaborative nature. There's no trade secrets here. As a professional, I want every building to know all the things I know about green buildings, and I want everybody to implement them. This whole sort of secret sauce attitude, in retail and other corporate areas is not the case in the green building world. The fact that these people opened their home to me and we must have chatted for a full hour on all the great things they did there. It's really inspiring.

Charlie ([30:08](#)):

I agree. Collaborative open a community. You're in the community and that's so cool, man. If you do go to Spain or come to Atlanta, let me know. A couple more questions here. Grant, let's talk about books. Not sure if you'd like to hold a hard cover in your hands or listen to audible, but what's a book you might recommend. It doesn't have to be industry specific.

Grant ([30:30](#)):

I do enjoy reading. I don't have as much time as I'd like to with the family and my two jobs, if you want to call it that. I'm definitely a hard copy guy. Our local library is fantastic and I love browsing the shelves and holding it in my hands and flipping through the pages. There's my bias now regard, but in terms of actual titles, one of the ones I can think of that I read recently, it was called The Comfort Crisis, and this was exploring sort of how we found ourselves as humans to be now sitting all day, eating poorly, not being out in nature, not exercising enough, this kind of thing, but more deeply than that, sort of the fundamental benefits of being uncomfortable.

Grant ([31:20](#)):

I sort of mentioned this earlier from a mindset perspective challenging yourself mentally and putting yourselves in some new situations and this took it both mentally and physically. It created a bit of a paradox because the green building role was very much about creating comfortable spaces and healthy spaces, which I still agree with of course. What the green building industry is trying to do is create comfort where comfort did not exist. Where we were in crappy chairs at crappy desks in crappy buildings. This is not necessarily what humans were meant to do physically the way we're structured and our physiology, that kind of thing. It was interesting to hear the perspectives of this guy who was not an expert in a field but sort of just stumbled upon his topic and then put himself in some really unusual circumstances.

Grant ([32:12](#)):

He did a 30 day hunt up in Alaska with some guys that of course knew what they were doing. He wouldn't have lasted 24 hours. But talking about the benefits of that level of physical activity separating yourself from the daily grind, all this kind of thing. It wasn't an industry specific boat, but the way I was able to take some of that and reflect it toward what I do as an everyday endeavor was interesting. It ended up having some relevance there that I didn't know existed.

Charlie ([32:45](#)):

Nice, thanks for that recommendation. I'll put a link in the podcast, show notes, everybody can check out that book. Grant, as we start to come to a close two final questions. One, is there any career advice you wish you could have had a little earlier in your career?

Grant ([32:58](#)):

Yeah, I am surrounded as I mentioned earlier by some of the great professionals that I did early in my career there. I had the benefit of receiving a lot of that advice early on. You never know, but I really feel like I had an advantage that way. There wasn't anything sort of significant that I missed early on, but the advice I guess I have, and that I try to live by as an advocate for sustainability in general is just this sort of. I know people feel overwhelmed by the concept of sustainability and all the conflicts that exist

between what are considered sustainable principles and should my food be local or should it be organic. Sometimes you can't have it both ways, that kind of thing.

Grant ([33:47](#)):

It exists in the green building world we talked about. You have energy efficiency or do you have indoor air quality and sometimes there are conflicts between them. I think the approach needs to be that you find those individual pieces that are important to you and you work on those, without being overwhelmed by the large picture. This is true on a project by project basis. As much as it is in our sort of life decisions and our trajectory as people over the course of our lifetime. You can't solve all of the problems at once and certainly not all of the time. Finding those little wins along the way is important. That was kind of driven home early in the career. When you sit down at a meeting and everything gets rejected and you're not taken seriously. The project looked like it attended south, but the next week you're working with a different client. That's very upbeat about the whole situation, or as implementing great things that went beyond your expectations and finding those little wins along the way, and building that momentum both professionally and personally and the way I've kept myself motivated.

Charlie ([34:56](#)):

Oh, great, great advice. Let's say, someone listened to this podcast and they are thinking of jumping into this green building movement. What words of encouragement do you have for them?

Grant ([35:06](#)):

Sure. This is actually very relevant because I host a workshop at Western University every year for a master's program. It's just a little two day thing in the green building industry, but these kids come from very diverse backgrounds. There could be forestry, undergrads, there could be engineering, there could be social sciences, there's all sorts of different backgrounds that they come to this environmental master's program. I dedicate a small portion of that to getting into the industry and the really encouraging thing for me, especially in the last five years since I've been doing this workshop is the number of opportunities, have just blossomed incredibly. I don't want to put a number to it because I can't say doubled

tripled. Every firm out there, whether you're selling coffee or you're making cars or you're building buildings is now tending towards this sustainability conversation.

Grant ([36:05](#)):

And there are positions that didn't exist five or 10 years ago in every industry with respect to environmental performance. Some of them are just on reporting and some of them are more in depth on say the engineering or technical side. Regardless of whether you want to get into the building industry or not, I think the number of green opportunities, if you will, has grown so much that you can find a position to advance the sustainability process and mindset specifically in the building industry. We're seeing things like, well, get a lot more attention the zero carbon standard coming up. So as these, these metrics and more life cycle assessments are being done. I don't think the green building industry is ever going to be in a place where it wraps up and says, "We've done everything we can, everyone's out of a job."

Grant ([36:54](#)):

There's no finish line. In a good way, that means there's always opportunities for people to find their way in the industry and contribute. Obviously a cynic would say, "We may never get to where we need to get, but I don't think that talk is relevant because we're doing the best we can and we're trying to get there wherever there might be. There's a lot of ways to do it and I think anyone who wants a green job, if you want to call it that, can find one.

Charlie ([37:22](#)):

I really enjoyed our conversation today with everybody. Make sure you connect with Grant. This has been Grant Peter's coming to us from Ontario. He's the manager of Green Building Services at Fluent Group Consulting Engineers. He's a LEED Fellow. I really thank you for your time today.

Grant ([37:38](#)):

Yeah, that's fine.

Charlie ([37:43](#)):

I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters podcast. Me and the entire team are stoked and just so glad to continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you were getting straight from us straight to you. Thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building Matters podcast@gbs.com. Our mission is to advance the green building movement through best in class education and encouragement. Remember, you can go to gbes.com/podcast for any notes and the links that we mentioned in today's episode, and you can actually see the other episodes that have already been recorded with our amazing, yes. Please tell your friends about this podcast, tell your colleagues, and if you really enjoyed it, leave a positive review on iTunes. Thank you so much. And we'll see you in next week's episode.