# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AT PROPELLER

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# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## A REFLECTION OF OUR CORE VALUES

***Our corporate social responsibility (CSR) vision is a product of our firm's eight core values. These values have served as a backbone for how we form strategy, serve our clients, hire a workforce, partner within our communities, and act as a steward. With those values, we frame our CSR vision as an intersection of our economic, social, and environmental contributions and impacts at both the individual and firm levels.***

The success of our firm is a direct result of the people we employ. As we grow our team, we continuously strive to ***commit to people*** and ***uplift our communities*** in ways that embody our principles and core values. Our commitment to people, evident in both our commitment to client relationships and our diligence in developing our team, is a foundational practice that allows us to grow while ***embracing our differences***.

***Serving exceptionally*** describes how we treat our client engagements, but also extends to how we craft our strategy to reduce our environmental impact. That sentiment is echoed by our commitment to always ***do good work*** and deliver solutions to our clients that allow our partners to reach new heights in their industries.

Other core values, like ***drive forward*** and ***harness grit***, provide a foundation for how we will grow our CSR efforts while not sacrificing firm or employee growth, or our Propeller culture. We recruit people who are ***humble, but smart enough to have an ego***. This is, in part, because we believe that such intelligence and humility will be crucial in building a more equitable and sustainable future in the world of business.

This report represents Propeller's first step toward educating ourselves about our own impact while building bridges among our current partners and clients.

02

# FIRM STANDING

## AT PROPELLER, GROWTH IS A CONSTANT

*Since its founding in 2012, one of Propeller's core tenants has been a commitment to responsible growth. This commitment includes increasing our employee headcount, growing our geographic presence, and expanding our client service offering – all with the goal to provide the clients we care about with the services and support they need.*

*Year after year Propeller has expanded to new industries, locations, companies, and people. In 2019, we took our growth to a whole new level.*

# OUR PRESENCE

*At Propeller, we emphasize the value of working, developing, and supporting growth in the communities where we live. Our hyper-local business model gives Propeller consultants the opportunity to work with organizations within their own communities—reducing our carbon footprint and facilitating a connection between the work we do and the people and places we call home. We now proudly serve four geographies across the United States– Denver, CO; Silicon Valley, CA; Portland, OR; San Francisco, CA.*

**90+%**
ORGANIC LEADERSHIP GROWTH

**PORTLAND**
108 NW 9th Ave Suite 300
Portland, OR 97209
info@propellerpdx.com
503•946•1505

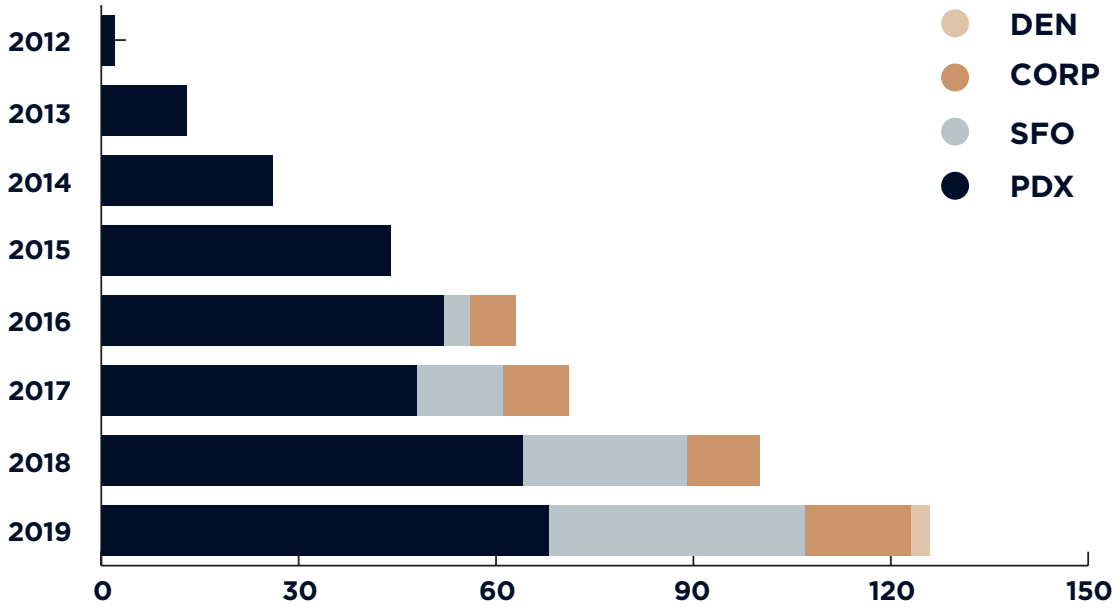
**SAN FRANCISCO**
832 Sansome Street FL 4
San Fransisco, CA 94111
info@propellersfo.com
415•885•9227

**DENVER**
1700 Lincoln Street Suite 17-120
Denver, CO 80204
info@propellerden.com
303•306•8116

**SILICON VALLEY**
5201 Great America Pkwy Suite 3210
Santa Clara, CA 95054
info@propellersfo.com
415•885•9227

★ NEW OFFICE 2019

## EMPLOYEE GROWTH BY HEADCOUNT



OUR EXPERIENCE

# INDUSTRIES SERVED

*Our consultants support a broad array of businesses and organizations across eight different industries*

FINANCIAL SERVICES

TECHNOLOGY

ENERGY / UTILITIES

HEALTHCARE

EDUCATION / CHILDCARE

MANUFACTURING

RETAIL

PUBLIC SECTOR

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

# PRACTICE AREAS

***Propeller is grounded in our commitment to do well for the clients and communities we support, while always looking for ways to do more. Recognizing an ongoing opportunity to support our clients in new ways, in 2019 Propeller developed two new practice areas: Experience Design and Data & Analytics. Propeller now provides expertise and leadership support to clients across four distinct functional areas.***

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The practice that enables organizations to successfully achieve a desired future state.

## AGILE

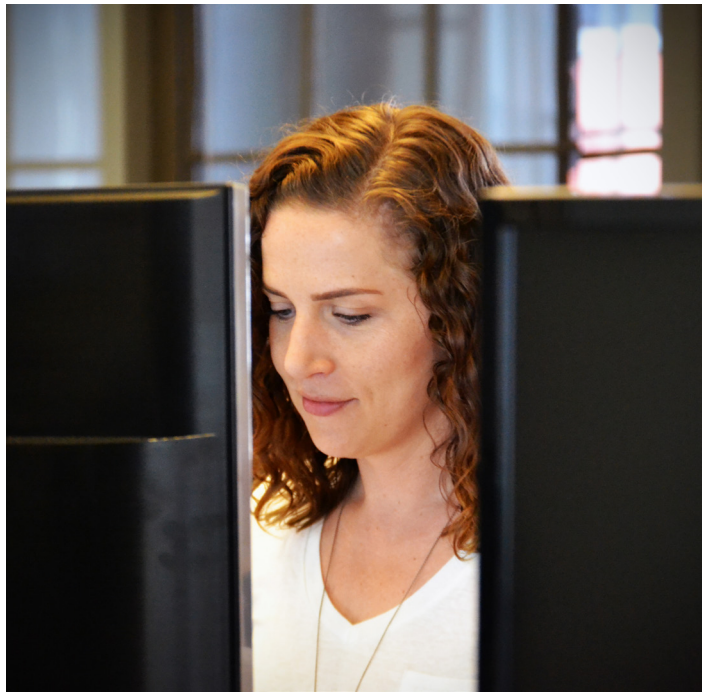
A set of principles that enables teams and organizations to better identify and deliver the most value more effectively.

## EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Curating personal, emotionally resonant exchanges between a customer or employee and a brand.

## DATA ANALYTICS

Data collection, management, analysis, and reporting to solve specific business problems.



# OUR AWARDS

*We don't do it for the awards, but it's nice to be recognized. Throughout our history, Propeller has excelled in our work and been honored with recognition from the industry's leading publications and organizations.*

**100 BEST MEDIUM WORKPLACES**
*#88, Fortune, 2019*

**#81 FASTEST GROWING COMPANY**
*Portland Business Journal 100 Fastest Growing, 2019*

**BEST WORKPLACES,**
*Inc., 2019*

**#27 BEST WORKPLACE IN CONSULTING & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (SM & MED COMPANIES)**
*Fortune, 2019*

**#12 MEDIUM-SIZED COMPANY**
*Oregon Business Magazine 100 Best Companies to Work For, 2019*

**FINALIST: BEST CORPORATE STEWARD (SMALL AND MIDDLE-MARKET BUSINESSES)**
*U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2018 & 2019*

**EXCELLENCE IN SOCIAL & COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**
*Consulting Magazine, 2017*

**SILVER CERTIFIED, 2018–2021, SUSTAINABILITY AT WORK**
*City of Portland*

**CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS**
*California Green Business Network, 2019*

FORTUNE · GREEN CALIFORNIA GREEN BUSINESS NETWORK · Inc. · Oregon Business MAGAZINE · THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE · CONSULTING THE PEOPLE • THE PROFESSION • THE LIFESTYLE · CITY OF PORTLAND OREGON 1851 · PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL

# OUR LARGEST CSR IMPACTS ARE OFTEN WITH OUR CLIENTS

***Propeller's diverse experience in project delivery and stakeholder management across various sectors includes a multitude of examples of how the firm has been able to amplify our clients' CSR efforts. Following is a sampling of projects that showcases our propensity to reach beyond our clients' bottom lines to achieve a greater good.***

CASE STUDY

## GOING PAPERLESS AT A FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPANY

The executive team of a national financial services company set the goal of moving 20 years of vital paper documents, which spanned 10 divisions and 1,400 employees, onto a digital platform within two years. Propeller was charged with the implementation and the development of governance structures, standardized reporting, coordinated business processes and employee training. The result of the engagement was a 40% increase in processing time and annual savings of over $10 million.

CASE STUDY

## A LARGE SOFTWARE COMPANY IMPROVES THEIR EMPLOYEES' COMMUTES

The goal of the project was to develop a set of recommendations for a commuting solution that put employee values at the center of its design to unlock infrastructure constraints, reduce the company's carbon footprint, and save employees the hassle and expense of driving into work.

CASE STUDY

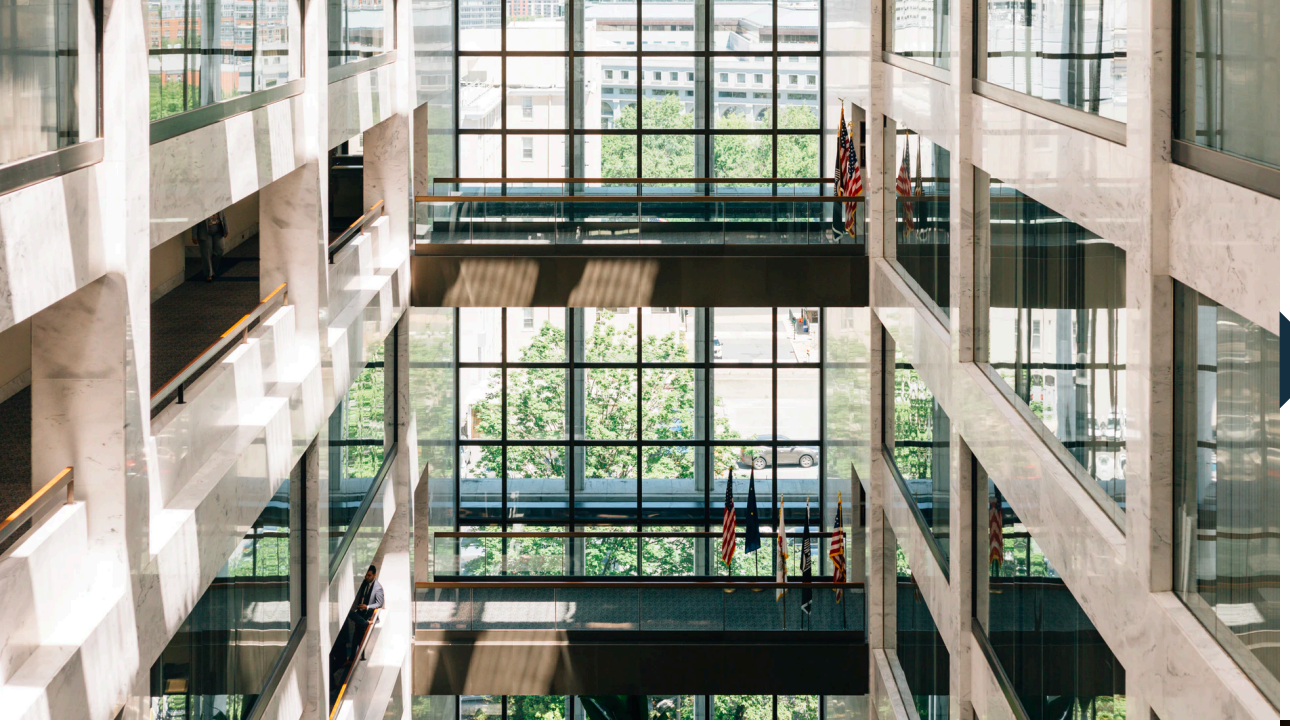
## FACILITATING BOARD EFFECTIVENESS AT LOCAL NONPROFIT

A large, local nonprofit added several new board members and underwent a shift in its strategic plan. Propeller led the nonprofit's leadership and key board members through an engaging organizational design that helped align the group on future strategy, vision and goals.

CASE STUDY

## A GLOBAL RETAILER INTRODUCES SUSTAINABLE POLYESTER INTO ITS SUPPLY CHAIN

Cross-functional teams comprised of experts from supply chain, sourcing, costing, analytics, product, and sustainability formulated a strategy on how to manufacture polyester products more sustainably. We explored alternative feedstocks (i.e. recycled bottles and recycled textiles), compared processes with the lowest carbon footprint, and identified which types of products (fleece) presented the largest opportunity.



CASE STUDY

## DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION AT AN EDUCATION SOFTWARE

We partnered with the Learning and Development and executive teams of an education software company to create a more inclusive and safer workplace environment following an acquisition. Propeller provided two skilled practitioners to facilitate a half-day introductory workshop on fundamental Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) concepts and conflict styles.

CASE STUDY

## A GLOBAL RETAILER REDUCES HIGHLY REGULATED CHEMICALS IN THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN

The chemistry department set ambitious goals for making the brand's chemical footprint more sustainable. They enlisted Propeller to provide strategic direction and lead execution of the project.

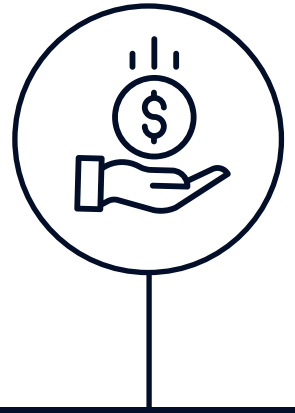
# PEOPLE AND IMPACT

## CREATING A LASTING IMPACT STARTS WITH INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

***At Propeller, our strong sense of culture manifests in our people. Our employees are at the core of our business, and they are the reason our clients keep coming back to us. Given the importance of our employees, in both our culture and our business model, Propeller is deeply committed to ongoing investments in our professional development.***

OUR EMPLOYEES

# EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



Propeller is entirely employee owned through an Employee Stock Ownership Program (ESOP)

$50

Employees are reimbursed for health and wellness expenses up to $50 per month

$4000

Training allocation of $4,000 per year to pursue educational or professional interests

401(k)

Sustainable 401(k) investment options were introduced company-wide in 2018

8 weeks paid parental leave for any new parents regardless of employee gender, or whether it is a new birth or adoption

# PROPEL HER

*Propel Her takes making a difference seriously. In 2017, three women founded our first gender diversity initiative, Propel Her. Propel Her is a woman-focused initiative launched to help women increase their presence, influence and professional partnerships in their communities and the workplace. Through its events and partnerships, Propel Her aims to provide guidance and tools that support female leaders, including mentorship, negotiations, conflict resolution, and leadership.*

## SOME OF PROPEL HER'S RECENT STANDOUT ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- *Hosting a series of co-sponsored mentorship events with Hult International Business School*
- *Leading an anti-harassment workshop that re-enforced the firm's commitment to fair leadership*
- *Delivering a 6-month mentorship program aimed at supporting women through various aspects of their personal and professional growth.*

# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY IS AN EXTENSION OF HOW WE INVEST IN OUR CLIENTS & OURSELVES

*Propeller's commitment to excellence extends beyond solving our client's problems. We are actively involved in numerous volunteering, philanthropic, and pro-bono arrangements with community partners. This commitment to community and corporate responsibility reflects the shared values of Propellerites throughout the firm. While many of our people use their personal time for numerous forms of community involvement, our firm-wide efforts are generally spearheaded by our internal initiatives — namely the Uplift, Propel Her, and Sustainability teams.*

PORTLAND'S MANAGING **DIRECTOR AJ OBERLAND** SUMMARIZES OUR APPROACH,

**"As Propeller has grown and we've worked to codify and mature our culture, community service has become a cornerstone of the firm. Our success as a consulting firm is predicated on strong customer service for our clients. That service mindset has been foundational in the way we've grown our support of the community."**

# UPLIFT

*Uplift, Propeller's community service program, aims to make a lasting impact on organizations by building deep partnerships that leverage our consultants' skills, experience, and thought leadership. Uplift has led professional development workshops, facilitated board offsites, aided in leadership goal setting, and mentored prospective small business owners.*

## UPLIFT SETS BOLD GOALS EVERY YEAR. HERE'S HOW WE MEASURE UP:

**1,353** PAID HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

**352** PRO BONO HOURS

**80%** LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION

**59%** PARTICIPATION RATE

2017

**$50**

EMPLOYEE MATCH LAUNCHED

2018

**40%**

EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATED IN MATCHING PROGRAM

2018

**34**

NONPROFITS WE CONTRIBUTED TO

# GIVING / PHILANTHROPY

In addition to giving our time, the Propeller team is committed to giving to our community in meaningful ways. Through a $50 employee match launched in 2017, we support organizations that inspire our team members. In 2018, roughly 40% of our employees participated in the matching program, allowing Propeller to contribute to 34 nonprofit organizations. Our employees also participate in annual school supply drives in each geography, and a giving tree for one of our key nonprofit partners.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Our strategic nonprofit partners, Mercy Corps NW, Impact NW, and Dress for Success are partnerships that have opened a wide range of opportunities for Propeller employees to get involved and use their skills. Here are just a few examples of how these partnerships come to life:

- Portland based Mercy Corps NW's goal is to invest in communities by supporting hopeful small business owners, unlocking possibilities for life after prison, and strengthening community resilience. In 2018, Propellerites contributed 550+ hours to strategy work, small business counseling, and facilitation.

- In San Francisco, Uplift partnered with Dress for Success to support their mission of empowering women to achieve economic independence. Propeller offers a complimentary skill set to Dress for Success's clients in preparing women with interview prep skills and professional development tools needed to succeed in their careers.

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

## HAVING A HYPER-LOCAL CONSULTING MODEL IS KEY TO OUR REDUCED ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

***Propeller strives to live and work holistically and responsibly while creating economic value within the confines of our environment and community. As a professional consulting services firm, our environmental impact is limited to the office space we occupy and the required transportation for client work. This report establishes a benchmark, namely in our greenhouse gas emissions, from which we can begin to develop strategic actions. As we continue to grow in employees and locations, we'll prioritize decisions in their impact against our greenhouse gas emissions and resource usage.***

# GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS METRICS

***As a growing firm, our greenhouse gas emissions are heavily correlated to our transportation footprint. While our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions are limited to energy usage within our office (natural gas and electricity, respectively), our Scope 3 emissions — transportation — make up over 96% of our greenhouse gas profile.***

**4**

METRIC TONS

## SCOPE 01

Emissions that are a result of energy being used onsite (ex. natural gas for heating)

**4**

METRIC TONS

## SCOPE 02

Emissions that are a result of energy being generated offsite (ex. electricity)

**213**

METRIC TONS

## SCOPE 03

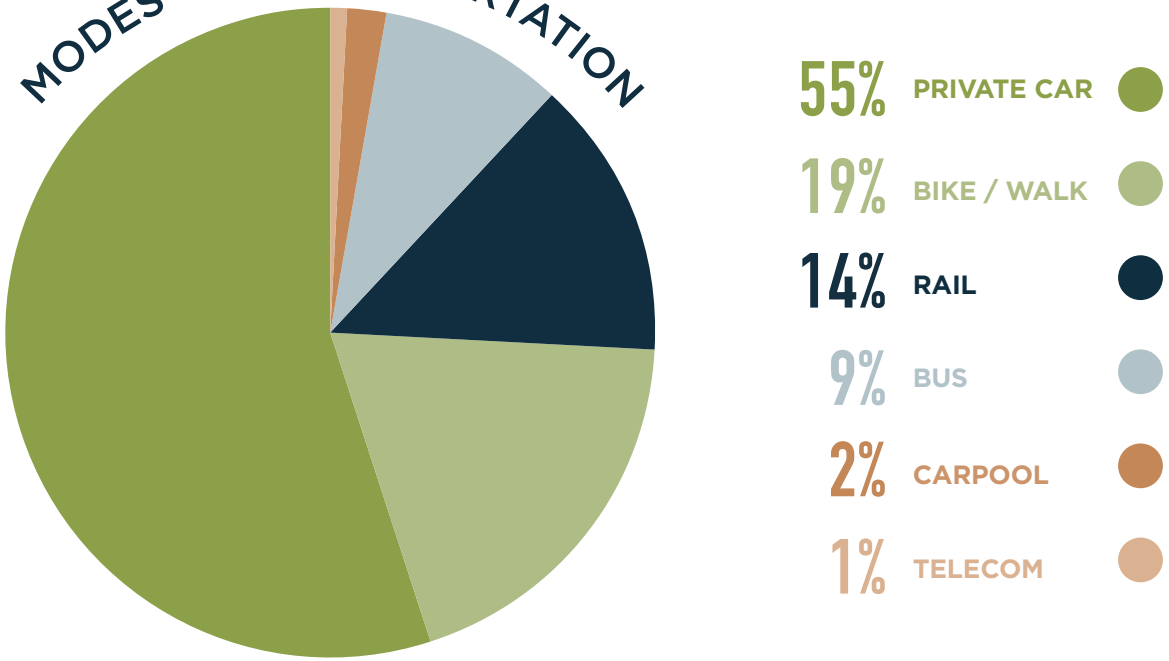
Emissions from other sources including transportation, purchasing, and more

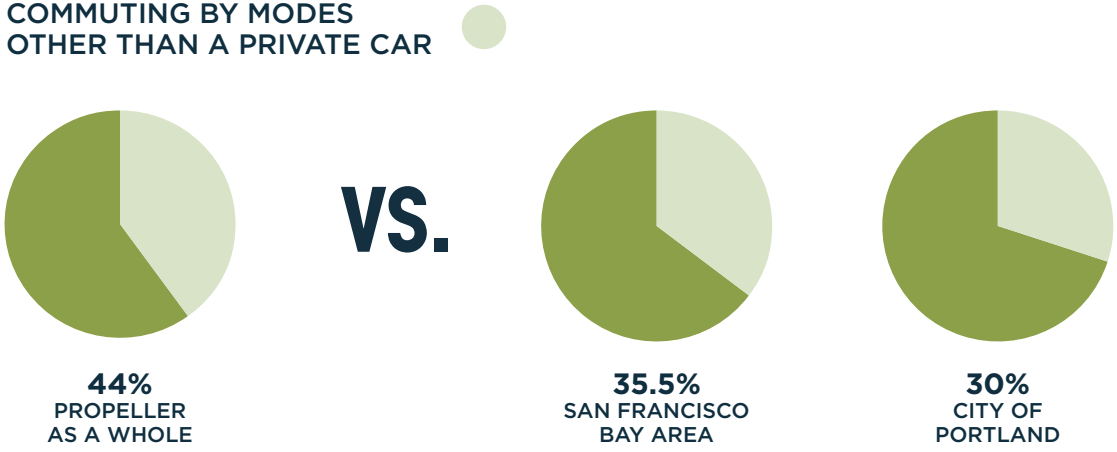
TOTAL EMISSIONS = **221** METRIC TONS OF CO2 EQUIVALENT

# HOW WE COMMUTE

*As an initial benchmark, this will help us strategize going forward how we can better take advantage of telecommuting and virtual work, while further incentivizing urban mobility alternatives instead of private cars.*

*That said, ~44% of our staff company-wide commutes by modes other than a private car. Compared to recent municipal averages, this is 8.5 percentage points higher than the Bay Area average[1] and 14 percentage points higher than the Portland average[2]. Nonetheless, transportation will be a strategic priority going forward, with the goal of reducing this emission total while growing the firm.*




1 http://www.vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/commute-mode-choice
2 https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/you-are-here-snapshot-how-portland-region-gets-around

# ELEVATING OUR SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE

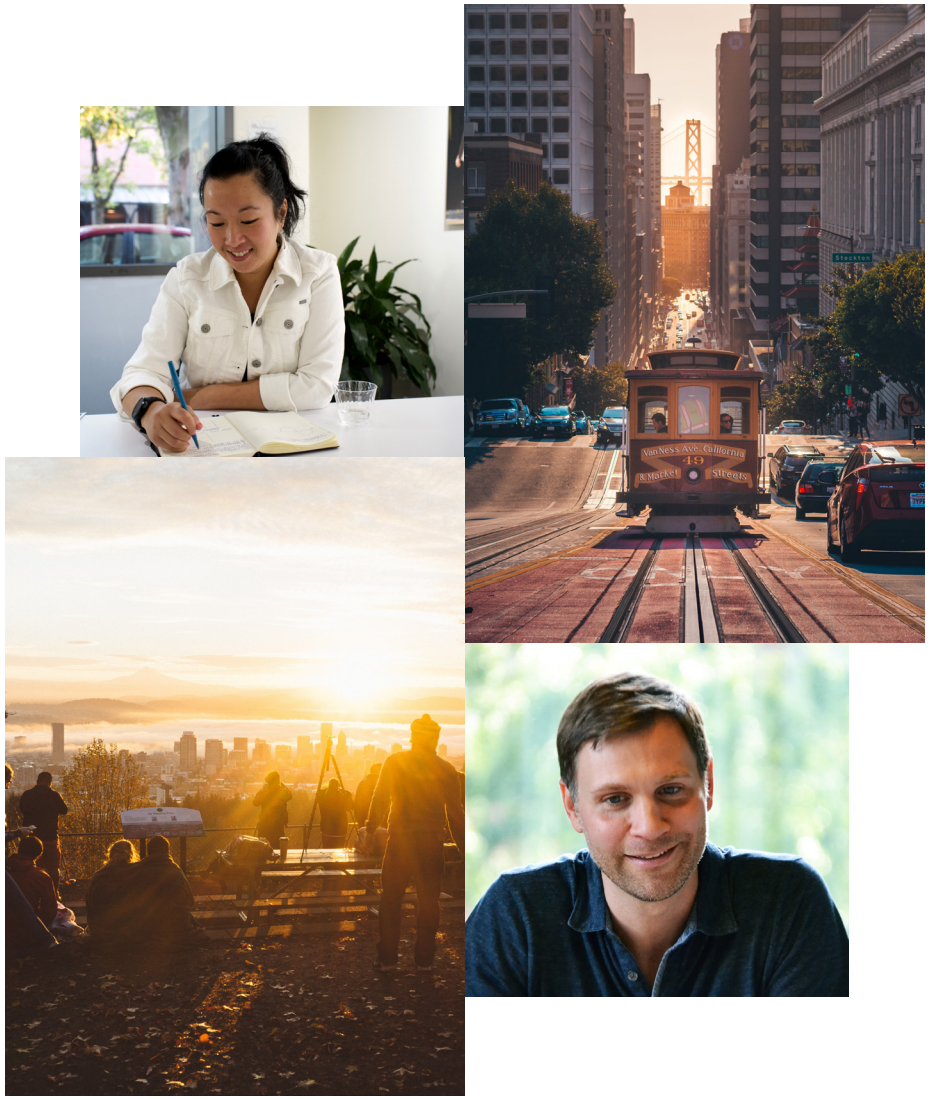
## Sustainability Certifications
## SFO & PDX

*In 2018, our headquarters in Portland achieved a Silver rating in the City of Portland's Sustainability at Work program. Not to be outdone, our new office in San Francisco was certified in 2019 by California's Green Business Program. These efforts helped us establish resource benchmarks while prompting us to craft our own environmental and procurement policies.*

*Selection criteria for our new office in San Francisco (and future offices) included sustainability standards, ensuring that our new location had the most up-to-date resource efficient technologies.*

GREEN
CALIFORNIA GREEN BUSINNES NETWORK

Sustainability at Work
2018-2021
SILVER
CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



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# CLOSING THOUGHTS

*In 2020, we will utilize the framework provided by our "Sustainability at Work" and "Green Business Program" partners in both Portland and San Francisco to determine best practices to reduce our impact in the areas of water, waste, transportation, and energy. Additionally, as our internal CSR committees mature, we will build our voice throughout the firm and within our community while continuing to grow and mature our giving programs.*

# LOOKING AHEAD

- *Improving data collection and accuracy around our environmental impact, relying less on assumptions*
- *Establishing benchmarks within the Professional Services sector to measure ourselves against*
- *Auditing the implementation of our procurement policy and re-engaging internal staff on this recent change*
- *Training newly hired employees on the company's CSR and sustainability policies and best practices*
- *Upgrading old technologies (ex. auto-shut-off light switches, faucet aerators) at our offices (as permitted through our tenant agreement)*
- *Reducing our commuter miles through incentives and education*
- *Establishing guidelines for internally sponsored events and catering*
- *Explore creative ways to engage employees in volunteer efforts – including open speed mentoring for nonprofit staff and build scalable structure to support Uplift in new geographies*