

# *Julian Weber Architecture and Design*

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Company Profile, SWOT, Web Presence  
Analysis, and Sustainability Report

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## 1 Executive Summary

Since the beginning of the twentieth century technological improvement in agriculture combined with the concentration of opportunities in metropolitan centers has led to an urban migration into cities. Post World War II the US saw an increase around urban areas a phenomenon referred to as urban sprawl. Urban sprawl is a product of new construction being cheaper to develop in new frontier, often just beyond city limits. This mechanism allowed developers to purchase affordable land (did not account for externalities imposed on environment or society) and the families to secure affordable housing (for the baby boom). Suburban development has been a continued movement in the US, but imposes an inefficient allocation and consumption of resources.

Thought leaders around the world have recognized that there are efficiencies of scale gained when increasing population densities. Densification can increase the efficiencies of governmental infrastructure and the benefits available in civilized societies while protecting natural and agricultural lands (there are other benefits, but these are a few main considerations). Many countries have already adjusted how they protect natural, social and fiscal resources and approach urban planning with a holistic approach to balancing the needs of society and nature.

The Julian Weber Architecture and Design Company (JW A+D) is based in Seattle, and is working to bring these forward looking ideas to scale in the local area. Their design features are utilized by builders to offer the end users an affordable and well thought-out modern living environment, with features that go beyond the typical into the realm of truly sustainable living.

Although their current market position is creating opportunities for growth and sufficient revenue for sustainment, to set the stage for increased growth while maintaining the values and message of the company, Julian Weber must take several key steps in the near future. This report will document the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the company, the key areas of sustainability that Julian Weber currently embraces, and the market position the company operates within today. Finally, this report contains several recommendations that, while seemingly simple on the surface, may result in substantial gains in revenue, growth potential, employee satisfaction, and enhanced brand equity.

## 2 Julian Weber Architecture and Design –Overview

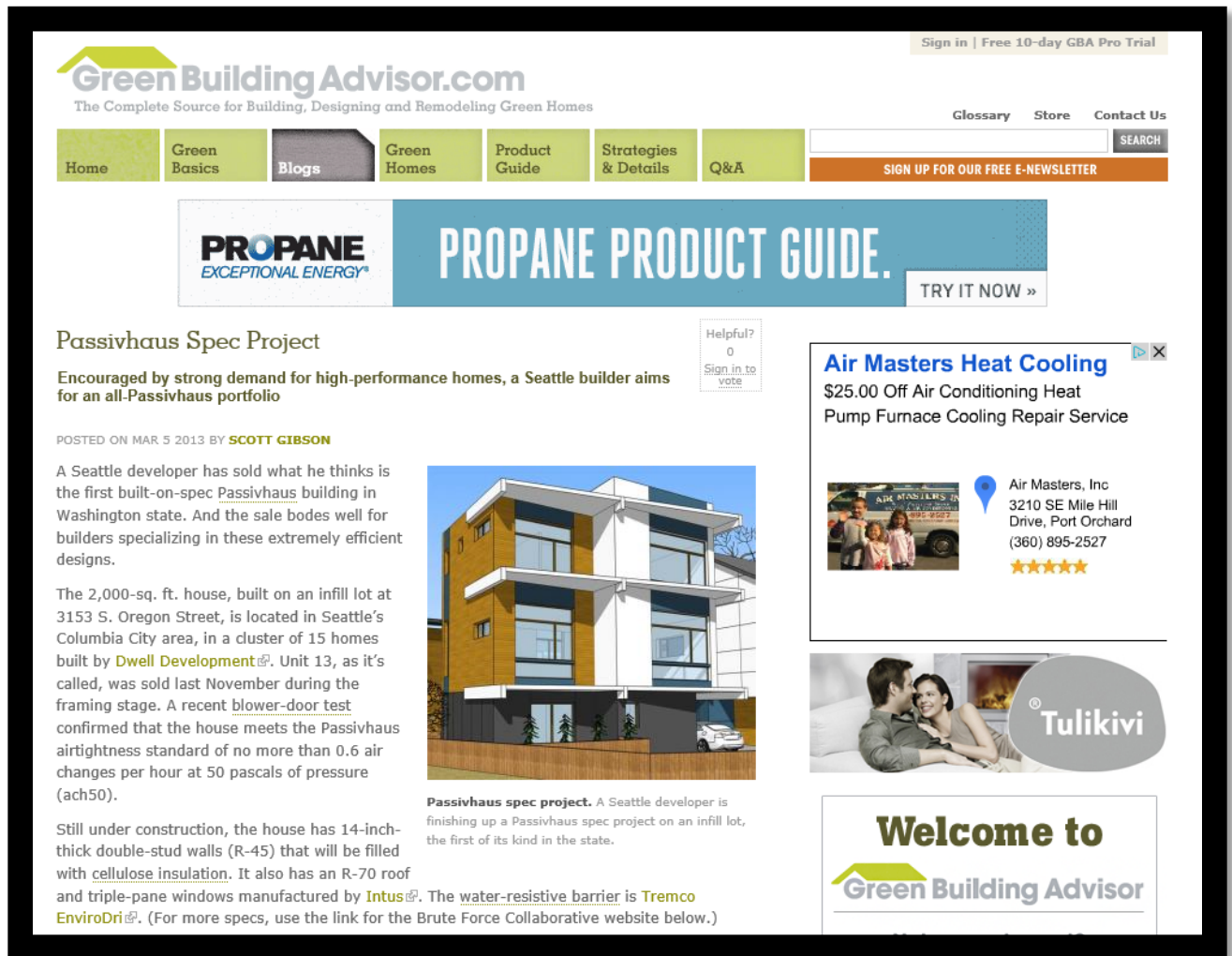
Julian Weber A + D, LLC chiefly focuses on designing townhomes to support the growing urban infill market. They are diversifying their project portfolio towards larger apartment complexes and single-family homes to be positioned better for the cyclical housing market.

Julian Weber is a licensed architect through the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He started the company in his garage in January 2012 and by September he had a lease on office space; he currently has 11 employees. Their chief sustainability asset is urban infill, where they retire obsolete inventory; old inefficient single-family homes are replaced with new, efficient multi-family units. This creates micro-communities due to the close proximity of the units, compared with traditional suburban housing complexes. People tend to stay in neighborhoods longer when they like their neighbors which increases efficiency. To increase the sustainability and efficiency of the units they can leverage the programs that are already available to work towards these goals; Built Green, Passivhaus and LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design).

Built Green is a non-profit organization that promotes green building and educational programs. Julian Weber A+D fits into this space through designing and overseeing the construction of Built Green properties. Through satisfying six action categories as part of the checklist criteria points are earned and a third party verification takes place after construction to receive a four or five star rating. Julian Weber A+D only works toward four and five star ratings because of the value associated with the third party verification requirement.

Passivhaus regularly yields 90% energy savings compared with typical building stock. This is obtained through passive heating and cooling techniques such as strategic shading and smart windows. The hard requirement of the program is for the building to verify strict airtightness requirements by testing. For the test the building is sealed and slightly pressurized. The rate of the pressure leakage must be 0.6 air changes per hour at 50 Pascals pressure. The program has received a lot of attention and enthusiasm from builders as shown in the spec. house shown in Figure 1. Here the builders are ready to mass produce these buildings which will greatly increase sustainability in Seattle.

Fig. 1



LEED is part of the United States Green Building Council. Points are awarded based on sustainability criteria such as energy usage, materials, green infrastructure and indoor environment quality. The points add together to achieve levels upon completion of the building the paperwork is submitted at the level of certification is granted by third party verification. Buildings receive Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. (<http://www.usgbc.org/leed/rating-systems>) Julian Weber A + D has yet to deliver a LEED certified project because of the cost associated with the paperwork process and the delay required before the certification is achieved. It can easily take six months after project completion before the certification is awarded. During this time the builder is sitting on the property and losing money which reduces their profit. (Interview)

There are also a lot of incentives associated with these programs. Lead times for obtaining a permit required to begin construction are greatly reduced for buildings that will follow these guidelines. Their permits are placed ahead of single-family homes in the queue. The use of urban infill adds multiple family units to a single plot, which do not require

additional infrastructure to support the density. The city does not need to run extra power, sewage or water lines to the plot. These inherent sustainable characteristics need increased visibility to raise the profile of the company in the Seattle builder community. Julian Weber A + D has allocated a marketing budget for 2014 to ensure their sustainable projects are leveraged across the industry.

### 3 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Sustainability Statement

The current “Community and Sustainability” page on the company website reads as follows:

JWA+D has a strong commitment to creating community and sustainable construction with several projects selected as case-studies for the Master Builders Association's Built Green website: [Rainier Vista micro-community 436 26th Ave. S. 1756, 1758, 1760, & 1762 18th Avenue S](#)

JWA+D worked successfully with Seattle Housing Authority, creating distinct, innovative homes at New Rainier Vista, a large-scale planned community in Seattle.

JWA+D master-planned 25 homes in New Rainier Vista with Dwell Development, a progressive client that shares a commitment to community-making and sustainable construction. The result, Columbia Station by Dwell Development, is one of the greenest communities in the country. Located on a brownfield site and close to light rail transit, the homes in Columbia Station are built with super-insulated, double-wall construction, triple-pane glazing and heat recovery.

Columbia Station was selected by Habitat for Humanity as the site for its prototypical "Home of the Immediate Future" designed by the Miller | Hull Partnership. JWA+D is working with Habitat and the design team to create a permanent location for this model home after it's exhibition at the Seattle Center.

At JWA+D, community design strategies are a natural extension of their consistent vision and integrated design solutions.

It is the finding of our group that, while the above statements are a good start towards expressing the mission of JW A+D, it doesn't paint the full picture of what the company is trying to accomplish. Additionally, it is problematic that the important projects highlighted in the above text are not more prominently discussed, displayed or linked. For a company of JW's size, a full Corporate Social Responsibility or Sustainability Report may be more than is warranted to achieve desired results. We recommend that JW A+D adopt a “sustainability statement”, to clearly articulate the CEO vision for the company's ability to contribute to the community and population's continued well-being through its sustainable design efforts and keen social values. An example statement might read as follows:

*“Sustainability is central to our design premise as well as our operational focus. We share our yearly operational objectives as well as our design activities to drive continual improvement and innovation in achieving a triple bottom line approach to managing our business.*

*As our company evolves, the impact we at JW A+D have in working with our build clients is further realized. We need to reach for greater efficiency and set the standards as thought leaders in Seattle. For example, as energy efficiency becomes a mainstream focus, we need to expand further into water efficiency and control of waste in all of our activities.*

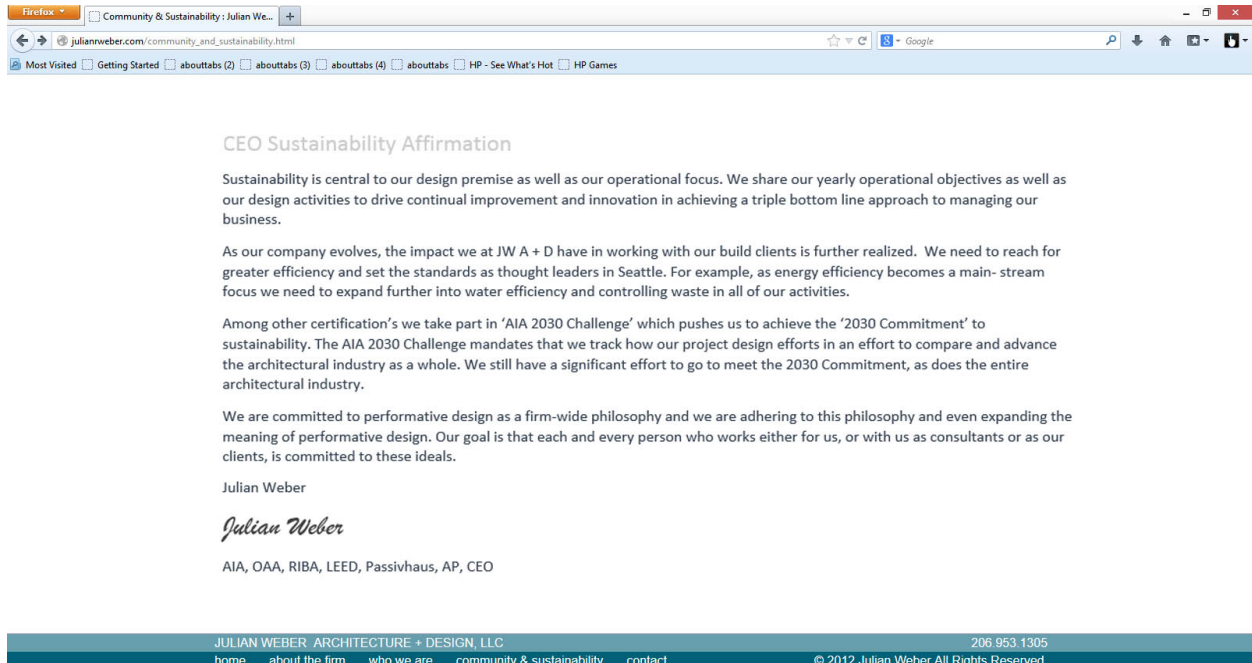
*Among other certifications, we take part in the “AIA 2030 Challenge”, which pushes us to achieve the “2030 Commitment” to sustainability. The AIA 2030 Challenge mandates that we track our project design efforts to compare and advance the architectural industry as a whole. We still have a significant way to go to meet the 2030 Commitment, as does the entire Architectural industry.*

*We are committed to performative design as a firm-wide philosophy and we are adhering to this philosophy while expanding the meaning of performative design. Our goal is that through a collaborative process, each and every person who works either for us or with us in consultancy or as clients, will be committed to these ideals.”*

Adding a statement similar to the above adds clarity to the sustainability goals of the company, while allowing someone browsing the web page to get a clear feel for what the company is trying to accomplish. The CEO Affirmation should be further tailored as appropriate by the company, and then added as a visual to their current Community and Sustainability page. This paragraph should be highlighted as a key part of the values of this company. (See Fig 2.)



Fig. 2



## 4 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Business Analysis

In this section, we will discuss the current business JW A+D conducts, and its marketing efforts with respect to sustainability. This will include a look at metrics used within the design, building, and real estate sales industries, the sustainable frameworks used and available, the current market position, and the sustainable values that are inherent to the company’s work within their operations area.

70% of JW design is driven by the structure of the site. The genesis of the project is the site visit. The Architects work to build in areas they know, so they understand the neighborhood and the issues that they are facing both socially and environmentally. The ascetics espoused at JW and the architecture toolkit drive their end designs.

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### 4.1 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Metrics

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“Being green in Seattle has clear value. The **metrics** might not be there, but real estate and builders get it. There has been a push by some of our clients and the MBA (Master Builders Association) to recognizing the value increase in green projects.” -Julian Weber

This section will address the value of these different measurements to costumers not the specific requirements of those systems.

The frameworks and metrics that are used for the Architectural industry are used in concert with those employed in the building industry because the two are in a symbiotic relationship; separating out certifications and consecrations would be a Sisyphean task. With that understanding we will explore these considerations and some the systems that govern them.

#### 4.1.1 Energy savings and efficiency

Structures allow us to be protected from the world around us. The material that is chosen to create that protection has a set of attributes and those will affect aspects of a home. One of these attributes is the R-value and it is a measure of the resistance of heat transfer across the material with the higher R-value materials having better insulating properties. This is important because the largest energy usage for most homes is heating and cooling the interior space.

Passivhaus being a system that that is primarily concerned with the energy usage of a house can provide a clear roadmap to goals that can be clearly communicated. The two weakness of this system is that it was design in Germany and is not well known in the United States. The other weakness is that the metrics that are used are measurements that require some technical understanding and education of the consumer.

The Energy Star label is the system designed for appliances and rates the relative energy usage across a product type to provide a grade that allows for the clear comparison of the products at hand. While appliances are most times an afterthought in home building it can be useful incorporate them into design and customer understanding that appliances can have significant effects of the yearly energy usage of a home.

#### 4.1.2 Regulated Building Standards and optional standard systems

LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a third party certification that will confirm that a space fulfills a set of requirements that vary widely in scope. This allows for the system to work well globally and has increased in visibility and use over the past few years. This system requires the buy-in of not only the client but the builder as well because some of the measurements are related to processes. One weakness that this system has is that unless the project is commissioned by a costumer it can add a significant about of holding time to the builder or developer while the necessary paper work is produced and reviewed.

The Living Building Challenge is similar to LEED in that a building is scored on a system of standards that focuses processes, materials, and input management and conservation. Where they differ is in the ideology of the goal. Living building believes that by pushing the boundaries of what is possible in the supply of materials and by working with product producers to ensure that projects are built in the most sustainable way possible and continue to operate that way, and the more buildings that are built in this way the easier that will become for everyone to adopt this way of building. This system requires the largest amount of investment in both time and funds to ensure that all materials avoid any of the forbidden chemicals and that all the technical requirements are met.

#### 4.1.3 Age

This is a factor that is thought about less than it should be. There will always be inventory that becomes functionally obsolete, but the number of years that a building will last without major renovations or replacement can dramatically affect the value of that structure for both the short and long term. The opportunity is to not only build for the long term but find ways to inform the customer about this aspect of the building.

#### 4.1.4 MLS

The multiple listing service, which will be discussed below, lacks the ability to communicate the qualities and metrics that are discussed above. Dedication to changing this through an organized approach could be a value creator for the whole industry.

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## 4.2 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Focus and Reporting Strategies

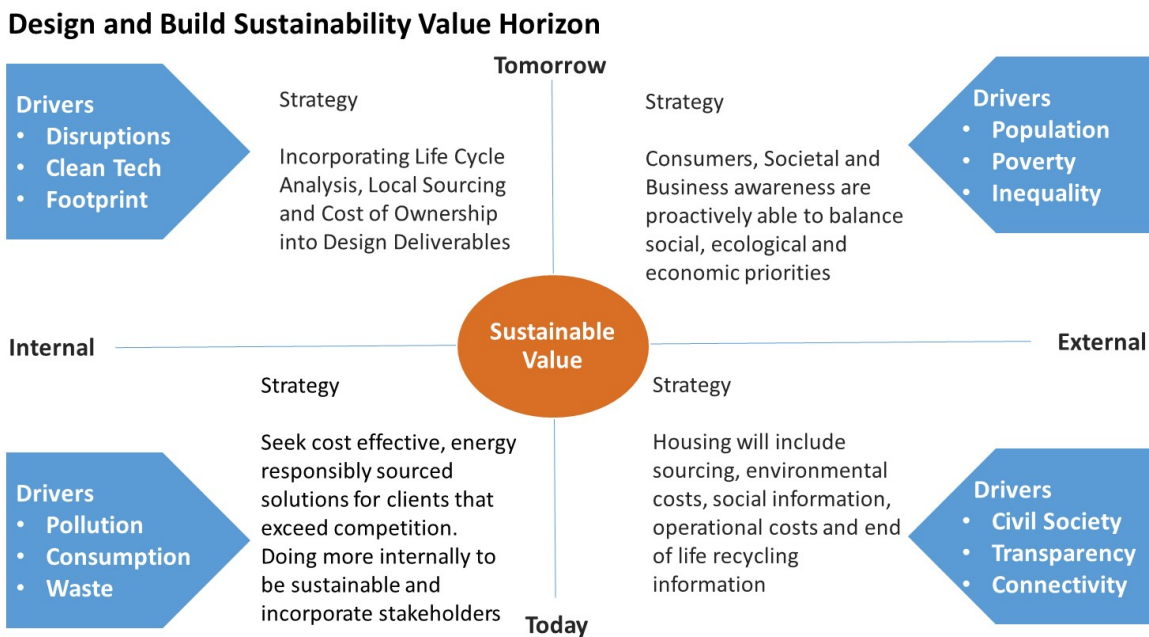
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Julian Weber A + D, LLC has sustainable practices inherent in the actions and operations of their organization. Their position on accounting for ecological, social and internal values situates them to take advantage of a quadruple bottom line approach to operations. However, like many of their competitors they have not formalized their strategy into quantifiable targets that embrace their many stakeholders. Weber is a small firm, with big aspirations, as they have shown they are not too small to take on large challenges, such as different levels of green certification and ecologically prominent design achievement (Such as their [Passivhaus Spec Project](#) or “passive house”)

Weber’s “res ipsa loquitur” (the thing speaks for itself) methodology to promoting its environmentally focused values to date is similar to other small value based companies like New Belgium Brewery, Ben and Jerry’s or Patagonia, but at some point each company had to bring their array of values into strategic focus and design benchmarks to maintain and realize those values. J.W A+D should review industry leaders in sustainability reporting like [Adrian Smith + Gordon Hill Architecture](#), or other building focused organizations like [KB Homes](#) and decide on the right level of commitment, goals and transparency to provide their stakeholders. Possible frameworks to incorporate these ideas are shown in Figures 3, 5, and 6.

A twelve person organization likely does not need a lengthy CSR report. JW A+D may be better served with a few well designed graphics and pages within their website. The content should include a series of well-defined targets interspersed with achievement and exhibit an empathy for stakeholders.

Fig. 3



Modified from Stuart Hart, Sustainability Value Diagram Circa late 1990's

## 5 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – SWOT Analysis

### 5.1 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – SWOT Overview

We chose to perform a broad look at JW A+D firm operations and planning through the lens of a “SWOT” analysis. This analysis was performed within the boundaries of an examination of the sustainability of the company, and how this might pertain to their operations. Each of the four quadrants have a direct impact to current operations and marketing, and the findings must be embraced and utilized when developing plans for future value propositions, market position, and overall operations. Below are the summary findings of our SWOT analysis (see fig. 4)

Fig. 4

## SWOT - Environmental



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## 5.2 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Strengths

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### 5.2.1 Strength – Involvement in many high profile efficiency focused projects

The way that Julian Weber A+D works to add social benefit to their buildings is to design “Urban Villages.” These are spaces that include at least 4 homes and not more than 7 and are build it a way to maximize the usable square footage and integrate the homes in a way that encourages the residence of the homes to be more connected socially and can bring shared value to the micro-community that can then take action causes that reflect their allied will.

Julian Weber A+D is working in both design and with the contractors that build their designs to reduce waste throughout the process. This includes upgrading existing infrastructure items on a lot such as electricity, water, sewage and electricity and decommissioning old inventory (mainly single family homes. In this way, urban infill takes advantage of underutilized infrastructure capacity and increases the quantity and efficiency of Seattle’s overall available inventory.

Julian Weber A+D is positioned to leverage their aptitude and experience working with builders who have chosen to certify the efficiency of their homes. In some cases the same builders have elected to promote socially conscious causes like those backed by the Seattle Housing Authority (Such as Rainier Vista project or their Passivhaus Spec Project or “passive house”).

#### 5.2.2 Strength – Startup, Growth Period

Many existing business are attempting to realign their business operations towards becoming more sustainable. Emerging companies like JW A+D are better positioned to make sustainability integral to their core competencies which could help them: create and define their competitive advantage, impact how they choose to grow and pursue profit channels and determine how they will approach/manage costs of their business to its stakeholders. Other considerations are enumerated in Bob Willard’s The sustainability advantage – Seven Business Case Benefits of a Triple Bottom Line (recruiting, attrition, employee productivity, lower manufacturing expenses, lower commercial expenses, revenue & market share, insurance & borrowing costs)

#### 5.2.3 Strength – Increased positive public awareness on the value of increasing urban densities

Seattle like many metropolitan areas ebbs and flows with being in front of or behind on its urban planning. From an economic stand point Seattle’s community leaders are concerned with providing a basis for commerce, industry and labor; specifically how they are optimized to combine as core factors of production. Urban infill has the effect of increasing the utilizing of the existing urban plan and enhancing the overall efficiency of the local community. Julian Weber and its builders retire legacy inventory (old homes) and replace the original homes with multiple homes that are highly efficient. The net impact is more people having access to reasonable housing, and a more efficient use of existing infrastructure as well as an upgraded housing stock. This phenomena is widely regarded as desirable by Seattle city planning organizations, and has led to relaxed more preferential zoning and permitting practices.

The business opportunity that JW A+D participates in, is that the public demands more efficient homes that are closer to public transportation, community centers and employment opportunities. JW A+D and its associated build partners are able to actualize their profitability between the cost of purchasing a legacy lot and building and replacing it with multiple properties with a similar retail of the inventory they replaced. This multiplier effect to urban infill provides multiple stakeholders shared value and is a strength in Julian Weber’s business model.

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## 5.3 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Weaknesses

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#### 5.3.1 Weakness – Not able to direct clients past materials specification

Architecture firms historically have engrained efficiency into their designs, but their ability to impact the building industries adoption of more progressive techniques has been limited (Julian Weber said at least since the 1960’s sustainability has been a topic of focus for architects). Builders are driven by minimizing costs and meeting minimums set by customer expectations; they (builders) have not been monetarily motivated to think sustainably. Architecture and design firms are bound to their relationships with builders and the builder bound to its end consumer’s preferences. Architects and builders of course look for win/win

scenarios where cost effective designs are also greener, but the utilization and their ingenuity progresses slowly in line w/ consumer awareness/demand reaches critical tipping points.

According to Julian Weber his firm is able to “nudge” builders through well formulated designs that save time, energy and are more efficient, but he and other firms are limited to providing materials specifications and process improvement suggestions. “When we consult with a builder on being green... it is often in an effort to save them time while also attaining green accreditation” Julian Weber

#### 5.3.2 Weakness – Homebuilders do not always have the time available to attain certifications such as LEED

The frameworks and metrics that are used for the Architectural industry are the same that are used by the construction industry as a whole and that is where the competing interests start. For example LEED has most of the benefits that are looked for when choosing a third party certification for a building project but that certification could add six months after the completion of the building to when it would be available to be listed on the market. This creates tension -

a) Between the value of the getting the certification and proving that the added cost translates into better value, and

b) The cost of holding the property over that added time must be shown to be worth it. Julian Weber A+D gains a small amount of leverage from the MBA trade group Build Green and the members of that group to aid in making homes greener.

#### 5.3.3 Weakness – JW A+D may not be able to demand (via lease) office building modifications to increase efficiencies in offices

At the current junction of the company’s evolution they lack the ability to influence their landlord to make sustainable adjustments to their space. In the future JW A+D would like to either design a new structure or select office accommodations that encapsulate many of the resource conservation techniques their projects exhibit.

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## 5.4 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Opportunities

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#### 5.4.1 Opportunity – Articulate sustainability into marketing and value position

The MLS or Multiple Listing Service is the way that properties are presented to buyers and contains a standard set of information; the number of bathrooms and bedrooms, garage space, over all square footage and other emanates like a fireplace. Julian Weber would benefit from sustainability metrics being added to the MLS checklist, such as R-Values, average energy usage, LEED, or even the obsolesce life of the products that are put into building the home. If this could be done it would give the consumer a system to judge the costs of owning the home much in the same way that one judges buying a car. It would also help Real-estate professionals influence builders by quantifying the value of sustainable features in increasing sale prices or sales velocity. This simplified system would allow for a lot of information sharing without the need for long reports.



The deficiency in the industry in relaying economic and ecologically focused building information to the end consumer, can be swayed by companies like Julian Weber. Regardless of anemic reporting metrics, there are clear indicators that Seattle consumers are basing buying decisions in part based on green certification and efficiency considerations. JW A+D has an opportunity to be ahead of compliance, conformity and reporting by including more stakeholders in its value proposition (See Summary for recommendations).

#### 5.4.2 Opportunity – Utilize third party certification and auditing where possible (AIA)

Within the Design and Architecture industry there are different awards and accreditations available. For example, the American Institute of Architects has its AIA 2030 Challenge, which mandates certain design, reporting requirements, and measures results in comparison to other firms. The participation requires effort, but helps the firm and the industry resolve shortcomings from an idyllic 2030 industry vision. Other opportunities for local achievements reside within the Master Building Association and other community based organizations; this will help them legitimize and quantify the sincerity of their sustainability efforts.

#### 5.4.3 Opportunity – Craft a white paper with a likeminded client or partner

Julian Weber's firm spends significant time and resources consulting with its clients and analyzing their needs. The end deliverable is a blueprint that encapsulates the site conditions, needs of the clients, building standards and an eye for aesthetics. Through the course of manifesting the deliverable (blueprint) they look for ways to incorporate design efficiencies (such as the long wide windows that provide more sun in the winter when the sun is low and let less light in during the summer – often on the NW side of home) with systems or materials features (such as HVAC systems or window treatments). The opportunity lies in capturing a symbiotic relationship with a client where their shared vision of the property maximized their client's retail price and satisfied a broad base of stakeholders.

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## 5.5 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Threats

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#### 5.5.1 Threat – Green competitors moving downward from commercial projects to the single family townhome sector

In recent years homebuilding margins have been slim (housing bubble and financial crisis). Builders that were able to weather the storm were able to repurpose their construction efforts to commercial or governmental infrastructure projects. As the demand for housing increases commercial builders may move down market from commercial to homebuilding. Consequently this poses a real threat to Julian Weber, because commercial projects often surpass private dwellings in their efficiency requirements as well as their accreditation. For example you will find a plethora of LEED certified new construction in Seattle, but may not be able to find any homes that have a similar certification or efficiency level. If larger architecture firms with many high profile commercial clients desire to move down market into the townhome market it may pose an imminent threat.



5.5.2 Threat – Any litigation that limits zoning, or slows permits on urban infill and townhome projects

Increased urban densities are desirable by metropolitan planning committees, but not necessarily by existing homeowners. Homeowners that form community coalitions may protest the land use and lax zone requirements (that have fostered the emerging townhome market). Existing homeowners would prefer low densities to high densities to maintain their current neighborhoods. Although this thinking is not sustainable (like driving an SUV may be more comfortable than a hybrid) it presents a real risk to the growth and prosperity of urban infill projects.

5.5.3 Threat – Not maintaining a unified sustainability vision as JW A+D expands

Growth poses many challenges to all companies, but possibly more for the sustainable focused company because of its reliance on values. Value based organizations need to review new business opportunities, operational processes and employment through multiple stakeholder lenses. This more advanced determination process adds complexity to decision process if the value proposition is not clear. Julian Weber will likely be enticed to work with builders who don't share similar values and may disregard recommendations. The threat is this could dilute their perceived value and superiority to firms that don't maintain a value based mission to the projects they elect to partake in.

5.5.4 Threat – Perception of green washing inherent with companies promoting sustainable values

The adjusted adage "No good deed goes unpunished" is appropriate for firms who take a sustainability focused approach. The threat is that there are many stakeholders with differing expectations. The goal for Julian Weber should not be to quiet all the skeptics, but hear the perceptions and make appropriate adjustments to their process. Please refer to the recommendations section for this proposed course of action to stave this and other threats.

## 6 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Sustainability Marketing and Web Presence

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### 6.1 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Current Sustainability Marketing

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JW A+D has a limited marketing budget and campaign for 2013. The website offers a link on the home page to a series of statements on one white background page. There is little on this page to get someone excited about sustainability and JW A+D. There are a few links to previous projects, many of these links were not functioning at the time of our review.

It is clear to our group, after extensive research and interviews where the firm desires to position itself in the market, however, the extent to which sustainability is a part of that position cannot be readily ascertained by a potential client visiting the website alone. This is

extremely problematic, and must be remedied. Our recommendations will be outlined later in the report, but suffice it at this point to say that the website will need to be altered to reflect the values and intentions of the firm, and to show the benefits JW brings to the client through sustainable design.

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## 6.2 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Market Offerings of Competitors

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Given the challenges that are faced by the industry as a whole that are discussed above in the SWOT analysis we explored some of the other sustainability offerings for other area Architects that can be found on the Built Green website.

What we found was that the majority of Architects and Designers are where JW is when it comes to how they market themselves from a sustainability standpoint. For most the topic of sustainability appears to be a passing thought that warrants no more than a sentence or two, with the ambitious of the group having a page on their website that has a paragraph or two that confirms that they also believe that sustainability is a positive goal to work towards. Then there are the few that take the idea of sustainability and make it their own, for example:

- Group Architect is a good example of a clear explanation that shows the commitment to sustainable action. The space is not flashy or full of self-praise. It takes some common questions and answers them in a way that breeds confidence that this is the way that they do business.
- Stuart Silk Architects is similar to Group Architect in that they also have a clear approach to their sustainability commitments. The added benefit is the presentation of metrics and facts about the environmental and social impacts of housing. This aids in showing that not only are they committed to the issues at hand but also that they understand the scope of the problems that the whole industry faces.
- Weber Thompson gains a mention in this report not because of what is said on their website but because they have gone all in on products that look to the future and try and maximize the complete usability of the space, including rooftop farms and exterior windows that double as grow spaces. Weber Thompson stands a great example of how a design firm can differentiate itself in a crowded marketplace.
- Living Shelter is another group that has used sustainability as a way to differentiate in the marketplace with clear offerings that include net zero energy usage and promoting the value of incorporating cost of operation into the planning process.

The last competitor that will be mentioned is Miller Hall. This group is also a top firm, not only for their commitment to sustainability but also their clear presentation of those ideas and

how they have successfully integrated those ideas into the work that they do. This group was specifically mentioned during the interview with Julian Weber as one of the true examples he strives to emulate.

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### 6.3 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Web Presence and Recommendations

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We discussed the web page situation with Julian Weber during our interview, and he agreed that the current iteration requires revision. The page as it stands today is markedly elegant in its simplicity but unabashedly falls short in content. The company is less than one year old, and it is obvious when one visits the home page. The firm will need to take a hard look at what features their style of design has to offer that others do not, in order to differentiate itself from the crowd, and to present the benefits associated with their product. Only when these building blocks are compiled can JW A+D move on to the next step of translating the firm's values and mission into a succinct message capable of quickly and effortlessly stating the position the company wants to occupy in the market.

We think JW A+D is poised to occupy a position in the Seattle market that has room for growth, while maintaining and leveraging their core values of sustainability. Julian Weber informed us of an impending budget increase for marketing in 2014, and he has plans to hire a consultant to assist in transitioning to success. We agree with this decision and his planned budget appears adequate to obtain the objectives at hand.

We have compiled a short list of actions JW A+D can take towards upgrading their web presence from our (sustainable) point of view:

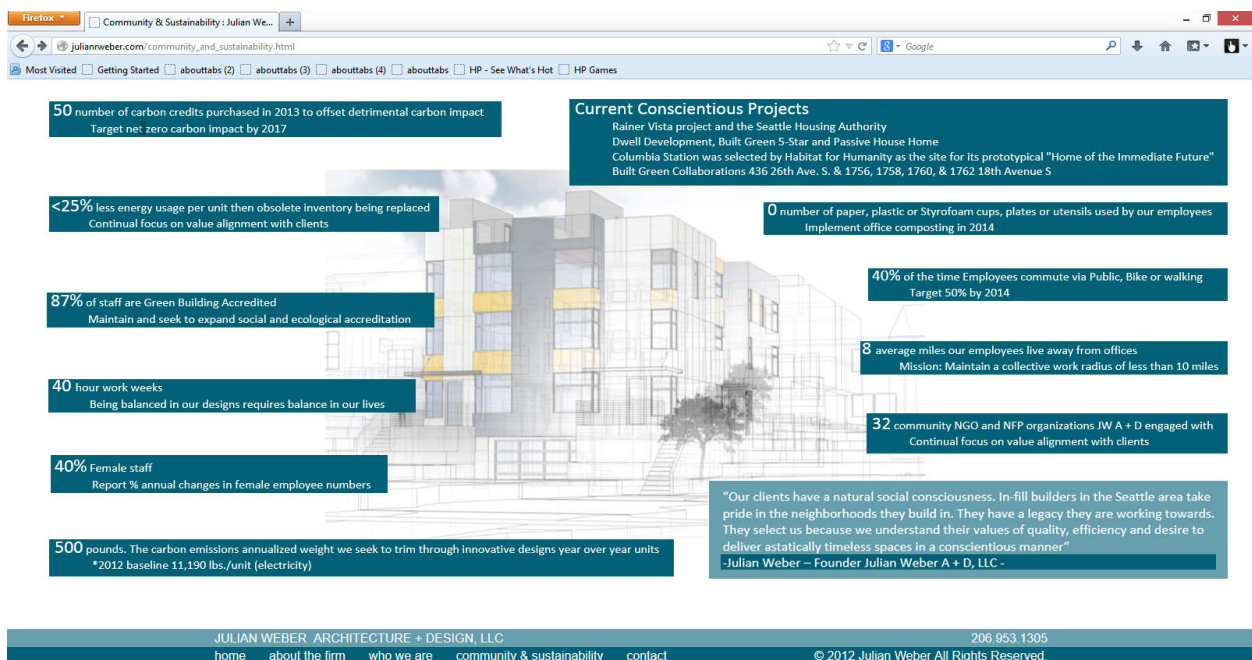
- Upgrade the examples on the page to include current and recently completed projects. All the examples available on the page now are outdated. Highlight the sustainable aspects of completed projects that reinforce the values stated in other areas. Include hard data and metrics, such as links to specifications or similar proofs used.
- Highlight awards and recognition whenever possible, especially when they are tied to sustainable features. Back these showcases up by linking to other related pages.
- Ensure any associations that JW A+D is a part of or holds membership in are noted on the webpage. Include all employee individual certifications and relevant memberships as applicable. On association webpages such as Green Builder, ensure JW A+D is a searchable firm for consumers and builders to learn about.
- Utilize a web professional service to upgrade search results for key search terms in the industry and in the Seattle area.
- Include a metrics page showing the many things JW A+D is already accomplishing in the areas of sustainability they strive to make a part of their business. This can serve to

provide legitimacy to their sustainable claims where producing a large sustainability or CSR report doesn't make sense for a startup company of their size and influence. Our team developed an example of what this could look like on their website, see Fig. 5.

- Julian Weber should include a clear CEO vision for the firm's sustainable core values. There are several ways he could choose to do this, either through a statement on the website, (example Fig 2) a short video highlighting their projects, or a blog linked to the website.

Any of the above examples will increase the brand equity of Julian Weber A+D. Getting the firm known as a major up and coming player in the Seattle design space will not happen without taking additional calculated steps; we think now is a good time to take these steps while the firm is young and nimble and can adapt to change with less perturbation than more established firms.

Fig. 5



## 7 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Sustainability Analysis

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### 7.1 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Sustainability Overview

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#### 7.1.1 Environmental Impacts

Julian Weber A+D is working in both design and with the contractors that build their designs to reduce waste throughout the process. This includes upgrading existing structures that are present on a lot and adding more homes in that space. This reduces the waste from demolition and allows for the opportunity to take advantage of the infrastructure that is in place.

70% of JW design is driven by the structure of the site. The genesis of the project is the site visit. The Architects work to build in areas they know, so they understand the neighborhood and the issues that they are facing both socially and environmentally. The aesthetics espoused at JW and the architecture toolkit drive their end designs.

#### 7.1.2 Social Impacts

The way that Julian Weber A+D works to add social benefit to their buildings is to design “Urban Villages.” These are spaces that include at least 4 homes and not more than 7 and are build it a way to maximize the usable square footage and integrate the homes in a way that encourages the residence of the homes to be more connected both socially and can bring their shared values and that micro-community can take action causes that reflect their new empowerment.

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### 7.2 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Sustainability Recommendations

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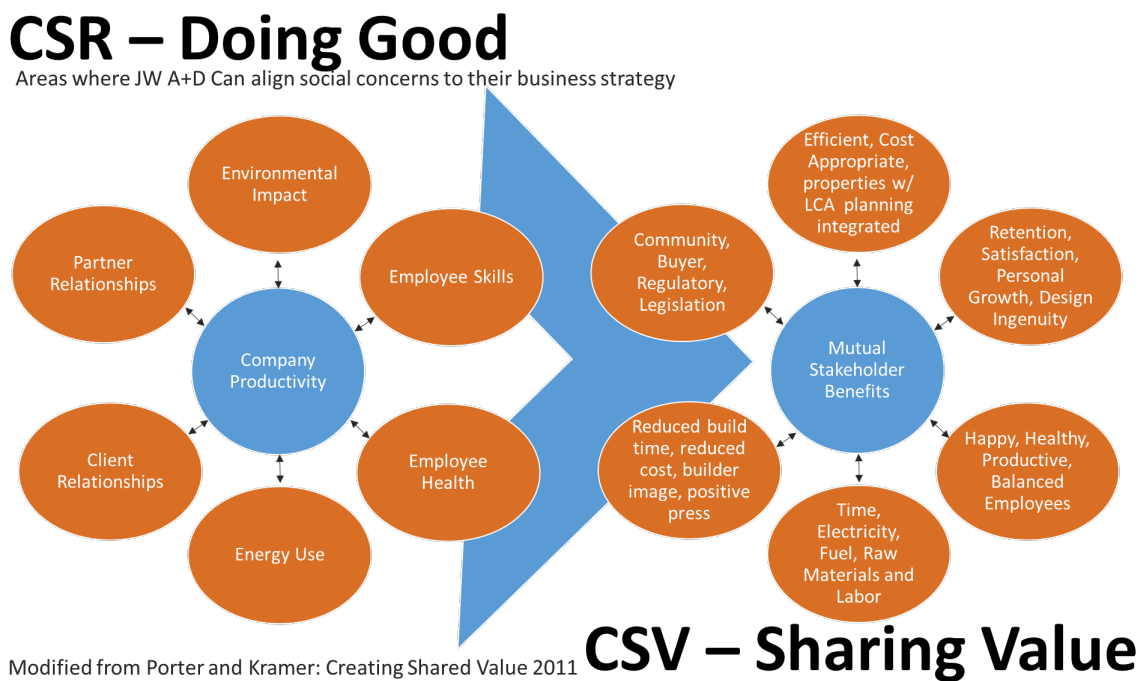
#### 7.2.1 White Paper on Sustainable Market Offerings

Julian Weber is a young firm. Their immediate goals should be to encourage smart growth through new relationships and innovative projects in the Seattle area. We have found that for the firm to achieve this goal and use sustainable practices as the backbone of their value system as a company, they must attract clients with similar appetites for sustainability. For this reason, we recommend the firm partner with their consultant in 2014 to craft a white paper highlighting the features and benefits to their designs. This will be a simple marketing tool to allow JW A+D to convey their message of sustainable design resulting in measurable benefits to potential clients in a quick and easy to understand way. If the builder can't see why it will translate to increased revenue to use JW A+D, (as may be the case today) the company is losing out on relationships that it should be gathering and emphasizing in its business plan. Sharing a white paper containing readily identifiable advantages may bridge the gap for some “on the fence” clients who are not ready to choose a sustainable designer over others.

7.2.2 Aligning Social Concerns with Business Strategy

The values that Julian Weber A+D have instilled in their employees and hold as a firm are already commendable. We recommend that the firm takes the next step toward aligning these established values with their business strategy to allow sustainability to work in their favor for the greater good. Examples of the areas of opportunity are shown in Fig. 6. JW has involved itself with projects that have social improvement as a key element. While this is good on its own, the firm can take this to the next level by examining and adjusting how these sustainable practices can create value throughout all the facets of their business. When this is done continuously, with tracking, measuring, and feedback loop refinements, the company will have a demonstrated track record of sustainable performance. Along the way, JW may experience additional benefits such as employee health and retention, increased innovative thinking, and new and lucrative client relationships.

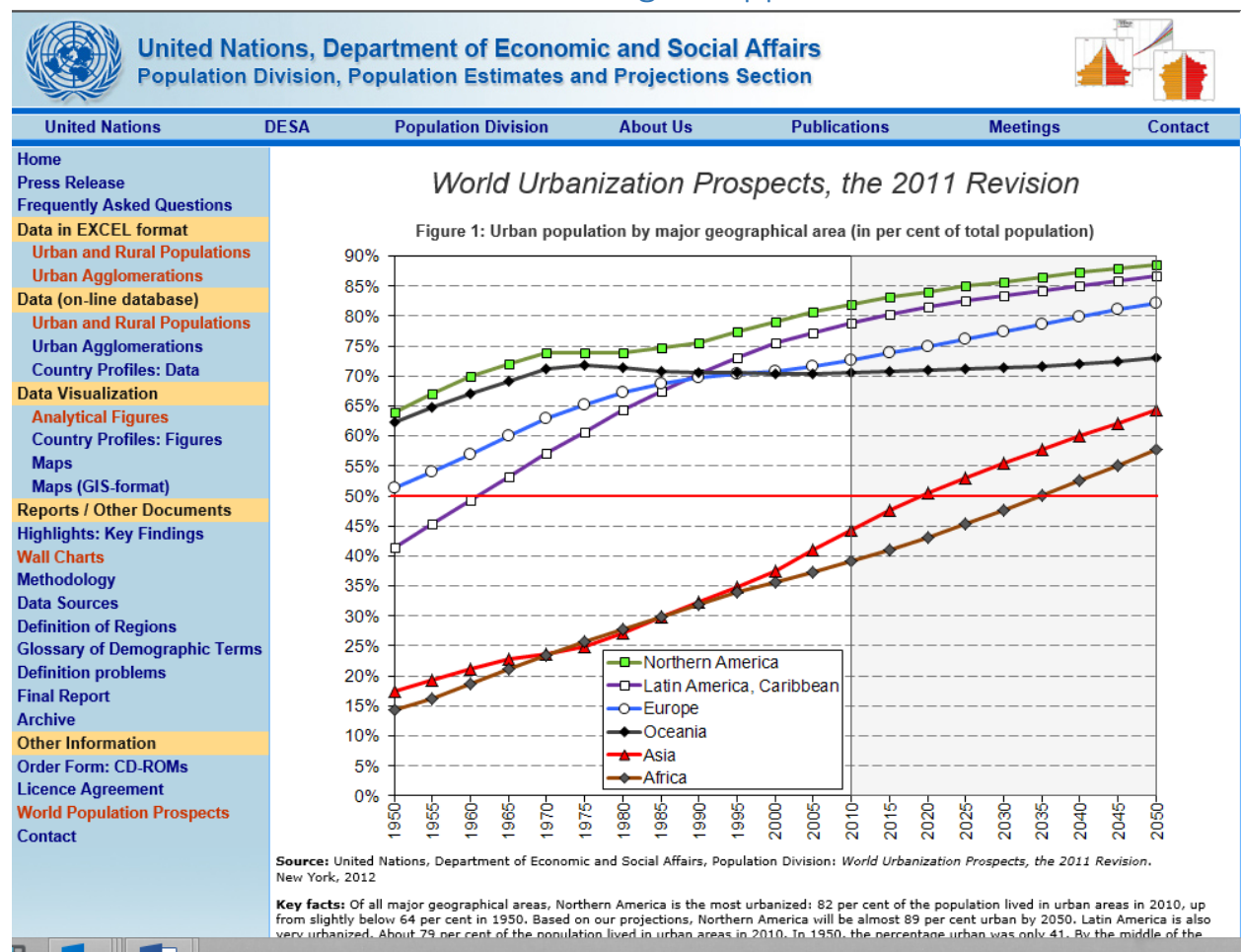
Fig. 6



## 8 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Conclusion

JW A+D is well positioned to continue to grow slowly in the Seattle, Washington marketplace. With the inclusion of some key recommendations included in the preceding report, their growth rate has potential to increase dramatically. While this analysis did not include the financials of the company, assuming a modest revenue stream, the firm can introduce more complexity in its sustainability marketing to see a return to the bottom line in a profit paradigm inclusive of people, planet, and economic profits. The Seattle market is a good area to find like-minded builders and consumers to help foster the company’s sustainability statement into a reflection of reality. The metrics advertised and used by the company can easily be improved upon for relatively little cost. When paired with a new web presence centered on their sustainability focus, the metrics can drive further employee innovative thinking, new mutually beneficial relationships with other businesses and consumers, and immediate revenue and growth opportunities.

## 9 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – Appendix





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## 9.1 Julian Weber Architecture and Design – References

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- Interview with JW A+D LLC CEO Mr. Julian Weber, AIA, conducted on November 19, 2013.
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