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The embodied carbon dilemma for commercial buildings: Demolish, retrofit, or rebuild?

1. Outline two key methods used to evaluate the environmental impacts of demolishing, retrofitting, or rebuilding an existing commercial building.

Explain how these methods support sustainable decision-making in early design phases.

2. Retrofitting older buildings can preserve cultural value but poses design and technical challenges.

Discuss two major challenges faced when upgrading such buildings to meet modern performance standards.

Then, describe one example of a successful retrofit project and how it overcame these issues while addressing embodied carbon concerns.

3. Which of the following factors is most critical when assessing whether to retrofit or demolish a commercial building from a sustainability perspective?

- A. Availability of construction workers
- B. Age of the building
- C. Embodied carbon in the existing structure
- D. Proximity to retail and services

At the end of this panel, attendees will be able to:

- Outline the methods used to measure the relative environmental impacts of demolishing, retrofitting, or rebuilding a given building
- Outline the challenges associated with retrofitting old buildings to achieve contemporary performance levels
- Identify examples in which these challenges are successfully overcome

