

NEWS RELEASE

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Step by step building – advancing energy efficiency in new construction

City adopts a new step code rezoning policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Summary

On March 29, 2021, Nanaimo's City Council passed the new Energy Step Code Rezoning Policy. The policy flows from the City's BC Energy Step Code Implementation Strategy and supports greenhouse gas emissions reduction in alignment with Council's Climate Emergency declaration.

The rezoning policy will exceed the Province's Energy Step Code requirements, which are implemented through the BC Building Code. The BC Energy Step Code will gradually increase energy efficiency requirements for new buildings, leading up to 'net-zero' energy-ready standards by 2032. The timeline is designed to allow some time for the construction industry to train, adapt and change building practices to meet the new standards.

In Nanaimo, for rezoning applications that lead to an increase in density or a change of use, the City will require any development on the property to meet enhanced Step Code requirements or meet a greenhouse gas reduction threshold as a condition of the rezoning.

The policy will come into effect June 29, 2021.

Strategic Link: The Energy Step Code Rezoning Policy reflects Council's commitment to Environmental Responsibility.

Key Points

- The City of Nanaimo's new Energy Step Code Rezoning Policy will come into effect on June 29, 2021.
- For rezoning applications that lead to an increase in density or a change in use, design and construction of any future development on the property will need to reach one step above the required BC Energy Step Code standard.

Quotes

"This new step code rezoning policy is one more measure in which we can step up to the task of mitigating climate change. These choices that we can all make – to live a more sustainable lifestyle – are made much easier when construction is eco-friendly from the ground up."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"Nanaimo is seeing incredible growth, so it is all the more important we encourage new development to use low-carbon energy systems and discourage natural gas use. Providing incentives for low-carbon energy systems is an important step towards a low-carbon future."

Tyler Brown
Councillor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- The BC Energy Step Code is an optional compliance path in the BC Building Code that local governments may adopt and use, to ensure their communities meet a level of energy efficiency in new construction that goes above and beyond the requirements of the BC Building Code. Nanaimo endorsed the BC Energy Step Code in July 2018, and Step 1 was implemented in April 2020.
- The City is currently requiring Step 2 for Part 9 buildings (single family and small multi-unit residential) and Part 3 buildings (large multi-unit residential, commercial and mixed use) remain at Step 1 until January 2022.

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