



Corporate Report

NO: R274

COUNCIL DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2007

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: December 10, 2007
FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 3760-01
SUBJECT: Greening of the BC Building Code

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter, on behalf of Council, to the Minister of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing:

1. Indicating Surrey's support for the Province's initiative of "greening" the BC Building Code;
2. Requesting that the "green" Building Code requirements be applied uniformly throughout the Lower Mainland; and
3. Requesting that Ministry staff meet with City of Surrey staff in continuing the development of the revised Building Code.

INTENT

To apprise Council of the Province's objectives in "greening" the BC Building Code, its proposed means of achieving that objective and City staff interaction with Ministry officials on this matter, to date.

BACKGROUND

The February 2007 Throne Speech announced development of a new, unified BC Green Building Code by early 2008. The Province's initiative to green the BC Building Code includes new objectives for energy and water efficiency and requirements that will support sustainability in these areas and support innovation and design processes to enable green building solutions. Since the Throne Speech, Building and Policy Safety Branch staff has been in consultation with industry, local governments and provincial government ministries and agencies.

DISCUSSION

The City received a letter, dated November 15, 2007, from the Minister of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing, providing an update on the Province's initiative of "greening" the BC Building Code and inviting comments on proposed changes to the Code (Appendix I).

It is the Province's intent to modify the existing BC Building Code to reduce the impact of buildings and construction on the environment, with a vision of creating more "sustainable" buildings and communities. The proposed initial changes are intended to focus on improving energy and water efficiency.

Changes are currently proposed in the construction of both Part 3 (Complex) and Part 9 (Simple) buildings, as defined in the BC Building Code and also by the inclusion of a new Part 10 to the Code that would address Building Efficiency and Resource Conservation.

Further subsequent steps are contemplated that include adaptive re-use of existing buildings, smart metering, improving indoor air quality, more environmentally friendly use of construction materials and resources.

Since Surrey Building By-law, 1987, No. 9011 stipulates that all buildings within the City are required to be constructed in conformance with the requirements of the BC Building Code, the proposed changes will have a direct effect on existing and new buildings in the City. Given the importance of this, City staff had been liaising with, and providing comments to Ministry staff on an ongoing basis.

In a recent discussion with the Executive Director of the Building and Policy Safety Branch, City staff has been advised that Ministry staff has been reassigned from work on the BC Building Code Modernization Strategy to the initiative proposing the greening of the BC Building Code, with a target of delivering a report to the Minister on both the Modernization and greening initiatives on March 31, 2008.

As part of the first stage of the greening initiative, questionnaires were sent to the building industry and local governments entitled "Public Review of Green Building Requirements", with responses to be considered in the report to the Minister. City staff is reviewing this questionnaire and detailed comments will be submitted to the Ministry by the deadline of December 21, 2007.

The areas that have been identified as central to the first step of the "greening" initiative are:

- Water efficiency requirements for Part 3 and Part 9 Buildings (Maximum flow rates; Fixture water efficiency); and
- Energy efficiency requirements for Part 3 and Part 9 Buildings (based on provincial regions). These changes include:
 - upgraded insulation requirements, including high performance glazing;

- HVAC (Heating Ventilating and Air Conditioning), including heat recovery systems;
- service water heating;
- lighting power density provisions; and
- other equipment focusing on electric motors.

The proposed changes are said to potentially increase the cost of house construction up to 1.3%. Savings in energy consumption are expected to offset these cost increases in the short term and offer long-term financial savings and environmental benefits.

Staff is currently reviewing the implications of the proposed changes and will address any concerns to Ministry officials as part of this review. Council will be kept apprised of any new developments.

CONCLUSION

The proposed changes are consistent with those being implemented in other jurisdictions nationally and internationally. They are also consistent with the City's upcoming Sustainability Charter. They hold promise of achieving overall long term savings to building owners as well as reducing society's impact on the environment and energy consumption.

Based on the above, it is recommended that Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter, on behalf of Council, to the Minister of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing:

- Indicating Surrey's support for the Province's initiative of "greening" the BC Building Code;
- Requesting that the "green" Building Code requirements be applied uniformly throughout the Lower Mainland; and
- Requesting that Ministry staff meet with City of Surrey staff in continuing the development of the revised Building Code.

Jean Lamontagne
General Manager,
Planning and Development

NM:saw

Attachment:

Appendix I Letter from Ministry of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing dated November 15, 2007



November 15, 2007

Greetings,

It is my pleasure to update you on the Province of British Columbia's initiative to 'green' the B.C. Building Code. As announced in the Throne Speech earlier this year, the 'greening' of B.C.'s Building Code is a key component of the Province's commitment to take immediate action to combat climate change.

Following discussions with representatives from industry and local government, the Province is proposing updates to the B.C. Building Code that will reduce the impact of buildings and construction on the environment. These proposals focus on improving sustainability through increased energy and water efficiency.

It is important that we hear from you. I invite you to comment on these proposals by visiting the provincial government's website at: <http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/building/> and clicking on the 'Greening of the BC Building Code' button. Please submit your comments by **December 21, 2007**.

These proposals are the first steps in 'greening' the B.C. Building Code. We are also exploring other areas including reusing existing buildings, smart metering, more environmentally friendly use of construction materials and resources, and improving indoor air quality. We will be consulting on these future proposals at a later date.

We look forward to hearing your comments on these initial proposals. If you have any questions regarding the public review, please contact my ministry at (250) 356-9011 or by email at green_code@gov.bc.ca. Together we can work to ensure a sustainable future that meets the needs of British Columbians for generations to come.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Rich Coleman".

Rich Coleman
Minister

**Ministry of
Forests and Range
and Minister Responsible
for Housing**

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Minister

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