

Report to Council



Date: May 13, 2019
File: 1250-30
To: City Manager
From: Tracy Guidi and Michelle Kam, Sustainability Coordinators
Subject: Energy Step Code Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the Report from the Sustainability Coordinators dated May 13, 2019 with respect to the Energy Step Code Zoning Bylaw Amendments;

AND THAT Zoning Bylaw Text Amendment Application No. TA18-0007 to amend City of Kelowna Zoning Bylaw No. 8000 as outlined in Appendix A in the Report from the Sustainability Coordinators, dated May 13, 2019 be considered by Council;

AND THAT the Zoning Text Amending Bylaw be forwarded to Public Hearing for reading consideration;

AND THAT final adoption of the Zoning Text Amending Bylaw be considered subsequent to the approval of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Purpose:

To amend the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that the thicker walls required at Step 5 of the Energy Step Code or for certified Passive House do not inadvertently impact the footprint size of a home built.

Background:

The BC Energy Step Code is provincial standard part of the BC Building Code that is designed to improve the efficiency of new construction by incrementally moving toward a future in which all new construction across the province is "net-zero energy ready" by 2032.¹

For Part 9² residential buildings, there are five steps to the Energy Step Code. In order to achieve Step 5 (net-zero energy ready), thicker insulated walls are required to meet the metrics defined in the Energy

¹ Net-Zero Energy Ready is a building built to high energy efficiency standards such that it could – with additional measures – generate enough on-site energy to meet its own energy needs.

Step Code. Builders that choose to build to certified Passive House, a voluntary standard to build homes that consume up to 90 per cent less energy than conventional buildings, also require thicker insulated walls to achieve that standard.³

As recommended in the City of Kelowna's Energy Step Code Implementation Strategy for Part 9 Buildings (May 2019), staff are proposing amendments to the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that incremental additions of insulation do not inadvertently impact the size of home built, particularly on urban lots for those builders achieving Step 5 of the Energy Step Code or certified Passive House (as outlined in Appendix A). This amendment proactively adjusts the footprint of typical houses to ensure that Development Variance Permits are not inadvertently being triggered and/or adding delay to a Building Permit approval.

Existing Policy:

The City of Kelowna has established a number of climate action goals and programs that are delivering on Council's commitment to low-carbon energy, including:

Official Community Plan

- OCP Objective 5.16. "Improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of new buildings."
- OCP Policy 5.16.3 "Variances for "Green" Features. Staff will give favourable regard to variance applications to reduce setbacks whose sole purpose is to accommodate green building features (e.g. solar panels etc.), provided that safety and neighbourhood impact issues can be addressed.
- OCP Objective 6.2. "Improve energy efficiency and reduce community greenhouse gas emissions."
- OCP Policy 6.2.1 GHG Reduction Target and Actions. The City of Kelowna will, in partnership with: senior governments; local residents and businesses; NGOs; external agencies; and utility providers, work towards reducing absolute community greenhouse gas emissions by:
 - 4% below 2007 levels by 2023;
 - 25% below 2007 levels by 2033; and
 - 80% below 2007 levels by 2050.

Our Kelowna as We Take Action: Kelowna's Community Climate Action Plan (2018-2023):

- Action # B6 Relax the setback requirements in Kelowna's Zoning Bylaw to ensure thicker walls to accommodate more insulation (common to buildings constructed to Steps 4 and 5 of the Energy Step Code).

Submitted by:

T. Guidi and M. Kam, Sustainability Coordinators

² Part 9 buildings are buildings that are three storeys or less and have a building area no more than 600 m². It includes single family homes, duplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings and small stores, offices, and industrial shops.

³ Passive House Canada, 2019. About Passive House. <https://www.passivehousecanada.com/about-passive-house/>

Approved for inclusion:



Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy & Planning Dept. Manager

Attachments:

Appendix A: Zoning Bylaw Amendments for Step 5 of Energy Step Code

cc:

Divisional Director, Planning and Development Services

Development Services Director

Building & Permitting Manager

Energy Program Manager

Community Energy Specialist

Community Planning Supervisor

Legislative Coordinator

Communications Coordinator