

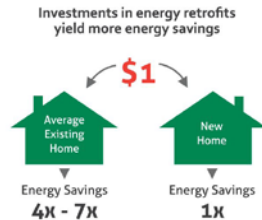


An update from CHBA BC's Government Relations Committee

December 2016 | Issue 9

New CHBA BC Policy Recommendations Document

CHBA BC represents an important industry voice in the provincial policy arena. This new online guide covers CHBA BC's position on key factors in the housing market that can influence prices. In addition, it lists six suggested policies to address these factors. Click [here](#) to view the document.



National Update on Drywall Duties

In September, the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) imposed a provisional duty on drywall for certain provinces, including B.C., ranging from 105.2% to 276.5%. For a full issue summary, [use this link](#). The Canadian International Trade Tribunal wrapped its two-week long public hearing on the duties on December 08, 2016.

In formal submissions, testimony and final arguments, CHBA National representatives detailed the negative impacts that the exorbitantly high duty has already had and will continue to have on members, homebuyers, and the economy. Testimony on these impacts also came from Members of Parliament, who had heard first hand from members in their constituencies. The government will complete its report on the duties by January 4, 2017. A formal decision is expected to follow in January 2017.

New BC HOME Partnership for first-time buyers

On December 15, Premier Christy Clark announced the new program for first-time buyers in BC, where the government will match buyers' down payment savings up to \$37,500 with a twenty-five-year loan.



The loan is interest-free for the first five years, and buyers must meet certain criteria, including a shared income of less than \$150,000 and a purchase of less than \$750,000. View program and criteria [with this link](#).

CHBA BC supported the announcement as it benefits first-time buyers, a key group in the housing continuum, in achieving home ownership. CHBA BC will also continue to advocate for an increase to the first-time home buyers' property transfer tax exemption from \$475,000 to \$525,000 to better reflect the increase in prices. View the CHBA BC news release [using this link](#).

BC Step Code report released

Representatives for CHBA BC participated in the stakeholder discussions this past year on British Columbia's new Energy Step Code. This new step code will replace any municipal energy-efficiency requirements, except in the City of Vancouver, that differ from the provincial building code as of December 2017. Read the stakeholder report [here](#).

CHBA BC data project available online

CHBA BC partnered with Landcor Data Corporation to produce an interactive database of housing fees in various municipalities across B.C. The first phase of this project focuses on development cost charges, building permit fees, subdivision fees, zoning fees, and school site development charges where collected. View the project [here](#).

National Housing Strategy report released

Public consultations for the National Housing Strategy took place across Canada between June and October, 2016. The BC consultations were held in Vancouver in September 2016, which CHBA BC actively participated in. CEO Neil Moody also participated in a panel discussion with other housing stakeholders during the two-day event.



On November 22, National Housing Day, the report was released outlining the results from in-person sessions and online feedback. The federal government also reported that the feedback was extensive, with 6,300 surveys online, almost 2,000 social media ideas and over 75 focus groups. The formal legislation is expected to be tabled by the federal government in early 2017. Read the full PDF report [using this link](#).

The CHBA BC Government Relations Committee is actively working on a number of key issues related to residential construction. For the full list of current issues, click [here](#).



Image: CEO Neil Moody welcomes Deputy Speaker and MLA Richard Lee to the CHBA BC Holiday Open House on Dec. 7, 2016.