News from the Legislature

The final sitting day of the spring session was on May 30. The Legislature will reopen on October 7, 2019. CHBA BC intends to hold a second Legislature Day event during the Fall session.

BC Budget 2020

CHBA BC submitted to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services as part of the pre-budget consultations for 2020/21. Click to read the submission.

Changes to B.C.’s Continuing Professional Development program for Licensed Residential Builders

On Monday, July 1, 2019, important changes to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for Licensed Residential Builders came into effect. These changes were first announced in March 2019. CHBA BC is a strong supporter of builder licensing, and any changes to make this process easy and flexible are welcomed.

Under the enhanced CPD program, all licensees with general contractor status must complete a minimum of 20 CPD training points during the one-year licence term. You can now carry a maximum of 20 extra CPD points over from one licence term to the next, if the nominee for CPD stays the same.

We encourage you to check the updated CPD Guide on the BC Housing website to learn more.

Changes to the Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)

On February 22, 2019, changes to the Agricultural Land Commission Act under Bill 52 – 2018 were brought into force. View an overview of the changes. Previously, secondary modular homes were acceptable through local government approval - under the new rules, they must apply to the ALC through their local government in addition to permit approval. This sudden announcement left many previous applicants, builders, and farmers in an uncertain state if they had a project underway prior to the new rules. As a result, new transition guidelines until February 2020 were announced on July 4, 2019. Any members with concerns on this issue can contact CHBA BC by email.

Open Consultations

Public Review: Proposed Changes to the BC Building Code 2018

The Building and Safety Standards Branch is conducting a public review of the following proposed changes to the BC Code:

- Design and Construction of Secondary Suites
- Energy Step Code for Large Buildings in Cold Climates and Public Sector Buildings
- Lighting of Recycling and Garbage Rooms

For more information about the proposed changes or to complete the survey, please visit this website. The online survey is available from June 28 to August 9, 2019.

The Building and Safety Standards Branch is also considering possible amendments to the Energy Step Code targets for houses and small residential buildings, with a focus on climate zones 5 and 6 (including Kelowna, Kamloops, and Prince George). These possible changes are still in development and
will not be part of this public review. Information will also be available on the Energy Step Code website, as this work progresses in the coming months. For more information about possible Energy Step Code amendments for houses and small residential buildings, please email Building.Safety@gov.bc.ca.

Workers Compensation Act Review
The public and stakeholders are invited to share their views until July 19, 2019 and attend a public hearing in one of 14 communities across the province. Click to read.

Ongoing Issues

Land Owner Transparency Act
The Land Owner Transparency Act became law earlier this year. For an overview of the changes, and for informational purposes only, check out this helpful guide.

Water Sustainability Act
Last week, CHBA BC and Homebuilders Association Vancouver held a teleconference with Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Selina Robinson and Minister of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations Doug Donaldson to discuss the Water Sustainability Act, and the section 11 approvals process. Members have expressed concerns with permit delays and the impact on their housing projects. Both short-term and long-term options to address the growing queue were discussed. Any members with feedback on this issue can email us at alycia@chbabc.org.

Prompt Payment
Thank you to all members who reached out regarding concerns with proposed prompt payment legislation in B.C. For a recap on this issue, click here. We encourage you to let us know your concerns by email if you haven’t already done so, and interest in further follow up opportunities.

National News

Anti-Money Laundering Meeting
On June 14, Canada’s federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers of Finance and ministers responsible for anti-money laundering and beneficial ownership transparency came together in Vancouver to discuss money laundering efforts. Click to read the joint statement.

CHBA End of Parliament Update
With the House of Commons adjourning for the summer on June 20, ending the last session of Parliament before the election, CHBA contacted Members of Parliament and Senators with a summary of the key activities that CHBA participated in on Parliament Hill this past session. CHBA also sent its best wishes to MPs not seeking re-election and best of luck to those that will be asking their respective constituents to re-elect them on October 21, 2019 – the date of the 43rd general election.

Here is a sample of key activities that CHBA National provided Canada’s Parliamentarians:

- CHBA’s Day on the Hill: The day featured meetings and discussions with over 80 MPs, Senators and staff and focused on finding solutions to unlocking the door to homeownership.
- CHBA’s response to the 2019 federal budget and CHBA CEO Kevin Lee’s reaction to the budget.
- CHBA’s recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status with Persons with Disabilities for its study Labour Shortages.
- CHBA’s recommendations for the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for its study on Bill C-97, Budget Implementation Act, 2019, No. 1.
- CHBA CEO Kevin Lee’s interview with Catherine Clark of the Sixth Estate for its show on National Housing “For Whom the (door) bell tolls” and op-ed for Sixth Estate titled “More needs to be done to unlock the door to homeownership – Fast!”