

December 17, 2019

**Submission to the [CleanBC Job Readiness Plan](#)**

Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Submitted by email to [LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LabourMarketPartnerships@gov.bc.ca)

## About Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC (CHBA BC)

CHBA BC represents over 2,200 member companies in the residential construction industry who work as home builders, renovators, tradespeople, suppliers, service professionals, and others. CHBA BC members are small and medium-sized businesses creating jobs and economic benefits in all areas of the province. Overall, the residential construction industry represents over 207,184 on-site and off-site jobs, \$12.6 billion in wages, and \$28.3 billion in investment value.

## Overview

The provincial government is developing a CleanBC Job Readiness Plan to help people seize opportunities as we move towards a cleaner economy. This plan will identify opportunities across the province for workers, industry, and businesses.

The document identifies opportunities in the residential construction industry for new jobs and training for a cleaner economy and barriers in these areas, based on currently available information.

## Discussion

### *New Jobs and Training for a Cleaner Economy Energy Advisors*

Under CleanBC, the Province of British Columbia has set a goal that all new buildings must reach a net zero energy ready level of efficiency by 2032; the BC Energy Step Code serves as the policy pathway to reach that goal. The BC Energy Step Code is a voluntary standard introduced as part of the BC Building Code (BCBC) in April 2017 that sets higher requirements for energy efficiency. Following the implementation of the BC Energy Step Code, we have seen the emergence of the Energy Advisor (EA), a non-regulated professional that was previously involved in voluntary energy efficiency programs such as the EnerGuide Rating System. Under Natural Resources Canada's EnerGuide Rating System, there exists a training framework offered by licensed service organizations that provides a technical and administrative foundation for EAs to provide building code compliance services. CHBA BC is a licensed service organization that currently works with 60 Energy Advisors servicing British Columbia.

It is important to note that most of the building code compliance services currently being provided by EAs are outside the scope of the EnerGuide licence, training, and quality assurance program. In many cases, EAs are providing energy modelling on buildings that are not registered under the EnerGuide Rating System. Currently there exists a potential training and professional reliance gap between the Energy Advisor qualifications and training, and a desired future state where there may

be regulated standards of training and work experience specifically for professionals providing BC Energy Step Code compliance services. In the context of the BC Energy Step Code compliance services, the attached *Energy Advisor and Energy Modeller Scope of Practice* document provides summary recommendations on professional regulation and details what falls within and outside of the scope of the EnerGuide Rating System licence, training, and quality assurance.

### *Building Officials*

The Building Act introduced provincial qualification requirements for building and plumbing officials to support the competency and professionalism of those in this occupation, and to improve consistency in how the BC Building Code is interpreted, applied, and enforced. By February 28, 2021, under the act, building and plumbing officials will have to pass the requisite exams for the class/scope of practice at which they work and be entered in the register of qualified building officials. There is a concern that many building officials will choose to retire as of February 28, 2021, instead of seeking to meet the qualification requirements. This shortage of building officials has been identified as an opportunity in the [Development Approvals Process Review, Appendix B](#).

Addressing these regulation challenges will support the clean economy as these jobs will be needed in all areas of BC to transform residential construction to meet CleanBC goals.

### *Skilling up for CleanBC*

As identified in the CleanBC Job Readiness Discussion 3, appropriate training to support the clean economy is critical to design communities and new buildings, renovate existing buildings, and innovate to help business and industry.

In particular, on-site trades training is a necessary component for successful implementation of CleanBC. The residential construction industry involves 63 trades, many of which do not access classroom sessions or webinars to receive training. Experiential education is expensive and particularly challenging for individuals and trades wishing to service remote or rural areas. The same challenge exists in supporting the growth of professionals such as Energy Advisors and Building Officials, where access to training in rural and remote areas of BC is limited. CHBA BC encourages provincial training incentives to support on-site training for skilled trades and experiential education for Energy Advisors and Building Officials in remote areas.



### *Skills Development Initiatives*

The Local Energy Efficiency Partnership (LEEP) process was first developed by the Office of Energy Research and Development at Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). This business-to-business initiative has since been adopted in several Canadian provinces, now including BC.

LEEP is delivered on a regional basis with the intent to establish an ongoing critical mass of builders capable of implementing the best innovations suited to their region, which can, in turn, pull through a responsive supply chain. The results include energy savings for homeowners, competitive advantage for participating builders and manufacturers, and builder-driven enhancement to local building practice.

Further support for LEEP initiatives for both new and existing homes presents another area of exploration for the province. LEEP identifies areas where research is required, as well as fosters smoother technology adoption and practical transitions to higher levels of building performance.

### Follow up

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation. We recognize this is an ongoing conversation and would be pleased to participate in any additional consultations or discussions on this topic.