

Subject: FW: Agenda Item 8.1 – Support for Zero Carbon Step Code
Attachments: Cumberland EL-3 support letter .doc

From: Rod Nadeau <rnadeau@innovationbuilding.com>

Sent: July 12, 2026 3:27 PM

To: Mayor Vickey Brown <mayor.brown@cumberland.ca>; Councillor Sean Sullivan <Councillor.sullivan@cumberland.ca>; Neil Borecky <councillor.borecky@cumberland.ca>; Neil Borecky <councillor.borecky@cumberland.ca>; Troy Therrien <councillor.therrien@cumberland.ca>; Nick Ward <councillor.ward@cumberland.ca>

Cc: Village of Cumberland <info@cumberland.ca>

Subject: Agenda Item 8.1 – Support for Zero Carbon Step Code

Dear Mayor Brown, Members of Council and Corporate Services,

Please find attached a letter from Innovation Building Group regarding Agenda Item 8.1, the proposed implementation of the Zero Carbon Step Code.

As a British Columbia builder and developer with approximately 40 years of experience designing and constructing high-performance all-electric homes, I wanted to share our practical experience building these homes throughout the province. Our comments are based on what we have found to be the most effective, affordable and practical approach to delivering high-quality housing for homeowners, municipalities and non-profit housing providers.

Thank you for considering our comments as part of your deliberations.

Kind regards,

Rod

Rod Nadeau
Managing Partner

(604) 932-8645

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innovationbuilding.com



Letter to Cumberland Council

July 12, 2026

Mayor Brown and Members of Council
Village of Cumberland

Re: Agenda Item 8.1 – Zero Carbon Step Code (EL-3 / EL-4)

Dear Mayor Brown and Members of Council,

I am writing in support of Agenda Item 8.1 and encourage Council to adopt at least EL-3 as recommended by staff. From the perspective of a builder and developer with approximately 40 years of experience constructing homes throughout British Columbia, I would also encourage Council to continue moving toward EL-4 as quickly as practical. In my experience, adopting a single, consistent standard from the outset is ultimately less costly and less disruptive than repeatedly changing requirements over time.

For nearly four decades I have been designing and building high-performance all-electric homes throughout British Columbia, including projects in Whistler, Pemberton, Golden and other communities where natural gas has either never been available or has not been widely used. All-electric construction is not a new concept. It has been successfully implemented across British Columbia for generations, and nearly half of homes in the province already rely on electricity or heat pumps as their primary heating source.

Today, Innovation Building Group is developing standardized all-electric housing systems for municipalities, non-profit housing providers and private developers throughout British Columbia. Our current projects include workforce housing, seniors housing, attainable homeownership and municipal buildings. We have chosen this approach because it delivers better value, lower operating costs, simpler mechanical systems and healthier homes. We are not building all-electric because regulations require it—we are building this way because we believe it is the best product we can deliver.

In our experience, building to EL-4 has not increased construction costs when projects are properly designed from the beginning. The largest cost pressures affecting housing today are labour shortages, material price volatility, financing costs, municipal approval delays and regulatory uncertainty—not whether a home uses a gas furnace or a heat pump.

Innovation Building Group Inc.

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In fact, regulatory uncertainty is one of the greatest challenges builders face. Every time implementation dates are delayed, or standards are changed, projects must be redesigned, specifications revised and purchasing decisions revisited. Manufacturers, consultants, municipalities and builders all lose productivity. A clear, consistent standard allows the industry to standardize designs, invest in manufacturing, train trades and reduce costs over time.

Today's homes increasingly require cooling as well as heating. Once a home includes a heat pump to provide air conditioning, that same equipment also provides highly efficient heating. Modern cold-climate heat pumps routinely deliver two to four units of heat for every unit of electricity consumed and are substantially more efficient than burning natural gas for space heating. BC Hydro has concluded that heating with a heat pump is now less expensive than heating with a natural gas furnace for the average B.C. household.

From a builder's perspective, it makes little sense to install two complete heating systems—a heat pump for cooling and a separate gas furnace for heating—when one system can efficiently perform both functions. In many parts of British Columbia, particularly southern coastal communities, cooling loads are increasing every year as summers become hotter. The heat pump is therefore already required and appropriately sized, making a second fossil-fuel heating system an unnecessary additional capital cost and an ongoing maintenance expense for homeowners.

There are also important health benefits associated with all-electric homes. Research has shown that gas cooking appliances contribute to indoor air pollution and are associated with an increased risk of asthma in children and other respiratory illnesses. Eliminating combustion appliances inside the home creates a healthier indoor environment while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

British Columbia has become a leader in high-performance residential construction because governments, municipalities, builders, consultants and manufacturers have worked together to provide clear direction. That certainty has allowed companies like ours to invest heavily in standardized building systems, factory-ready housing designs and innovative construction methods that improve productivity while reducing housing costs.

Our company competes every day on affordability, quality and market acceptance. If all-electric construction increased our costs, made our homes more difficult to sell or reduced their value to homeowners, we simply would not build this way. Instead, after four decades of experience, we have made all-electric design the foundation of our standardized housing platform because it delivers simpler buildings, lower operating costs, healthier indoor environments and a better long-term product for our clients. We are currently applying these standardized all-electric building systems to municipal buildings, workforce housing, seniors housing, attainable

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homeownership and non-profit housing projects throughout British Columbia. Our business depends on delivering housing that people can afford and communities want to build—not on advancing a policy position. Our experience tells us that regulatory certainty allows builders to innovate, invest in better building systems and reduce costs over time.

I respectfully encourage Council to support Agenda Item 8.1 and maintain momentum toward EL-4. In my experience, delaying implementation will not make housing more affordable. It will simply prolong uncertainty, require additional redesign work and discourage the investment and innovation that British Columbia's building industry has already made. A clear, consistent path forward gives builders the confidence to standardize designs, invest in manufacturing, improve productivity and ultimately deliver better homes at lower cost.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line.

Sincerely,

Rod Nadeau
Innovation Building Group (2016) Ltd.

Innovation Building Group Inc.

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Subject: FW: K-Country Homes support for Agenda Item 8.1 and EL-4 of the ZCSC

From: K-Country Homes <kcountrypages@gmail.com>

Sent: July 13, 2026 7:32 AM

To: Mayor Vickey Brown <mayor.brown@cumberland.ca>; Councillor Sean Sullivan <Councillor.sullivan@cumberland.ca>; Neil Borecky <councillor.borecky@cumberland.ca>; Troy Therrien <councillor.therrien@cumberland.ca>; Nick Ward <councillor.ward@cumberland.ca>

Cc: Village of Cumberland <info@cumberland.ca>

Subject: K-Country Homes support for Agenda Item 8.1 and EL-4 of the ZCSC

I have been building low density housing since 1993, with a focus on affordability and energy efficiency.

In 2022, we started building what would become EL-4 in the Zero Carbon Step Code (ie all electric). The learning curve was remarkably shallow (unlike the Energy Step Code). The first couple of builds were slightly more costly (primarily due to design), but since then, we have found that EL-4 is the least expensive, particularly now that the BC Building Code requires some air conditioning. It is also simpler to build with one less trade and fuel source. We have also found that refrigeration (heat pump) sub-trades are much more familiar with heat pumps and more competitive in 2026.

We build in some cold climates such as Kimberley, and have found all-electric to be effective and efficient.

One thing that is very important to builders in terms of affordability is stability and predictability of regulations. That is why I advocate for EL-4 and a stable Energy Step Code, then no more energy/emission-related changes for a decade. We need predictability, otherwise, we tend to incorporate uncertainty into our pricing models. The best route to affordability is EL-4.

Bruce Murdoch
K-Country Homes
250-417-6681

Subject: FW: Tonight's Vote: Please adopt at least Emissions Level 3 (EL-3) of the ZCSC

From: K. Selby

Sent: July 13, 2026 10:16 AM

To: Mayor Vickey Brown <mayor.brown@cumberland.ca>; Councillor Sean Sullivan <Councillor.sullivan@cumberland.ca>; Neil Borecky <councillor.borecky@cumberland.ca>; Troy Therrien <councillor.therrien@cumberland.ca>; Nick Ward <councillor.ward@cumberland.ca>

Cc: Village of Cumberland <info@cumberland.ca>

Subject: Tonight's Vote: Please adopt at least Emissions Level 3 (EL-3) of the ZCSC

Dear Cumberland Mayor and Council,

I am a constituent living in the village and I've learned that you will be voting to adopt the Zero Carbon Step Code this evening. This is very exciting as it is a critical step for climate action, public health, and future-proofing our community.

I urge you to adopt at least Emissions Level 3.

As the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) outlines:

- The ZCSC reduces carbon emissions and improves indoor air quality.
- It aligns Cumberland with over 30 other B.C. municipalities already leading on climate action.
- Buildings built to higher emissions levels (like EL-3 or EL-4) are more resilient, healthier, and often cheaper to build and maintain.

Thank you for all that you are doing to future-proof our village. I so appreciate everything you've accomplished together over the past term.

With respect,

K. Selby

RELAX, we will survive by choosing to love and protect, by understanding what we need in order to create a dream everyone can participate in.

Subject: FW: Stand.earth Letter of Support for Zero Carbon Step Code EL-4
Attachments: Stand.earth letter of support to Cumberland on zero carbon bldgs - July 2026.pdf

From: Sunil Singal <sunil.singal@stand.earth>
Sent: July 12, 2026 2:00 PM
To: Mayor Vickey Brown <mayor.brown@cumberland.ca>; Councillor Sean Sullivan <Councillor.sullivan@cumberland.ca>; Neil Borecky <councillor.borecky@cumberland.ca>; Troy Therrien <councillor.therrien@cumberland.ca>; Nick Ward <councillor.ward@cumberland.ca>
Cc: Village of Cumberland <info@cumberland.ca>
Subject: Stand.earth Letter of Support for Zero Carbon Step Code EL-4

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of Stand.earth and our 98,000 community members across BC, please see attached our letter in **support of Council adopting at least Emissions Level 3 of the Zero Carbon Step Code by the end of this year.**

More than 30 communities have already adopted the highest level (Emissions Level 4), including Qualicum Beach, Whistler, and Nelson. Cumberland would be in good company by keeping pace with other leading communities that have modernized their building requirements.

Sincerely,

Sunil Singal |

He / Him

Climate
Campaigner

—



Stand.earth has adopted a four-day work week. My usual working hours are Mon-Thu 9am-5pm Pacific Time.

July 12, 2026

Dear Mayor Vickey Brown and Council,

On behalf of Stand.earth and our 98,000 community members across BC, including in Cumberland, **I'm writing in support of Council adopting at least Emissions Level 3 of the Zero Carbon Step Code by the end of this year. More than 30 communities have already adopted the highest level (Emissions Level 4), including Qualicum Beach, Whistler, and Nelson. Cumberland would be in good company by keeping pace with other leading communities that have modernized their building requirements.**

Setting requirements for how new buildings reduce climate pollution is well within the authority of municipalities and is one of the most practical tools local governments have to shape long-term housing costs, residents' health, and local emissions. As Cumberland plans for future growth, the homes approved today will shape energy costs and community resilience for decades. Adopting Level 4 of the Zero Carbon Step Code without delay can significantly reduce operational emissions while helping ensure new homes are more affordable to operate, more comfortable during hotter summers, and run on BC's clean, abundant electricity.

Below we aim to share additional information on the role of all-electric new construction as you consider how to move forward with climate action plans and the Zero Carbon Step Code policy.

- 1. Homes built with gas connections will face retrofit challenges in the near future and requiring electrified construction now could give local businesses a competitive advantage when it becomes the standard province-wide.** The longer we take to build new homes that meet Zero Carbon benchmarks, the more homeowners and commercial building owners we are burdening with costly, challenging and inconvenient retrofits down the road when these standards become mandatory in 2030. Municipalities across BC that have already passed accelerated Zero Carbon standards are betting that moving quickly will give local businesses and trades a leg up by developing local expertise, skill and supply chains ahead of provincially-mandated higher standards. This is [supported by over 30 building industry leaders who published a letter in strong support of the Zero Carbon Step Code](#).
- 2. BC's electrical grid is ready to handle increased demand.** BC Hydro expects to have more than enough power until 2030, and its [20-year Integrated Resource Plan](#) is forecasting and preparing for scenarios with significantly increased electricity demand due to accelerated electrification of buildings and vehicles. Through two recent consecutive calls for power, [BC Hydro will add about 10,000 gigawatt-hours of new renewable electricity each year from wind and solar projects, enough to power roughly one million homes annually](#). The price of electricity in BC is also relatively low and more reliable than gas prices, which can fluctuate significantly.
- 3. All-electric buildings provide significant health and safety benefits.** Modern building codes, like BC's Zero Carbon Step Code, encourage heating, cooling, and cooking systems that keep us healthy and safe. Heat pumps automatically provide cooling, keeping homes more comfortable and safe during extreme heat events, and they provide air filtration to protect against wildfire smoke and other outdoor air pollutants. As we prepare for another terrible wildfire season, requiring new buildings to provide cooling via electric heat pumps is one of the most straightforward and effective things we can do to avoid another deadly event like the 2021 heat dome. Switching out gas stoves for electric appliances also [significantly improves indoor air quality](#).
- 4. Building to Zero Carbon standards is affordable and effective in all climates.** [According to provincial data tables](#) it costs less than 1% more to build a Zero Carbon home in most climate zones across the province, and if highly efficient heat pumps are installed (instead of much less efficient baseboard heaters), [the ongoing heating and hot water costs are measurably lower](#) than with gas systems. BC's multistakeholder [Climate Solution Council has also called on the province to end all gas connections for space and water heating for new buildings to protect](#)

[affordability for British Columbians](#) and highlighted that “90% of British Columbians live in climate zones where electrification of new homes would result in cost savings.”

- 5. Decarbonizing buildings is one of the most effective and affordable climate actions local governments have the jurisdictional authority to make, and according to FortisBC’s own research, electric heat pumps are the best way to decarbonize buildings.** In BC, [buildings currently account for 12% of all greenhouse gas emissions](#) and in cities, that number can soar to 40% or higher. Reducing emissions from buildings is one of the easiest steps that municipalities can take within their jurisdictional authority to meet climate action goals. In March 2022, a report was published by FortisBC, the BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation (now this Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions), and the BC Bioenergy Network that explored the future supply of renewable and low carbon gas. [When initially published](#), the report included findings that heat pumps are “six to eight times more efficient than heating with gas” and concluded that “in the moderate climate of southern and coastal B.C, electric heat pumps can achieve GHG reductions more effectively than renewable and low-carbon gases.”

Building codes have long been designed to set minimum standards that protect our health and safety. Few would argue that builders should have the choice to insulate with asbestos, decorate with lead paint or build a high-rise apartment building without a fire escape. Similarly, why should they be able to install a polluting gas-powered furnace or boiler over a highly-efficient electric heat pump when cleaner and safer technology is readily available and affordable?

As we all move to tackle the climate crisis and navigate a new reality full of extreme and unpredictable weather events, we will have many difficult decisions ahead of us. However, building Zero Carbon new buildings isn’t one of those hard decisions – in fact, it’s very straightforward.

Yours truly,



Liz McDowell
Senior Campaigns Director
Stand.earth