

Stakeholder Feedback

This attachment provides a summary of community engagement on the topic of implementing mandatory energy labelling for new construction. The Climate and Energy Perceptions Survey provides insight as to the average Edmontonian's knowledge and support of building energy efficiency and action on climate change. The Emissions Neutral Industry Advisory Group (ENBIAG) workshops gave the building industry a chance to share their views on the opportunities, challenges and options to move Edmonton towards emissions neutral building construction. The Energy Transition and Climate Resilience Committee (ETCRC) provided a wide and strategic perspective on the energy transition and climate resilience impacts of both mandatory energy labelling and implementing advanced energy codes.

Since 2017, The City of Edmonton has commissioned an annual survey to gain a better understanding of Edmontonians' perceptions and motivations surrounding the Energy Transition Strategy. The July 2023 Climate and Energy Perceptions Survey¹ included online responses from 1,004 Edmonton residents aged 18 and over and found the following:

- 74 per cent of respondents agree that climate change is a concern and 73 per cent agree that there is a need to act now to address the issue.
- 64 per cent of respondents said that the City of Edmonton should increase or maintain its efforts to address climate change, and 65 per cent agree that they want to do more personally to help prevent climate change.
- 85 per cent view it as important that their home is energy efficient and 74 per cent indicate that energy efficiency is important for the buildings in which they work, study, play, or shop.
- 56 per cent of respondents have taken action in the past year to improve their home energy efficiency (an increase of eight per cent from 2022).
- 79 per cent of respondents agree that the cost of energy use in their home makes them want to conserve and 55 per cent sometimes worry about whether there is enough money to pay their energy bills
- 54 per cent of respondents were aware of the EnerGuide program (including 61 per cent of homeowners and 40 per cent of renters), an increase from 33 per cent in 2017

¹ Narrative Research. City of Edmonton Climate and Energy Perceptions Survey. July 2023.

- 79 per cent of respondents agreed an EnerGuide would be useful when renovating their home
- 74 per cent of respondents would like to see an EnerGuide label or evaluation when buying a home

Administration held workshops with ENBIAG on July 13, 2022 and November 14, 2023. The group's purpose is to help guide and shape project directions, provide broad industry perspectives, and represent industry organizations and stakeholders. The group's membership was selected to represent a balanced range of industry perspectives, based on experience, industry knowledge and influence, including members from the Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA), the Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP), and the Urban Development Institute (UDI). They identified job creation, better information for consumers on the total cost of ownership, and changing market behaviour towards energy efficiency as the opportunities from implementing increased mandatory energy labelling for new building construction. They identified costs and time added to construction, and lack of consumer knowledge as challenges.

Proposed options for mandatory labeling include focusing on building types with the fewest challenges, expanding the existing voluntary program to be mandatory. They indicated there was currently enough industry capacity to support a mandatory program for new construction. Related options proposed included developing solar-ready or net-zero labels, energy labels for existing homes, a simple energy label for commercial buildings based on information already collected during the permitting process, and a mandatory benchmarking program for commercial buildings. They suggested that the City's program be aligned with Alberta EcoTrust's digital labelling program (which does not apply to new construction) and that the City publish and promote its learnings from the Blatchford development. They suggested a standard for displaying energy labels, such as on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) or in utility rooms of commercial buildings.

Administration presented to the May 10, 2023 ETCRC meeting to gather their feedback on the opportunities, challenges and options for both mandatory energy labelling and implementing advanced energy codes. ETCRC consists of Edmontonians with experience and interest in energy transition and climate resilience, with the mandate of advising Council on the Community Energy Transition Strategy and other climate change plans. ETCRC members suggested balancing disincentives with incentives to promote energy efficiency, empower citizens to make wise financial decisions that consider the value of energy

efficiency and supporting industry capacity building, especially in the areas of breaker sharing and heat pump installation. They emphasized that energy efficiency is easier to implement in new builds than retrofitting existing buildings. They identified challenges with industry capacity, citizen knowledge and builders lacking the incentive to build higher efficiency standards as they don't pay for the operating expenses and increased costs affect their profits. ETCRC members recommended more public engagement and education, emphasizing the long term savings of more energy efficient homes.

They showed support for mandatory measures, but included that consistent regulations across the province would be better for builders. ETCRC also identified equity considerations such as multi-family homes being excluded from incentive programs, lower-income people having high utility expenses in lower quality buildings, and suggested grants for those facing environmental racism and energy poverty to improve the energy performance of their homes. They suggested making information available in different languages to increase their accessibility for immigrants.