

DATE OF MEETING JULY 15, 2020
AUTHORED BY ROB LAWRENCE, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
SUBJECT CLEANBC HOME RENOVATION REBATE PROGRAM UPDATE

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Committee on the CleanBC Home Renovation Rebate Program in order to discuss developing a promotion program in the Fall.

Recommendation

That the Environment Committee receive the report and presentation titled, "CleanBC Home Renovation Rebate Program Update", dated 2020-JUL-15, for information purposes.

BACKGROUND

The CleanBC Better Homes Rebate Program is a program coordinated by the Province of BC to help accelerate home energy retrofits and reduce energy use by providing incentives for high efficiency heating equipment and building envelope improvements. Both BC Hydro and Fortis BC are also offering support and incentive funding as part of the program.

As part of the effort to implement the City's Climate Emergency Declaration, Council directed \$100,000.00 from the City of Nanaimo Emission Reduction Reserve Fund towards the CleanBC Better Homes Rebate Program. The province administers the program and reports to the City quarterly on the program uptake.

DISCUSSION

To date, media attention toward the program has been muted since attention has been focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. City staff will be looking into developing a more targeted campaign in the fall that will complement the Provinces program.

Staff are interested in hearing from the committee towards the fall regarding what the City should consider when developing its own marketing strategy on building energy efficiency incentives and the rebates currently offered in light of the current and potential health restriction that has impacted public movement and access to City facilities.

Rebate Program Top-Ups

The City is participating in the following CleanBC rebates:

Fuel Switch Heat Pump

The Fuel Switch Heat Pump top-up is a rebate for participants that switch from a fossil fuel (oil, natural gas or propane) heating system to an electric air-source heat pump. The City has committed to a \$350 top-up. Participants either can install a fully electric heat pump system or install a dual-fuel heat pump system with back up fossil fuel heating (i.e. a furnace). This municipal top-up is in addition to up to \$3,000 in rebates currently available through the CleanBC Program.

Electric Service Upgrade

The Electric Service Upgrade rebate is an additional \$500 for participants upgrading their electrical service to 100, 200 or 400 amp service and switching from a fossil fuel (oil, natural gas or propane) space or a water heating system to an electric air-source heat pump or heat pump water heater.

Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

The Heat Pump Water Heater top up is a \$350 rebate from the City for residents that switch from a fossil fuel (oil, natural gas or propane) water heating system to an electric heat pump water heater.

Contractor Participation Incentive

The Contractor Participation Incentive is a \$50 top-up available to the contractor for installing a qualifying heat pump for space or domestic hot water heating in homes that are fuel switching from natural gas, oil or propane. Contractors are a key stakeholder in the rebate process as 60% of rebate applicants hear about the program from their contractor. The contractor also supports homeowners with required paperwork and the application process. The City's contribution would be matched by the Province.

EnerGuide Home Evaluation

The City of Nanaimo currently has an EnerGuide Home Evaluation Rebate that provides a \$150 rebate toward the cost to complete a Home Energy Efficiency Assessment. This rebate is in addition to a \$300 rebate available from the Province to help cover the costs of a home energy evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The City's participation in the CleanBC Home Renovation Rebate Program offers a great opportunity to leverage City funds with the province to encourage homeowners to switch out fossil fuel intense heating systems for electric heat pumps and to learn more about energy efficient upgrade opportunities for their home.

The information in this report is provided as background to the committee. Staff will be preparing a draft City communication plan in the fall to help promote the program in Nanaimo. Staff will be asking for input from the Committee before moving on with implementation.

SUMMARY POINTS

- CleanBC Home Renovation Rebate Program is a program coordinated by the Province of BC and intends to help accelerate home energy retrofits and reduce energy use by providing incentives for high efficiency heating equipment and building envelope improvements.
- To date, media attention toward the program has been muted since attention has been focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking forward, City staff will be looking into developing a more targeted campaign in the coming fall that will complement the provinces program.
- Staff would like to develop a targeted public awareness campaign, in light of current and future health restrictions, and are looking for input on how best to frame and develop this with input from the environment committee.

Submitted by:

Rob Lawrance
Environmental Planner

Concurrence by:

Jeremy Holm
Director, Development Approvals

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development Services