



July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Dear Nanaimo City Council,

The David Suzuki Foundation supports council passing the highest step of B.C.'s Zero Carbon Step Code for new construction. By taking this action and joining other local governments from across the province, Nanaimo will build a better city, support good jobs in the community, help improve local air quality and mitigate the climate crisis.

In passing this motion the city is helping accelerate the shift to using affordable, secure, clean electricity, and moving away from the volatility and uncertainty of fossil fuel prices. Adopting the highest tier of the Zero Carbon Step Code now will help new buildings benefit from and avoid the costs of conversions and upgrades in the future. High-efficiency electric heat pumps can provide heat in winter, as well as cooling in summer. They are more cost-effective and better for health than gas furnaces and heaters. British Columbia's electricity grid is currently in surplus and can handle this new demand in the near term, and BC Hydro has begun a new process to procure more clean electricity to accommodate exactly this kind of new electricity demand.

Natural gas for heating and cooking in homes has been shown to negatively affect the health of occupants, especially children. In the coming decades, all fossil fuel-powered home heating will need to be converted to clean electricity as we meet our regional and national climate goals. It makes little sense to allow the continued build-out of natural gas appliances and infrastructure that we know will need to be replaced. The cost of heating buildings with gas will rise over time with the high volatility of natural gas pricing and carbon tax increases, and at some time the gas equipment will need to be disconnected to meet climate targets.

Adopting the leading standards will help climate-proof buildings for the future. It will ensure that building owners have healthy, climate-resilient homes powered by clean, reliable and affordable electricity from B.C.'s clean grid. Please pass the motion and build a better Nanaimo.

Sincerely,

Tom Green,  
Senior Climate Policy Adviser  
David Suzuki Foundation