

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)
To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 5/17/2022 5:20:29 PM
Subject: [Upcoming news release: City advances climate action with deep emissions reductions \(May 17, 2022\)](#)

Dear Mayor and Council,

Following your approval at today's Council meeting, I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release, regarding the four Climate Emergency building reports to lower carbon emissions.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
News release
May 17, 2022

City advances climate action with deep emissions reductions

Today Council took action to further advance City leadership on zero-emissions buildings that will reduce the fossil fuels we burn, add cooling and air filtration in new buildings, and transform our construction processes to use more sustainable and healthy materials with less waste.

Actions taken out of the four reports will collectively remove or avoid over 50,000 tonnes of carbon pollution in Vancouver per year, which is equivalent to removing 13,000 gas-fueled cars from our roads. In addition to this critical climate action, these building updates have many health benefits for residents and building occupants.

“The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report states it is ‘now or never’, to avoid the worst of climate breakdown. Vancouver has the tools and ability to act. Today, we did just that by taking meaningful action to reduce emissions from buildings, while making them more climate resilient,” said Mayor Kennedy Stewart. “Tackling emissions from existing buildings, shifting our construction practices and prioritising residents’ safety, health and comfort is a win-win.”

With simple changes to energy use and technology, we are able to harness renewable energy to heat buildings and hot water, and add cooling and filtration, which is increasingly necessary given an increase in extreme weather and smoke events.

The four Climate Emergency Action Plan reports include the following actions:

- Requiring cooling and air filtration in new buildings to protect residents from air pollution and heat waves;
- Reducing carbon pollution from large existing office and retail buildings by 40 per cent by 2030 and requiring zero emissions by 2040;

- Cutting carbon pollution from all new buildings to nearly zero by 2025, a 90 per cent reduction compared to 2007 levels;
- Creating first-of-their-kind requirements in North America to limit carbon pollution from building materials and reduce waste;
- Explore options to remove gas for cooking and fireplaces in new residential buildings;
- Prioritize electrification over renewable gas in new and existing buildings;
- Streamlining existing regulations to make renovations easier;
- Pioneering processes to track and cap emissions from large existing commercial buildings;
- Providing supports for owners of existing multifamily buildings, detached houses and commercial buildings to access energy coaching and rebates for heat pumps;
- Delivering a roadmap of future regulations to support industry and resident readiness; and
- Funding existing non-market housing to make these options more climate resilient.

“Vancouver has a well-earned international reputation for bold climate commitments to make near-zero emissions homes and buildings the new normal,” said Theresa O’Donnell, General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability at the City of Vancouver. “The package of actions approved by Council today show how cities like Vancouver can demonstrate climate leadership by being forward-looking and responsive, while moving at a pace that supports success for the building industry, residents and City processes.”

Equity and resilience have been core considerations when developing these updates. The City has prioritized eliminating carbon pollution from Vancouver’s largest commercial buildings, which have the best opportunities and resources to make energy-efficiency retrofits and/or switch to renewable energy.

An equity focus also recognizes some residents are more at risk to extreme weather events like summer heat waves and smoke events. To address this, staff are advancing work to prioritize cooling in multi-family homes, adding requirements for filtered outdoor air, and providing grants to retrofit non-market housing with heat pumps to increase climate resiliency for residents.

Background

These four building emissions reduction reports are part of the City’s [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#), which analyzed the sources of Vancouver’s carbon pollution, and committed to cutting these emissions in half by 2030. Buildings present a significant opportunity for climate action, as burning natural gas, a fossil fuel, in Vancouver’s buildings accounts for nearly 60 per cent of our carbon pollution. Embodied emissions, which come from manufacturing, transporting, construction, maintenance, and disposal of building materials, account for 11 per cent of global carbon emissions.

To learn more, visit: <https://vancouver.ca/green-vancouver/how-we-build-and-renovate.aspx>

Media contact:

City of Vancouver
 Civic Engagement and Communications
media@vancouver.ca