



RESIDENTIAL BUILDERS

Community Builders...**Building Communities**

November 2, 2017

Dear CRD Chair and Board,

RE: Update on BC Step Code

Following our letter of September 14, Re: **Step Code Survey to VRBA Members**, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing released a report on the costs of the Step Code.

The report is not credible when compared to our own survey of 22 experienced builders, including Built Green, Passive Home and Net Zero contractors. For example, the ministry estimates a Tier 5 (Passive Home) will cost only an additional \$17,450 over a base code home.

Our builders estimate the additional cost to be between \$55,410 and \$110,820 and in this environment of weekly rising prices for material and labour, the number is likely to be on the higher side. Given this disparity between the report and real world construction costs, the report should be disregarded for any Tier.

In addition, when council asks for the designations of Built Green, Leed, or Passive Home, the contractors must be registered with the program and have certified education to deliver that specific product. Education is the foundation of professionalism and helps protect your residents and municipality.

There is no certified education for the Step Code. While the ministry claims it will provide seminars for the Step Code, attendance by builders is optional.

The Step Code is poor policy increasing costs and risk while undermining certified education programs and National Building Code diligence.

In addition, there is negligible benefit reducing GHG's at significant cost in already energy efficient new homes. Our older housing stock is where real energy efficiency gains can be achieved.

For these reasons and others, including the real potential for unintended consequences, VRBA does not support the Step Code at any level. We recommend support for Built Green, a very successful certification program that includes energy efficiency, water conservation, recycling and affordability – critical for young families in BC.

You can find more information on the Step Code at our website <http://www.vrba.ca/need-know-bc-step-code/>. Feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Yours sincerely,

Casey Edge
Executive Director

cc Honourable John Horgan, Premier of British Columbia
cc Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
cc CRD municipalities