



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
REAL ESTATE  
ASSOCIATION

September 9, 2015

Climate Leadership Discussion Paper  
Ministry of Environment  
Climate Action Secretariat  
PO Box 9486, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9W6

Submitted by email: [climateleadershipplan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:climateleadershipplan@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Climate Leadership Team:

On behalf of the British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA), thank you for your work to ensure British Columbia's leadership in climate change adaptation. REALTORS® and real estate boards around the province are interested in issues impacted by climate change, and we are pleased to provide the following feedback to your July 2015 discussion paper.

**Goal 1: Communities are thriving and resilient in the face of climate change.**

*1.2 Buildings and communities produce as much or more energy than they consume; waste is a source of energy.*

BCREA strongly believes improving the energy efficiency of existing homes is a worthy objective, and should be pursued through voluntary measures and incentives for property owners. A voluntary approach will help ensure that real estate prices are not negatively impacted, particularly in highly populated areas of the province that are subject to some of the least affordable property in Canada.

Therefore, BCREA does not support regulations that require more energy-efficient buildings and greater uptake of clean energy technologies. Instead, we urge the government to provide homeowners and homebuyers with information and incentives to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes. A good starting point to enabling affordable retrofits would be the reimplementing of the provincial government's program through which utility providers can provide financing to homeowners. A pilot project began in November 2012, but the program has been on hold since early 2014.

*1.3 Planning decisions prepare communities to anticipate and recover from extreme weather events.*

For several years, BCREA has advocated that existing floodplain maps around the province need to be updated, so communities can make reliable decisions about where and how they grow. Floodplain maps inform development decisions, and also help guide emergency planning. Investing in mapping to mitigate the catastrophic impacts of flooding is far more cost-effective than responding to flood emergencies. Such planning will be most effective when done collaboratively by local, provincial and federal governments.

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BCREA strongly supports the following statement: “Governments need to invest more in building resilience to extreme weather events and provide stronger direction regarding appropriate places to build.”

**Goal 4: The cost of climate change for society is considered whenever British Columbians make important decisions.**

*4.1 The price of carbon encourages businesses, organizations and people to reduce carbon emissions.*

Similar to our rationale noted under objective 1.2, BCREA supports the following statement:

“Government should improve the affordability of solutions that allow business and consumers to reduce emissions and prepare for climate change.”

The Association also supports the setting of emissions targets, accompanied by incentives to encourage voluntary participation by business and private citizens.

*4.2 Climate change risks to people, infrastructure and our natural environment are considered in important decisions.*

Again, BCREA urges education and a voluntary, incentive-based approach to encourage the consideration of climate change in important decisions.

We look forward to seeing the results of this consultation, and to providing additional feedback in December of this year. If BCREA can be of further assistance in the meantime, please contact me directly at [rlaing@bcrea.bc.ca](mailto:rlaing@bcrea.bc.ca) or 604-742-2787.

The British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) is the professional association for more than 18,500 REALTORS® in BC, focusing on provincial issues that impact real estate. Working with the province’s 11 real estate boards, BCREA provides continuing professional education, advocacy, economic research and standard forms to help REALTORS® provide value for their clients.

To demonstrate the profession’s commitment to improving Quality of Life in BC communities, BCREA supports policies that encourage economic vitality, provide housing opportunities, respect the environment and build communities with good schools and safe neighbourhoods.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Laing  
Chief Executive Officer