

MINISTRY OF HOUSING INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE

PURPOSE: For **INFORMATION** of the Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing

ISSUE: Strata EV Charging and Electrical Management Regulations

SUMMARY:

- Amendments to the Strata Property Regulation will bring into force a new Electrical Planning Report (EPR) requirement, as well as requirements related to owner requests for EV charging and short-term exclusive use of a parking stall for the purposes of EV charging.
- Affordability has been considered and small stratas will be exempt from the requirement to obtain an EPR due to the cost burden this would impose.
- The regulations support several government commitments, including CleanBC, the *Zero Emissions Vehicle Act*, and planned equipment regulations.
- Extensive stakeholder consultation has been conducted and stakeholders have been very supportive of this initiative.
- Housing Policy Branch (HPB) is currently targeting the November 29th Cabinet meeting for approval of the regulations.

BACKGROUND:

- On May 11, 2023, Bill 22 – *Strata Property Amendment Act* received royal assent, making changes to the *Strata Property Act* in support of EV charging, and setting out a new requirement for stratas to obtain EPRs.
- Upon royal assent, Bill 22 lowered strata voting thresholds from three-quarters to a majority for approval of certain decisions related to the installation of EV chargers and infrastructure.
- Regulations will bring the remainder of Bill 22 into force, including requirements related to EPRs, owner requests for EV charging, and short-term exclusive use of a parking stall for the purpose of EV charging. See **Appendix A** for a detailed description of the regulations.
- By supporting the switch to EVs in strata corporations, the regulation supports several government commitments:
 1. The 2019 *Zero Emissions Vehicles Act*, which requires 30 per cent of vehicle sales and leases to be zero emission vehicles by 2030 and 100 per cent by 2040.

2. The 2018 CleanBC Plan, which promised to explore ways to help make sure that people living in multi-unit residential buildings can charge EVs at home.
 3. The 2020 mandate letter to the Minister Responsible for Housing which committed to making it easier to charge EVs in stratas.
 4. The 2023 Throne Speech which committed to new legislation to improve access to EV charging stations in condo buildings.
- Extensive stakeholder consultation was conducted throughout 2022-2023. Strata specialists, technical experts, and EV charging advocates have participated in 11 formal consultation sessions. Stakeholders have been very supportive of this initiative and are expecting this regulation.

DISCUSSION:

Purpose of Requiring an EPR

- EPRs will help stratas understand the current and future demands on their electrical systems. They will assist in planning for EV charging infrastructure as well as for other upgrades, such as conversion to heat pumps and installation of cooling equipment.
- The Province's CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 committed that "*...after 2030, all new space and water heating equipment sold and installed in B.C. will be at least 100% efficient.*" This means that post-2030, strata corporations which replace natural gas-powered heating equipment will be required to switch to electrically powered equipment. This will significantly increase demands on their building's electrical system and reduce available electrical capacity.
- EPRs will help ensure that stratas are prepared and have the information necessary to help manage this transition.
- HPB is working closely with the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation to ensure requirements are aligned.

Preserving Affordability in Small Stratas

- Small stratas of fewer than five units will be exempt from the EPR requirement. These stratas have smaller operating budgets and distribute costs among fewer units, meaning that any cost impact of the report would be disproportionately felt by these owners. The cost of a report is estimated at between \$1,000 and \$8,000, depending on the size and complexity of the building.
- Some strata stakeholders provided feedback that all stratas should be included in this requirement due to the value of the EPR and the possible implications of improper management of electrical systems. However, given the other cost

pressures stratas are currently facing (inflation, rising insurance costs, and increased contributions to the contingency reserve fund), this exemption is one way the Province can help alleviate affordability challenges.

- s. 12

Phasing of EPR Requirement

- The EPR requirement will be phased-in over several years to ensure there is a sufficient supply of qualified professionals to conduct the reports. The phased implementation will also give stratas time to plan and save for the expenditure.
- An estimated 16,000 strata corporations in B.C. will be required to obtain an EPR.
- The proposed regulation will introduce the EPR requirement in two phases:
 - Phase 1: In three years' time (by late 2026), stratas located in Metro Vancouver Regional District, Fraser Vally Regional District, and the Capital Regional District (excluding the gulf islands) will be required to obtain an EPR.
 - Phase 2: In five years' time (by late 2028), stratas located in other areas of the Province will be required to obtain an EPR.
- The EPR is a one-time only requirement and stratas will not be required to obtain a subsequent report.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:

- EV charging legislative amendments triggered notification requirements for Treaty First Nations and these notifications have been completed.

GBA+ OR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS:

- Strata homeowners have lower household incomes than single family homeowners. Many strata owners are seniors on fixed incomes, first time homeowners or immigrant families.
- Small stratas have been exempt from the EPR requirements to support affordability.

OTHER MINISTRIES IMPACTED/CONSULTED:

- Ministry Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation
- Building and Safety Standards Branch
- Technical Safety BC

Attachments – Appendix A

DATE:

Teri Collins
Deputy Minister

DATE:

Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing

Prepared by:

Kylie Sandham
Manager, Policy and Legislation
Housing Policy Branch
778-698-5731

Approved [Oct 30, 2023] by:

Bindi Sawchuk
ADM
Housing and Land Use Policy Division
250-216-0346

This document may contain information that is protected by solicitor client privilege. Prior to any disclosure of this document outside of government, including in response to a request under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Ministry in possession of this document must consult with the lawyer responsible for the matter to determine whether information contained in this document is subject to solicitor client privilege.

Appendix A: Strata Property Regulations Amendments – EV Charging

The regulations will bring the remainder of Bill 22 into force.

Exclusive Use – Parking Stall

The proposed regulation will allow strata corporations to grant permission to an owner to exclusively use a parking stall for a period of up to 5 years, if EV charging has been installed in the parking stall and the installation was paid for by the owner. Currently, this permission can be granted for up to 1 year. This change will provide owners who pay for the installation of EV charging with some certainty that they will have continued access to their investment.

Owner Requests for EV Charging

The proposed regulation will prescribe:

- 1) required content of an owner's request for EV charging,
- 2) when requests may be made for EV charging,
- 3) classes of EV charging that may be considered for installation, and
- 4) the timeline the strata corporation has for considering and responding to a request (3 months).

Electrical Planning Report

Electrical planning reports will help stratas understand the demands on their electrical system. With this information, stratas will be able to make decisions about the management of their existing capacity as well as plan for increased demands in the future.

Reports will provide information such as: current capacity of the electrical system, a list of existing demands on the electrical system, an estimate of peak electrical demand and spare electrical capacity, an estimate of the electrical capacity needed to support future demands, such as EV charging and heat pumps, as well as recommendations for demand management.

The proposed regulation will prescribe:

- 1) geographical areas of the provinces for the purposes of phasing in the requirement to obtain an electrical planning report,
- 2) the qualifications a person must have to complete an electrical planning report,
- 3) the dates on or before which a strata corporation must obtain an electrical planning report,
- 4) exemptions from the requirement to obtain an electrical planning report for small stratas of fewer than five units, and
- 5) the information that must be included in an electrical planning report.