From: Web NoReply
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 12:12 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Comments - Sonja Vrinten - Energy regulation Options for Building Standards
Attachments: Final Building Code Letter Template.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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--- Replies to this email will go to [redacted]

Submitted on Monday, May 5, 2025 - 12:11

Submitted by [redacted]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Monday, May 05, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Sonja

Last Name: Vrinten

Email: [redacted]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:
Address: [redacted] McKercher Dr
Ward: Ward 8

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: 6.11 - Energy regulation Options for Building Standards

Comments:
please see attached letter

Attachments:

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Dear Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development, & Community Services,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of Ward 8 to urge the City of Saskatoon to adopt the National Building Code's Tier 2 standards for energy use efficiency in 2025 and Tier 3 in 2026. This proposal is not only a necessary response to urgent environmental threats but an opportunity to achieve multiple benefits for our community, including long-term affordability, public health, and liveability. More efficient building codes have been proven to work and have strong support in Saskatchewan. The path forward is clear.

Environmental Responsibility: Residential homes account for around 25% of greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatoon (1). Compared to Tier 1, Tier 3 would reduce the energy use of new builds by 20% (2). Adopting Tier 2 standards in 2025 and Tier 3 in 2026 would support Saskatoon's commitment to emissions reductions and climate resilience as outlined in the Low Emissions Community Plan and 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

As a longtime resident, I have witnessed significant changes due to global warming right within our city which I find heartbreaking. Monarch butterflies, fresh air, regular spring rains and lush greenspaces are all beauty I feel I will only be able to revisit in memory. Younger generations have already missed so much that I took for granted. Dust, smoke, stunted leaves and intense heat are a current reality. Birds now leave nests prior to maturity in attempts to cool themselves. People are becoming disconnected and disheartened. Wildfire smoke and the "fire season" are considered normal. However, I have felt our city's responsible use of their decision-making authority encouraging; a glimmer of what we could be. I ask that we continue to be strong. Going against the grain by adopting policies such as Tier 2 and ultimately Tier 3 building codes is certainly not popular with all interest groups and is not an easy action to take. It requires courage and the ability to put the common good above the pressure of powerful groups with financial goals. It is not easy, but it is necessary, correct and just action.

Affordability: Some are concerned about the upfront costs of implementing Tier 2 or 3 standards. However, this will result in savings for residents over the long term. According to Efficiency Canada, a home built to Tier 3 standards would save around $624 per year on utilities compared to a home built to Tier 1 (2). This is money that homeowners could then contribute to the local economy.

Public Health and Liveability: Buildings constructed with energy-efficient designs can provide better air quality and more resilience to extreme weather (3, 4). As a result, more efficient building codes would better protect residents from the impacts of forest fires, other air quality concerns, and extreme weather events—a critical consideration given the increasing severity of such events.

Proven Success and Public Support: Cities like Vancouver and Toronto have already adopted more efficient building standards and have meaningfully reduced their carbon emissions (5, 6). Saskatoon has the opportunity to learn from these successes and adapt them to our local context. A 2021 Abacus Data poll showed that 62% of residents in Saskatchewan

support or strongly support changing building codes so that new buildings are more efficient (7). These figures give a clear mandate for action to the City of Saskatoon.

Tier 2 & 3 building codes are not simply an upgrade—they are an investment in Saskatoon's future. By adopting these standards, the city will be taking a bold, proactive step to mitigate the effects of climate change while prioritizing affordability, public health, and liveability for its residents. The climate crisis demands decisive action, and now is the time for Saskatoon to rise to this challenge. Later is too late.

I appreciate the ongoing efforts of Mayor Block and City Council to explore innovative solutions to support our community's wellbeing. I am confident that adopting Tier 2 building code standards in 2025 and Tier 3 in 2026 will be a milestone in Saskatoon's journey toward sustainability, affordability, and liveability.

Thank you for considering this important matter.

Sincerely,

Sonja Vrinten

1. Green Municipal Fund. (n.d.). Case study: Bringing energy efficiency to Saskatoon homes. https://greenmunicipalfund.ca/case-studies/case-study-bringing-energy-efficiency-saskatoon-homes
2. Efficiency Canada. (2025, February 19). *Saskatchewan's building code backtrack will burden homeowners with higher costs.* https://www.efficiencycanada.org/saskatchewans-building-code/
3. Wang, C., Wang, J., & Norbäck, D. (2022). A systematic review of associations between energy use, fuel poverty, energy efficiency improvements and health. I*nternational Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(12), 7393. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19127393
4. Tootkaboni, M.P, Ballarini, I., Corrado, V. (2025). Towards climate resilient and energy-efficient buildings: A sensitivity analysis on building components and cooling strategies. *Building and Environment, 270.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.buildenv.2024.112473
5. General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability. (2024). *Vancouver's next climate plans*. City of Vancouver. https://council.vancouver.ca/20240723/documents/r3.pdf
6. City of Toronto. (2023). *City of Toronto releases two reports detailing progress on ambitious TransformTO Net Zero Climate Action Strategy.* https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-releases-two-reports-detailing-progress-on-ambitious-transformto-net-zero-climate-action-strategy/
7. Efficiency Canada. (n.d.). Building codes for new buildings. https://www.efficiencycanada.org/building-codes/building-codes-for-new-buildings/