

Housing Alliance Development & Land Use Workgroup Meeting  
Notes – Governor’s Executive Order on Energy Efficiency  
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In 2017, the Legislature considered a bill from the environmental community that would have required changes to the building code that would have significantly increased requirements related to energy efficiency. During that process stakeholders requested that this run through existing processes to change and improve the code, while still achieving the same outcomes.

Since the 2017 legislative session, the Governor’s office has been convening stakeholders to identify a list of potential code changes they would like to see move through the code change process. In the coming weeks, the Governor will issue an Executive Order related to climate goals and improvements to the building code.

After the Executive Order is issued, the goals will be sent to the Building Codes Division, where code changes will happen through normal processes, which involves convening several committees, and identifying potential changes and improvements on a cycle of every three years.

Included in the Executive Order are requirements that buildings be:

- Solar ready: Ready to be equipped with solar panels;
- Electric vehicle ready: Ready to be equipped with electric vehicle charging stations;
- Zero energy ready (Residential) and the equivalent for commercial buildings: Meaning that the building uses so little energy that if renewables are placed on site, the energy use would be zero. This standard can’t regulate occupant use. The code is based on average building usage.
- High efficiency water usage, which includes some water recapturing provisions;
- Continue to meet code compliance.

Retrofitted or renovated buildings will be required to meet code under the same standards as today – if the rehabilitation is substantial enough to require it to meet current code.

The Building Codes Division will use existing processes to identify changes to the code.

Currently, there are seven boards which cover a range of areas:

- Electrical and Elevator Board;
- State Plumbing Board;
- Board of Boiler Rules;
- Building Codes Structures Board;
- Mechanical Board;
- Residential and Manufactured Structures Board;
- Construction Industry Energy Board.

<http://www.oregon.gov/bcd/boards/Pages/index.aspx>.

The Executive Order will give Building Codes Division and the Boards general standards and goals. In addition to the general standards and goals, there will be a matrix to identify what is meant by those general standards. From there, the Building Codes Division will use their existing process to update the code at least every three years based on the identified goals and standards in the Executive Order.

The proposal does also include a cost “escape clause”. When each board implements code changes, they have the ability to do a cost analysis in which they look at the cost to implement the change in several types of building and look at the standard construction process to meet code. If the average cost to implement the change is above a certain threshold, the implementation of the code change can be delayed until readily available technology comes down in cost.