

# A MINNESOTA ADVANCED BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARD

## WHAT:

An advanced building performance standard could be offered as an optional appendix to the state's building code allowing cities to adopt a higher energy standard for new and major renovation commercial and multifamily buildings. The appendix would be available to jurisdictions as a uniform, advanced energy standard.

## WHY:

**An advanced building performance standard is necessary to allow the State and cities to cost effectively meet our climate and other clean energy goals.** The State of Minnesota, and many cities, have climate action goals that call for an 80% reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, but we are not on track to meet these goals. New and renovated buildings are a significant source of GHG emissions and must be addressed.

Today, Minnesota cities cannot require that commercial buildings be designed and constructed to meet a standard above the state code, thereby limiting the carbon reduction cities can achieve. Cities view the rapid growth in new commercial and multifamily development as a major missed opportunity to have an impact and want to act soon. Additionally, an advanced building performance standard would have a positive impact on job growth in the building construction, building operations, and design sectors.

## HISTORY & BACKGROUND OF THE ADVANCED BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARD EFFORT:

- An advanced building standard was recognized as a key GHG reduction strategy more than a decade ago, first through the state-led MN Climate Change Advisory Group stakeholder process 2008 report and again through the EQB-led Climate Solutions and Economic Opportunities (CSEO) project in 2014.
- In 2019, state Rep. Jamie Long authored a bill to create an advanced building performance standard
  - Voluntary option for cities to adopt
  - Supported by 12 cities around the state, League of Minnesota Cities, AIA-MN
  - Sen. Dave Senjem sponsored the bill in the senate
  - Passed in House energy omnibus bill; negotiated out during conference committee
- Fall 2019: Convened three city-led workshops to identify common interests and solutions, engaging 22 cities statewide
  - Utilities, architectural community, design engineers, and insurance industry participation
  - Other stakeholder meetings: trade groups, affordable housing, multifamily builder assoc.
- Departments of Commerce (Commerce) and Labor & Industry (DLI) host a broad stakeholder process
  - Five meetings between October 2019 – January 2020
  - Includes contractors, trades, multifamily, energy efficiency, cities, and legislators

## PARTICIPATING CITIES & GUEST STAKEHOLDERS

Planning Team Cities: Bloomington, Edina, Minneapolis, Rochester, St. Louis Park, and Saint Paul

*Collaborators:* Twenty-three total engaged cities, AIA MN, USGBC MN, investor owned, corporative, and municipal electric and natural gas utilities, and Insurance Federation of MN.

## SOME WAYS TO SUPPORT:

- Pass a resolution pledging your city's support
- Request lawmakers support – legislators, DLI and Commerce Commissioners, Governor's Office
- Testify at a legislative committee hearing

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Ben Rabe, [rabe@fresh-energy.org](mailto:rabe@fresh-energy.org)

## EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES/PROVINCES:

### MASSACHUSETTS *(Adopted 2009)*

- Performance-driven code
- Being updated as a net-zero stretch code

### NEW YORK CITY *(Adopted 2015)*

- Reduces building energy use by 23% (2012 baseline)

### BRITISH COLUMBIA *(Adopted 2017)*

- Voluntary provincial standard
- Reaches net-zero energy ready by 2032

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN  
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2020-XXX

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A POLICY TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ENERGY  
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**WHEREAS**, buildings account for approximately 40% of all the energy used in Minnesota and new development practices have the opportunity to make the greatest longstanding impact; and

**WHEREAS**, there is overwhelming scientific consensus that climate change is a significant threat to human civilization and is caused primarily by the combustion of fossil fuels; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of Minnesota is not on track to meet its 80% carbon reduction by 2050 goal;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Northfield needs to meet our carbon reduction goal of being a 100% carbon-free community by 2040; and

**WHEREAS**, high efficiency construction presents opportunities for workers in manufacturing, construction, and service sectors, and it is essential that workers play a role in helping drive innovation towards a clean energy economy while creating and maintaining family-sustaining jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Northfield is interested in improving health and supporting economic development using environmentally conscious efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Minnesota Climate Strategies and Economic Opportunities report identified implementation of a “stretch code” to improve energy efficiency as a leading cost-effective strategy in meeting the state’s 80% greenhouse gas reduction goal by 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Northfield supports individual Minnesota cities having the option to adopt more stringent energy requirements for new construction and major renovation buildings as an issue of local autonomy,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Northfield, Minnesota that the City formally adopts a policy to support state legislation leading to higher performing commercial buildings through advanced energy performance standards.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 18th day of February, 2020.

ATTEST

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City Clerk

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Mayor

VOTE:    \_\_\_ POWNELL    \_\_\_ DELONG    \_\_\_ GRABAU    \_\_\_ NAKASIAN  
          \_\_\_ NESS    \_\_\_ PETERSON WHITE    \_\_\_ ZWEIFEL