

# SUSTAINABLE Future at Work

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CLEANER  
**GREENER**  
LINCOLN  
MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER



**“OUR HOME, OUR FUTURE, OUR CHOICE”**

# Code Update Process in Lincoln

## October 17, 2012

***Critical part of efforts to create and adopt sustainable policies and practices in Lincoln:***

**Mayor's Environmental Task Force (2003)**

**Mayor Beutler Executive Order 80968 (2008)**

**Cleaner Greener Lincoln (2009)**

**Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan (2011)**

**Sustainable Lincoln Blue Ribbon Leadership Team (2012)**



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

"The Cleaner Greener Lincoln initiative will make the City of Lincoln an active leader in the area of sustainability, building upon Lincoln's extraordinary community commitment to its quality of life, investing stimulus and other resources, facilitating energy savings at the city, neighborhood, and business levels, fostering new ideas and partnerships, making it easy and affordable to be sustainable in Lincoln, and putting Lincoln in the fore as the green capital city of the Great Plains."

**Mayor Chris Beutler, June 4, 2009**



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- In the United States, buildings account for approximately 40% of total energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, 13% of water use, and 160 million tons per year of construction and demolition debris.
- The City of Lincoln controls and shapes this “built environment” with a regulatory system that includes building codes, zoning ordinances, and health standards.
- To achieve building codes and practices built for a more sustainable future, the City of Lincoln is now acting to meet this goal.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

### **Action Plan:**

1. Assess existing codes to identify barriers and opportunities to sustainable design and green building within the permitting process.
2. Bring together all the stakeholders, both in the building industry, community, and internally.
3. Identify community goals and priorities, including use of both national code updates (e.g. International Green Construction Code) and local ideas.
4. Analyze and educate on the options available to meet these goals.
5. Work within existing building and safety code task forces to identify clear paths for adoption of revisions.
6. Provide ongoing education for City staff, the local design and building community, and the broader community on the benefits of a green building code.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

### **“Residential Sustainable Building Standards” Guide**

- Greg Shinaut, long-time local home builder and Black Hills Energy customer representative, was contracted in 2010 as a “Green Building Practices Consultant” to Cleaner Greener Lincoln
- Drafted guide to educate and inform on “strategies to assist builders, developers, real estate agents, appraisers, and home owners understand the benefit of sustainable practices, materials, and methods that are contained within a Green-built home.”
- Guide distributed to builders, developers, business groups, environmental organizations, and other interested parties
- **Guide to be adopted as on-line reference material for Lincoln’s residential building code**



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

### “Green Team” Meetings Jan-June, 2012

- Wide ranging group discussion of economic opportunities and benefits of suggested sustainable building practices in residential building in **recycling, water conservation, resource management, energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and home operations and maintenance**
- Recommendations to Mayor



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

### **2012 Building Code Updates**

- Goal is to seek to keep Lincoln at pace with the International Code update cycle and with other area communities
- Increase local efficiencies without significant costs
- To include review of 2012 International Energy Conservation Code and 2012 International Green Construction Code



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- As a city of the primary class, the City of Lincoln has been given the authority to implement and to enforce its own building codes, provided these codes do not go below the minimum standards adopted by the State of Nebraska.
- At the same time, this authority allows the City of Lincoln to adopt standards that exceed this statewide minimum health and safety threshold.
- The City of Lincoln can, and at times does, institute building standards that are in compliance with state standards, yet add to them based on local policy priorities.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- The City of Lincoln bases its code on the bottom line requirements of state statute, regular code updates from the International Code Council, and local building standard desires.
- The Building and Safety Department develops each code - whether it is Residential or Commercial, Electrical, Mechanical, Fire, or Plumbing Code - with a similar process.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- Through Executive Order Mayor creates Task Force for each code and directs Task Force to review regularly possible updates and changes to the code.
- Mayor appoints to each Task Force individuals who are representative of the respective building industries, giving necessary credibility to the professional recommendations of each Task Force.
- Each Task Force is staffed by Building and Safety Department Section Chiefs, and is called into action when state law has been changed, a new International Code has been issued, or there is a perceived need to update or change a code.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- Each Task Force is expected to consider **feasibility, cost, and appropriateness for Lincoln's building codes** with each potential code change.
- This time-consuming process can involve from eight to twelve meetings over several months.
- Each Task Force compiles a set of Code change recommendations.
- Each of these recommendations- including whether to or not to adopt certain International Code changes or local proposals that exceed state statutory requirements - are referred to the Code Study Committee.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- Code Study Committee also is appointed by the Mayor through an Executive Order. It includes both building industry representatives as well as “at large” members.
- The Code Study Committee reviews all Task Force recommendations and prepares a final set of recommendations for submission to the Lincoln City Council and Mayor.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- The process provides a full professional vetting of possible code changes along with an assessment of **not only health and safety, but community and general welfare concerns**, including sustainability goals, the impact on economic development, or future code advancements before any proposed code changes are submitted to the final policymakers.
- The Task Force and Code Study Committee process creates a detailed record of possible code changes that can be accessed, understood, and used both by final policymakers as well as the general public.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- Lincoln's transparent and representative building code adoption and updating system provides input on a wide range of options for specific sections of the building code.
- Although the process is one of significant community and industry involvement, it does not formulate code policy.
- The City Council and Mayor still must act to put into place any policy decisions. Whether any particular code change works for the City of Lincoln ultimately is a decision made by our elected officials.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- 2012 Code Review Task Forces and Code Study Committee Meetings
  - Charged with review of 2012 International Building Code updates
- Final recommendations expected early 2013, followed by City Council and Mayor Beutler review and adoption
- Including review of 2012 IECC and 2012 IgCC (commercial building only)



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

- The Task Force and Code Study process allows for great vitality and growth in the building codes in Lincoln.
- Options can and are worked through with an appropriate amount of analysis and community input, including home builders, plumbers, electricians, as well as neighborhood representatives, academics, and business leaders.
- The local control we have in Lincoln, allows us to adopt what we believe is in our city's best interests and to harmonize each code to one another.



# Lincoln's Code Updates

## October 17, 2012

**For more information:**

**[green.lincoln.ne.gov](http://green.lincoln.ne.gov)**