

# Provincial Update: Harmonized Codes and Digital Leadership



Zachary May  
Executive Director  
Building and Safety Standards Branch  
BOABC AGM - May 30, 2023



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ministry of  
Housing

# Harmonized Codes and Digital Leadership

Shifting codes development to the national code development system and focusing on improving processes provincially.



# Harmonized Codes and Digital Leadership

- Building and Safety Standards Branch and Provincial mandates
- Harmonized codes and the new national codes process
- Digital Codes and Permits



# Ministry of Housing

Office of Housing and Land Use Policy



Housing Policy Branch  
Planning and Land Use Management Branch  
Housing Targets Branch  
**Building and Safety Standards Branch**

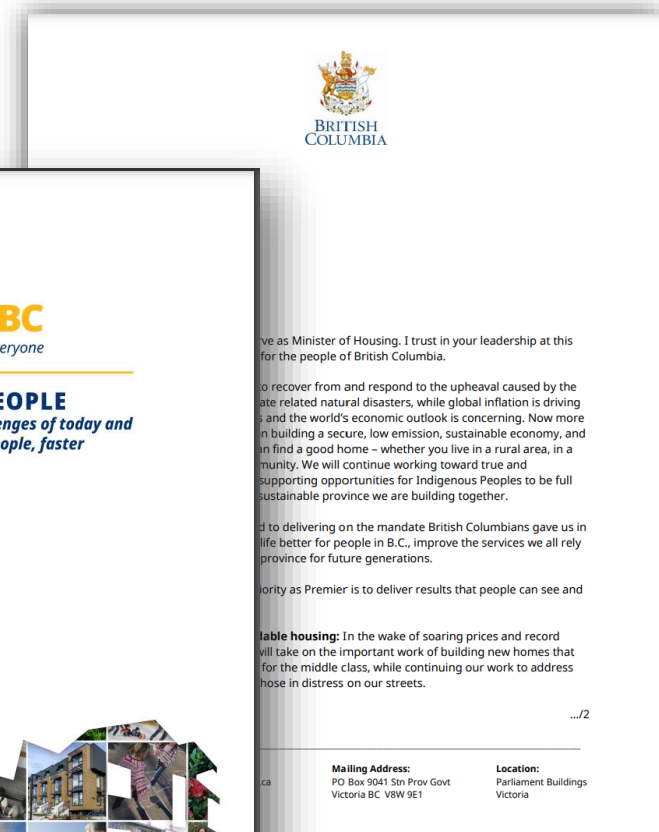
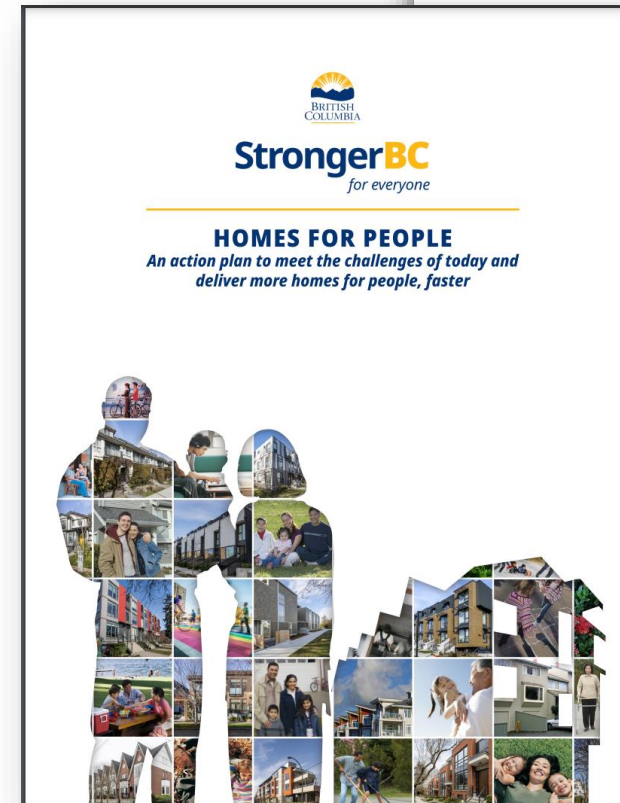
Office of Homelessness Policy and Partnerships



# Ministry of Housing

- New Ministry to support Government's housing priorities
- Provincial commitment to attainable and affordable housing
- *Homes for People* housing strategy

*Unlocks more homes, faster by **creating the conditions to encourage faster housing construction and reduce development costs**, including changes in regulations and zoning, less red tape, more incentives and a focus on targeted types of housing.*



# Homes for People



## **Become North American Leader in Digital Permitting and Construction**

*The Province will work with partners at all levels of government and leaders in the housing sector to spur innovation through the rapid implementation of digitized construction codes and digital design and permit processes. This will support our construction industry and make B.C. a leader in the digital permitting process.*

## **Build More Homes with Mass Timber**

*Through Homes for People, we are working with experts across the country to make changes to building codes to make it easier to build more homes with mass timber. We will work with partners to make it easier to use mass timber in taller buildings and improve flexibility to expose mass timber, as a design element.*



# Harmonized Codes and the New National Codes System

- Significant updates to the way model codes are developed in Canada
- Reduced barriers to trade and labour mobility
- Increased responsiveness to needs of Provinces and Territories
- Reduced variations in the BC Codes
  - Ventilation, Radon, Secondary Suites, Energy Efficiency, etc.



# Harmonized Codes and the New National Codes System

Construction Codes  
Reconciliation  
Agreement



---

Harmonization



---

Timely Adoption



---

Transformed Systems



---

Freely Available National Codes





# Harmonized Codes and the New National Codes System

## Canadian Table for Harmonized Construction Codes Policy

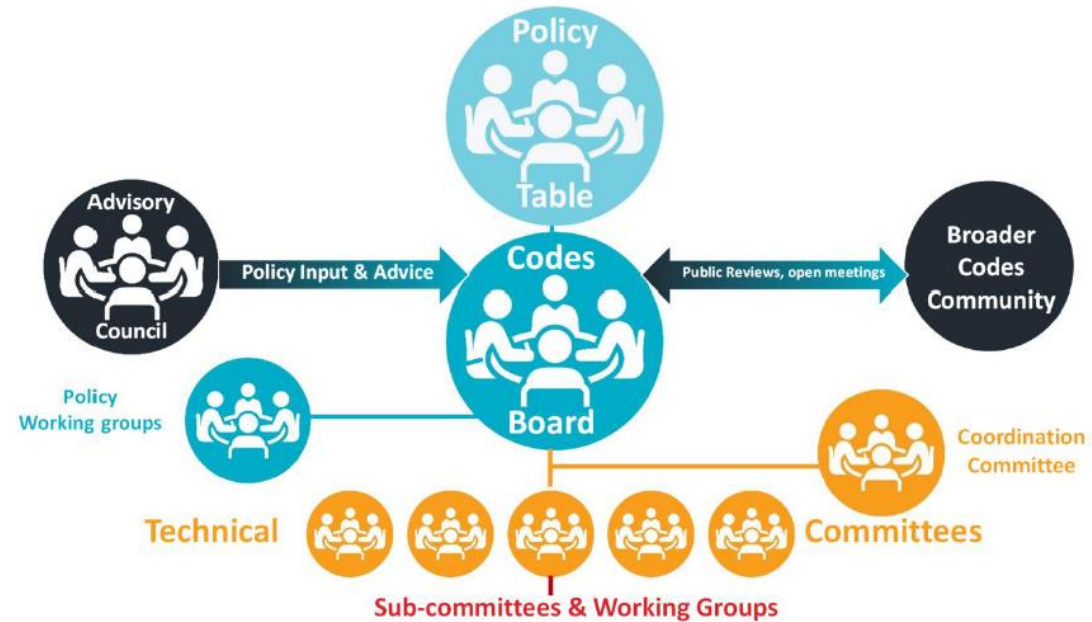
- Strategic direction-setting
- System / Board oversight

## Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes

- Input to strategic priorities
- Policy work
- Work planning
- Oversight of code development committees
- Approval of changes
- Considers stakeholder input from Advisory Council

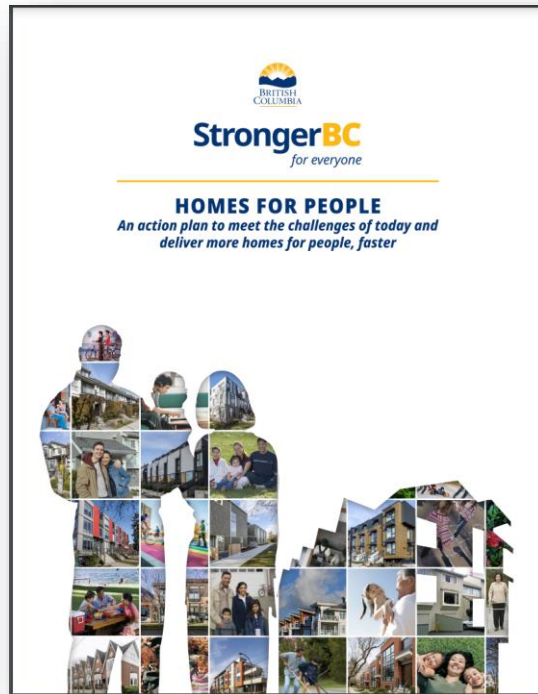
## Technical Committees

- Develop proposed changes
- Consider public/stakeholder input



# Harmonized Codes and the New National Codes System

Shifting codes development to the national code development system and focusing on improving processes provincially.



## Become North American Leader in Digital Permitting and Construction

- BC leadership in coordination with NRC

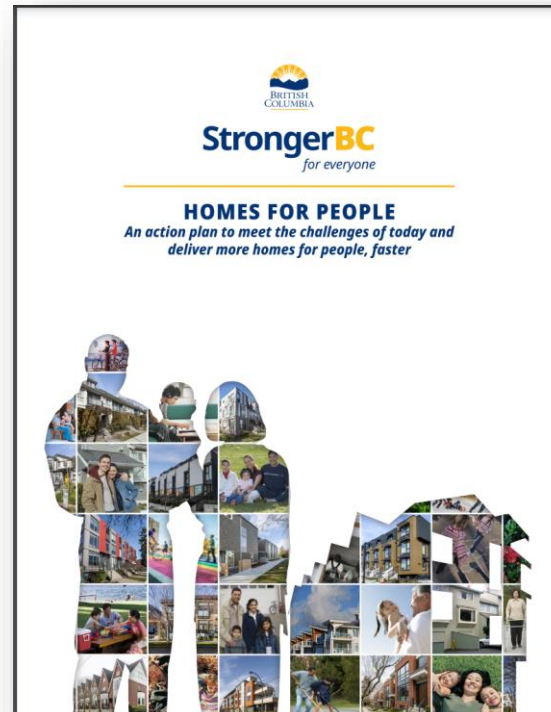
## Build More Homes with Mass Timber

- Accelerated code development process through BC/QC task group with support from NRC



# Digital Permitting and Construction

*Unlocks more homes, faster by **creating the conditions to encourage faster housing construction and reduce development costs**, including changes in regulations and zoning, less red tape, more incentives and a focus on targeted types of housing.*



## **Become North American Leader in Digital Permitting and Construction**

*The Province will work with partners at all levels of government and leaders in the housing sector to spur innovation through the rapid implementation of digitized construction codes and digital design and permit processes. This will support our construction industry and make B.C. a leader in the digital permitting process.*



# Vision

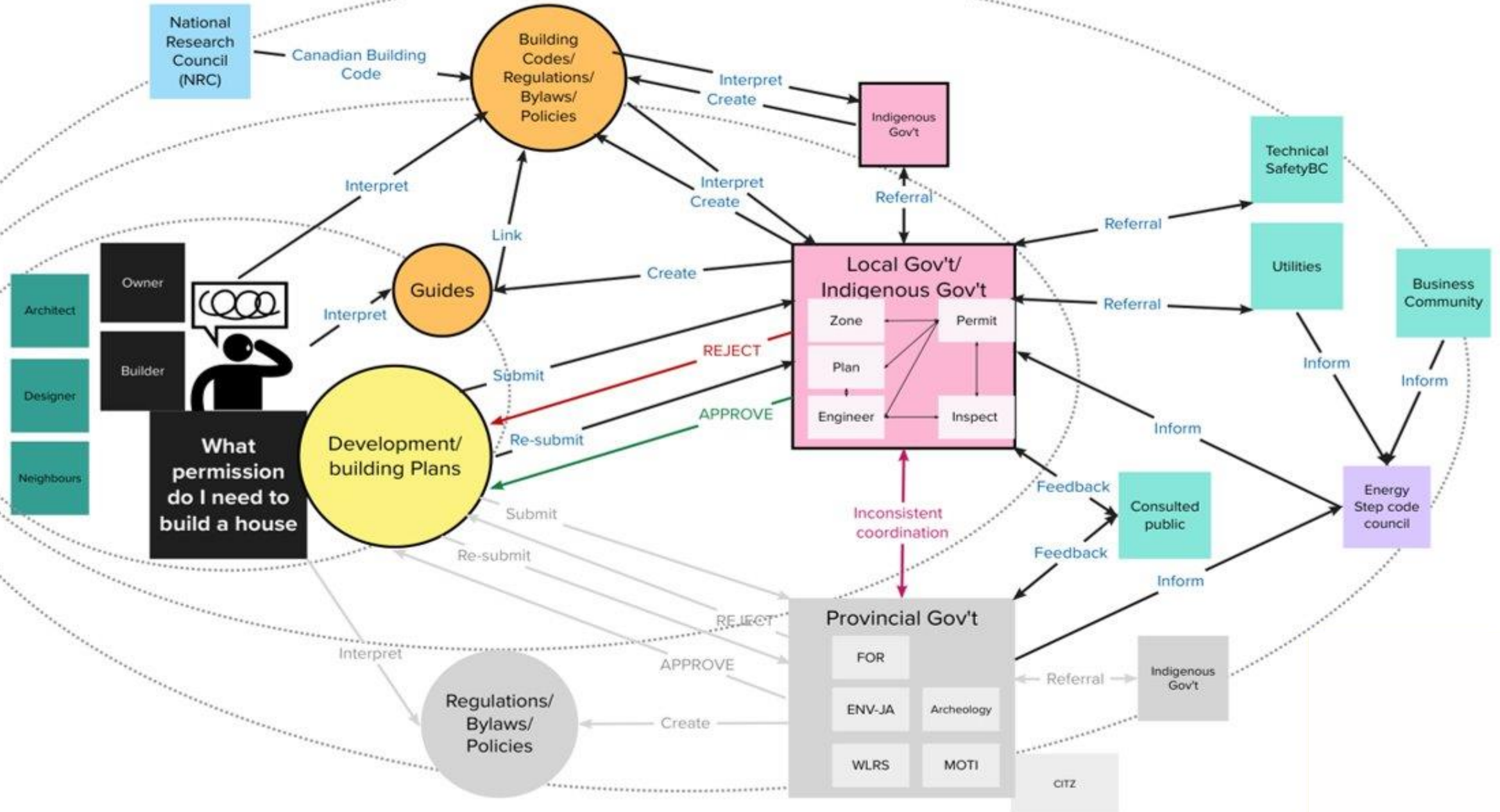
**Become the  
North American  
leader in digital  
permitting and  
construction**



**BC's housing  
development  
system is more  
collaborative,  
quicker and  
delivers better  
outcomes**



# Ecosystem map: From Development to Building (grey elements out of scope for BSSB)



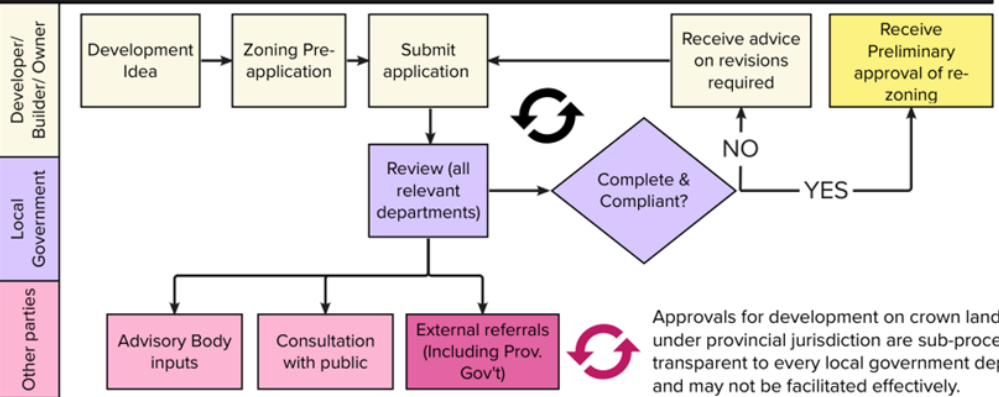
# Streams of Work

Stream	Objectives	Outputs
1. Digitize Building Code	Make it easier to understand, access, and update the building code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Digitally enhanced code</li><li>BIM enabled Code</li></ul>
2. Digital Building Permit Submission and automated Code Compliance	Make it easier/faster to comply with the building code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Smart compliance checklists</li><li>Digital building permit submission</li><li>Tools to automate code compliance</li></ul>
3. Integrated Housing Permit Platform	Make it easier for data to enable the development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Database to manage housing development outputs (from WLRS &amp; Building Permit tool)</li><li>Integration platform to enable data exchange across permit processes</li><li>Provide real-time reporting on housing development in BC</li></ul>



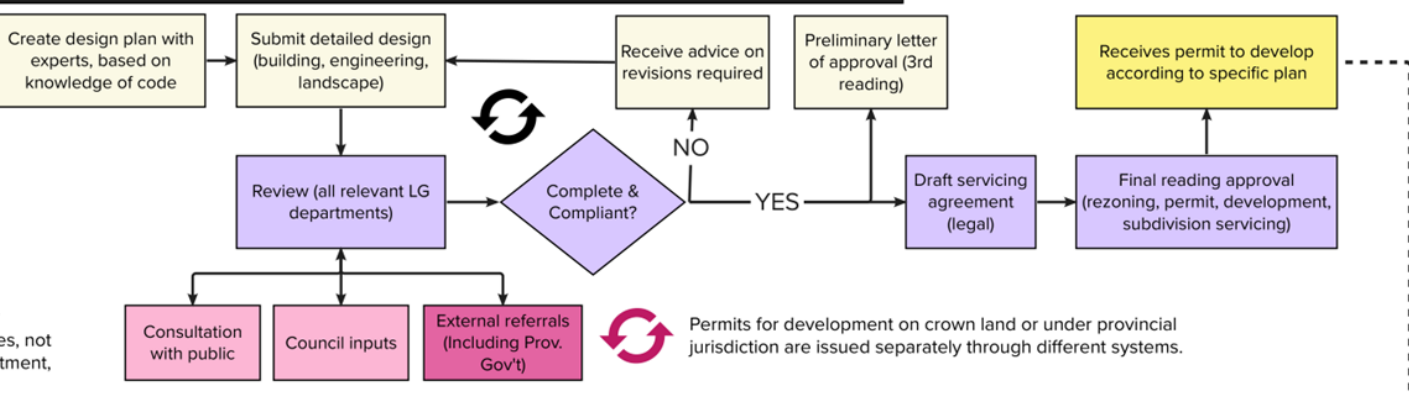
# High Level Process: From Development to Build

## Phase 1: Land Development



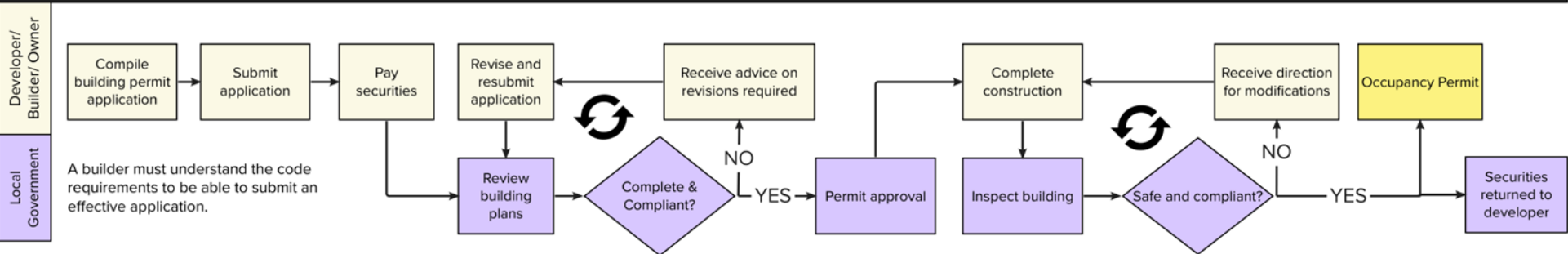
Approvals for development on crown land or under provincial jurisdiction are sub-processes, not transparent to every local government department, and may not be facilitated effectively.

## Phase 2: Detailed Design & Development Decision



Permits for development on crown land or under provincial jurisdiction are issued separately through different systems.

## Phase 3: Construction Decision

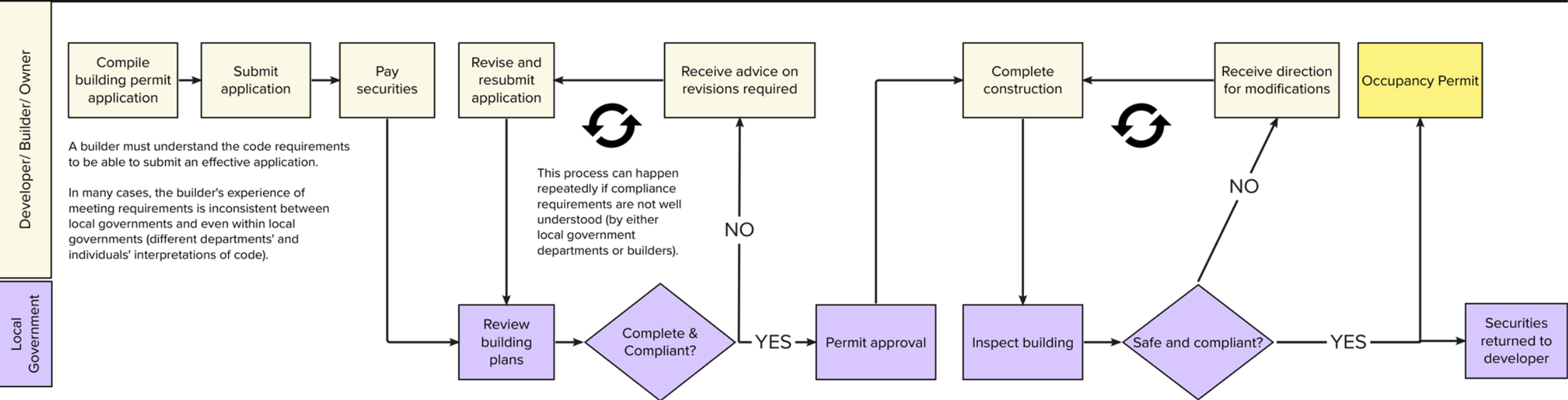


A builder must understand the code requirements to be able to submit an effective application.

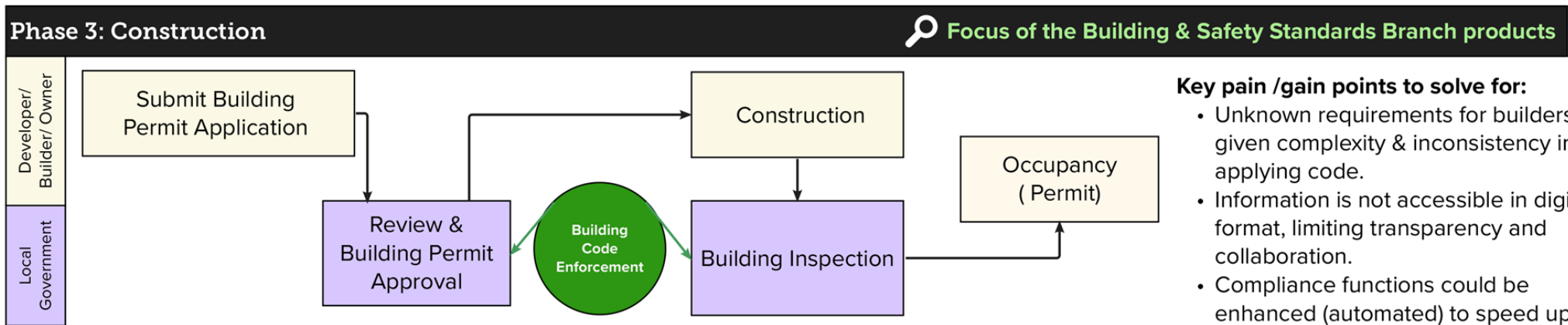
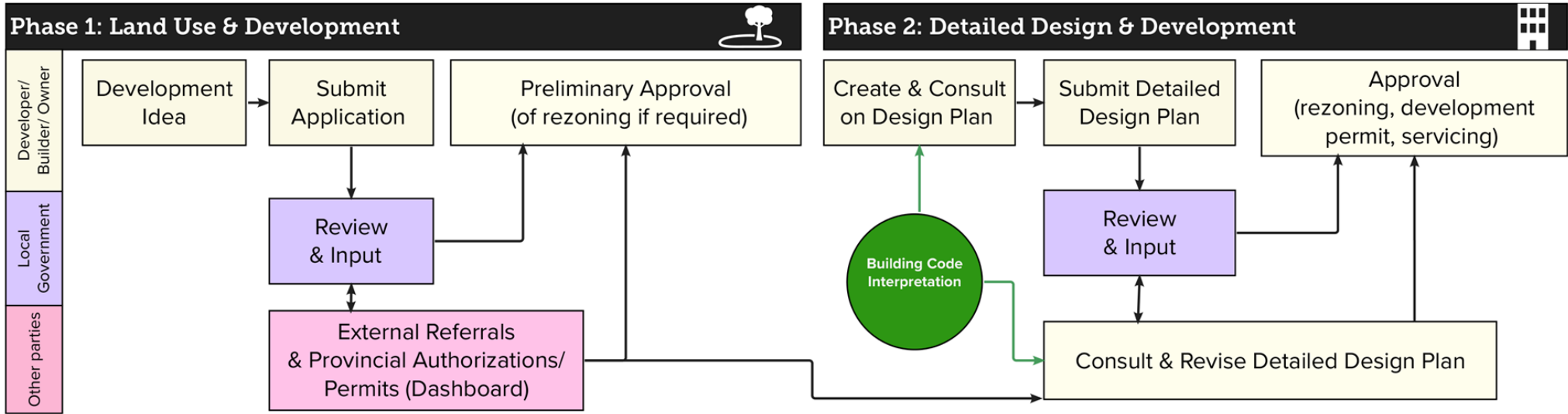


# Building Permit Approval Process

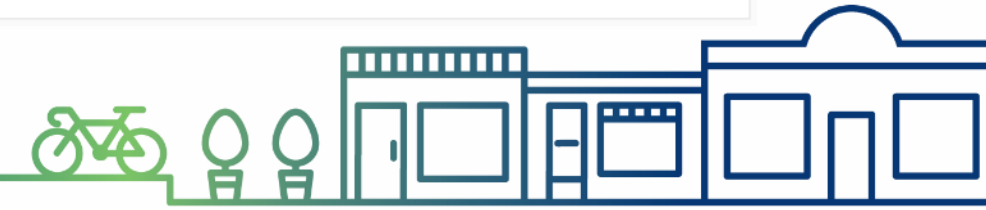
## Phase 3: Construction Decision







- Key pain /gain points to solve for:**
- Unknown requirements for builders, given complexity & inconsistency in applying code.
  - Information is not accessible in digital format, limiting transparency and collaboration.
  - Compliance functions could be enhanced (automated) to speed up process.



# Digital Permitting and Construction

**Vision:**

*BC’s housing development system is more collaborative, quicker and delivers better outcomes*

British Columbia

**City of Kelowna develops AI tool to speed up building permit applications**

Source: CBC news

GOVERNMENT

**Vancouver looks to reduce building permit timelines for ‘frustrated applicants’**

Evan Saunders February 20, 2023

Source: Journal of Commerce



# Digital Permitting and Construction

## **Complete:**

- Preliminary research with Indigenous communities, local governments, and industry
- Preliminary coordination with NRC
- \$9 million grant to Digital for mission mapping and pilot projects

## **Next Steps:**

- June 12<sup>th</sup> virtual kick-off
- Engagement through the summer with Indigenous communities, local governments, and industry

## **Anticipated for Spring 2024:**

- Digitally enhanced BC Building Code
- Pilot digital permit submission and code compliance tool in 15-20 local governments



# Harmonized Codes and Digital Leadership

Shifting codes development to the national code development system and focusing on improving processes provincially.

For more information, please contact [building.safety@gov.bc.ca](mailto:building.safety@gov.bc.ca) or [gov.bc.ca/buildingcodes](http://gov.bc.ca/buildingcodes)

