Building Code Development, Changes and Harmonization

August 20th, 2026

Presenter: Tim Warner

Email: twarner@boabc.org

Disclaimer

Information presented today does not directly represent the opinions of the Building Officials Association of BC (BOABC). This presentation is conceptual and for informal educational purposes only. The presenter and Association takes no responsibility for application of any concepts or interpretations in this presentation to specific projects. The slides must not be considered complete or exhaustive. Code provisions have been generally represented and may not reflect all exceptions.

Land Acknowledgement

Welcome!

Today's Session:

- What is building code development?
- Why does our Code change?
- How does our Code change?
- Code change in practice
- How do I get involved?

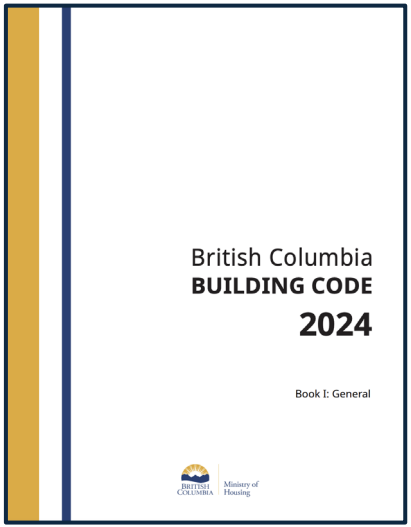
What is building code development?

National Model Codes

Provincial/Territorial Adoption

BC Building Code

Building Officials



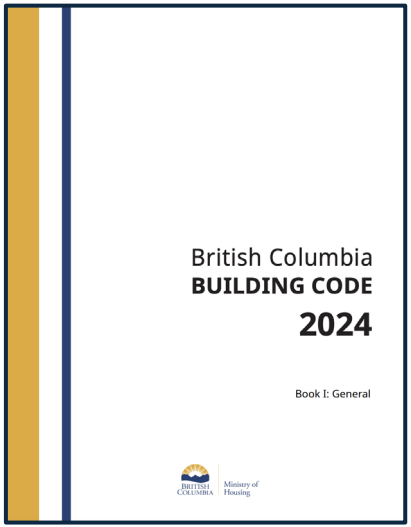
What is building code development?

National Model Codes

Provincial/Territorial Adoption

BC Building Code

Code Users



What is building code development?

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BC Building Code

Code Users

What is building code development?

National Model Codes

CBHCC
Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes

CCHCC
Comité canadien de l'harmonisation des codes de construction

With support from NRC and Codes Canada

What is building code development?

Intergovernmental body

Sets work plan and direct strategy

Approves code changes for adoption

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Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes

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What is building code development?

Intergovernmental body

Sets work plan and direct strategy

Approves code changes for adoption

What is building code development?

National Model Codes

5 year cycle

NBCC 2030 currently under development

What is building code development?

Processes that change, maintain and support the Code

New Provisions	Revision	
Change Existing Provisions	Errata	New/Revised Commentary
Clarification	Correction	

What is building code development?

Processes that change, maintain and support the Code:

Can be…

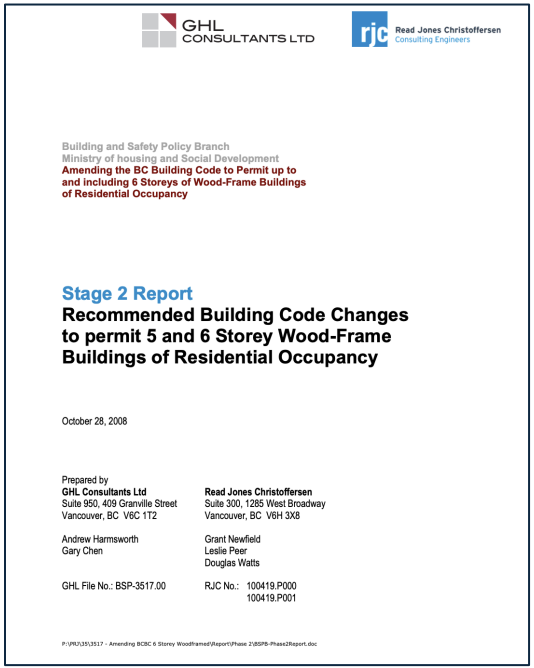
Transformational: Change what or how we build

Clarifying: Standardize meaning and application

Foundational: Change the assumptions behind the Code

What is building code development?

Transformational:
Change what or how we build



GHL CONSULTANTS LTD

Read Jones Christoffersen
Consulting Engineers

Building and Safety Policy Branch
Ministry of housing and Social Development
Amending the BC Building Code to Permit up to and including 6 Storeys of Wood-Frame Buildings of Residential Occupancy

Stage 2 Report
Recommended Building Code Changes to permit 5 and 6 Storey Wood-Frame Buildings of Residential Occupancy

October 28, 2008

Prepared by

GHL Consultants Ltd
Suite 950, 409 Granville Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 1T2

Andrew Harmsworth
Gary Chen

Read Jones Christoffersen
Suite 300, 1285 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6H 3X8

Grant Newfield
Leslie Peer
Douglas Watts

GHL File No.: BSP-3517.00

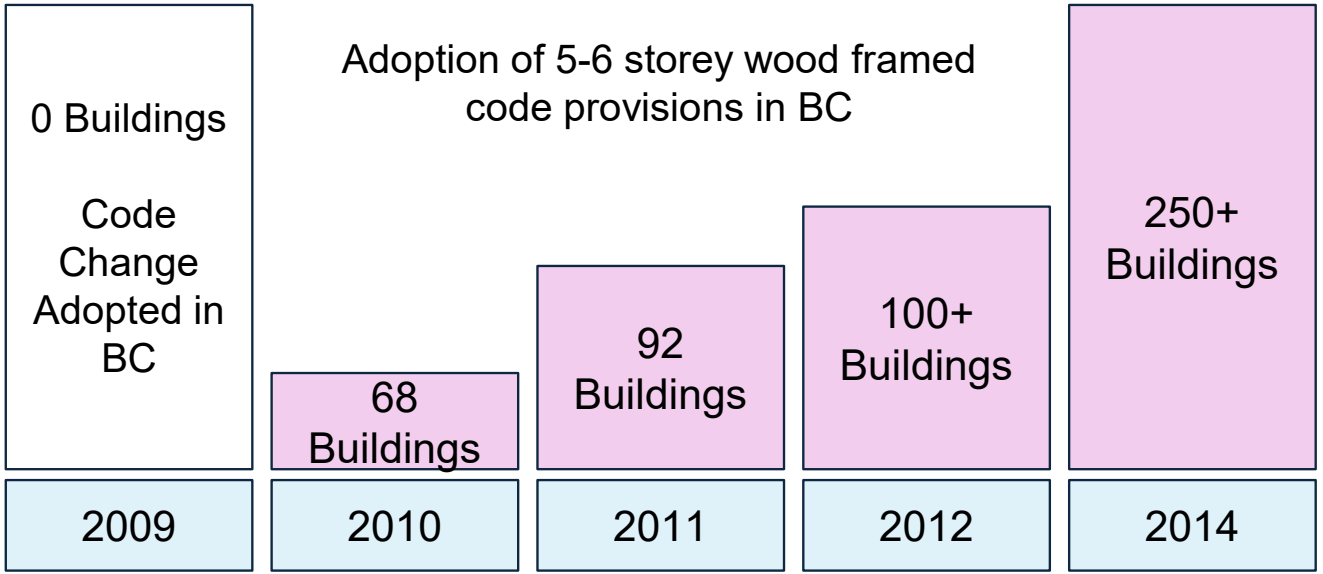
RJC No.: 100419.P000
100419.P001

P:\PRJ\35\3517 - Amending BCBC 6 Storey Woodframed\Report\Phase 2\BSPB-Phase2Report.doc

- Introduction of 5-6 storey wood-frame buildings of residential occupancy
- Developed in BC first
- Controversial, challenging beginnings
- Now commonplace
- Shaped NBC2015

What is building code development?

Transformational:
Change what or how we build



https://natural-resources.canada.ca/corporate/planning-reporting/audit-evaluation/evaluation-report-forest-products-market-access-development

What is building code development?

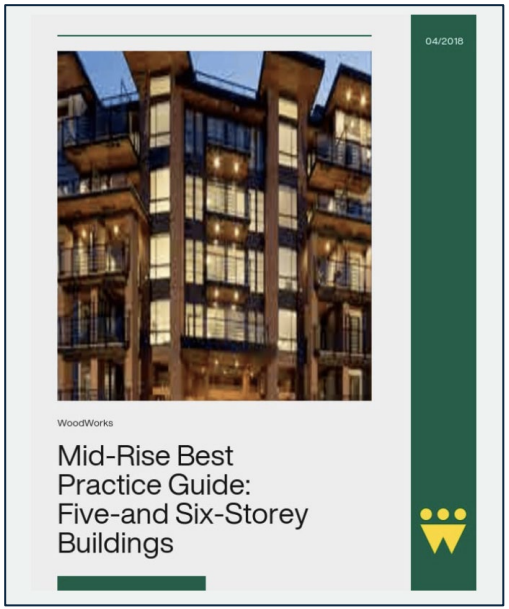
Transformational:
Change what or how we build

www.cbc.ca/news/

What is building code development?

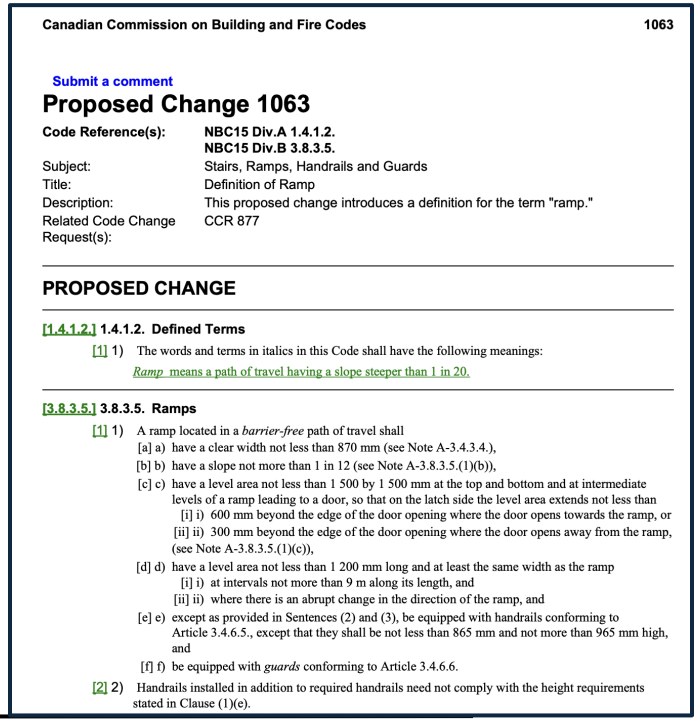
Transformational:
Change what or how we build

www.apartments.com/r



What is building code development?

Clarifying:
Standardize meaning and application



Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes 1063

Submit a comment

Proposed Change 1063

Code Reference(s):	**NBC15 Div.A 1.4.1.2.** **NBC15 Div.B 3.8.3.5.**
Subject:	Stairs, Ramps, Handrails and Guards
Title:	Definition of Ramp
Description:	This proposed change introduces a definition for the term "ramp."
Related Code Change Request(s):	CCR 877

PROPOSED CHANGE

[1.4.1.2.] **1.4.1.2. Defined Terms**

[1] 1) The words and terms in italics in this Code shall have the following meanings:

Ramp means a path of travel having a slope steeper than 1 in 20.

[3.8.3.5.] **3.8.3.5. Ramps**

[1] 1) A ramp located in a *barrier-free* path of travel shall
- [a] a) have a clear width not less than 870 mm (see Note A-3.4.3.4.),
- [b] b) have a slope not more than 1 in 12 (see Note A-3.8.3.5.(1)(b)),
- [c] c) have a level area not less than 1 500 by 1 500 mm at the top and bottom and at intermediate levels of a ramp leading to a door, so that on the latch side the level area extends not less than
  - [i] i) 600 mm beyond the edge of the door opening where the door opens towards the ramp, or
  - [ii] ii) 300 mm beyond the edge of the door opening where the door opens away from the ramp,

  (see Note A-3.8.3.5.(1)(c)),
- [d] d) have a level area not less than 1 200 mm long and at least the same width as the ramp
  - [i] i) at intervals not more than 9 m along its length, and
  - [ii] ii) where there is an abrupt change in the direction of the ramp, and
- [e] e) except as provided in Sentences (2) and (3), be equipped with handrails conforming to Article 3.4.6.5., except that they shall be not less than 865 mm and not more than 965 mm high, and
- [f] f) be equipped with *guards* conforming to Article 3.4.6.6.

[2] 2) Handrails installed in addition to required handrails need not comply with the height requirements stated in Clause (1)(e).

- Introduction of the definition of the term “ramp”
- Clarified use in ~260 instances across the Code
- Clearer understanding of triggered requirements, eg handrails and guards

What is building code development?

Clarifying:
Standardize meaning and application

Submit a comment

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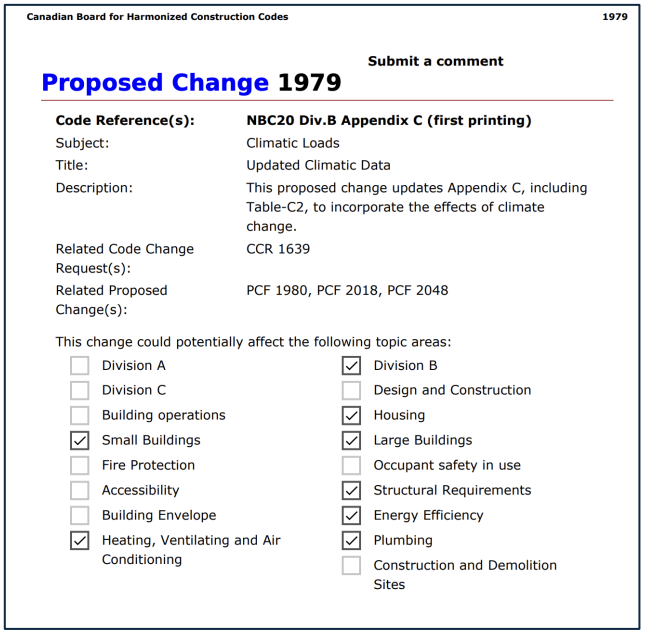
What is building code development?

Foundational:
Change the assumptions behind the Code



Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes 1979

Submit a comment

Proposed Change 1979

Code Reference(s):	**NBC20 Div.B Appendix C (first printing)**
Subject:	Climatic Loads
Title:	Updated Climatic Data
Description:	This proposed change updates Appendix C, including Table-C2, to incorporate the effects of climate change.
Related Code Change Request(s):	CCR 1639
Related Proposed Change(s):	PCF 1980, PCF 2018, PCF 2048

This change could potentially affect the following topic areas:

- ☐ Division A
- ☐ Division C
- ☐ Building operations
- ☑ Small Buildings
- ☐ Fire Protection
- ☐ Accessibility
- ☐ Building Envelope
- ☑ Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning
- ☑ Division B
- ☐ Design and Construction
- ☑ Housing
- ☑ Large Buildings
- ☐ Occupant safety in use
- ☑ Structural Requirements
- ☑ Energy Efficiency
- ☑ Plumbing
- ☐ Construction and Demolition Sites

- Incorporated effects of climate change into Appendix C
- Alters fabric of the Codes scope
- Changes seen in how climate loads are now factored into Codes
- Eg. New Reference Hourly Wind Pressure, Specified Snow Load calculations

What is building code development?

Foundational:
Change the assumptions behind the Code

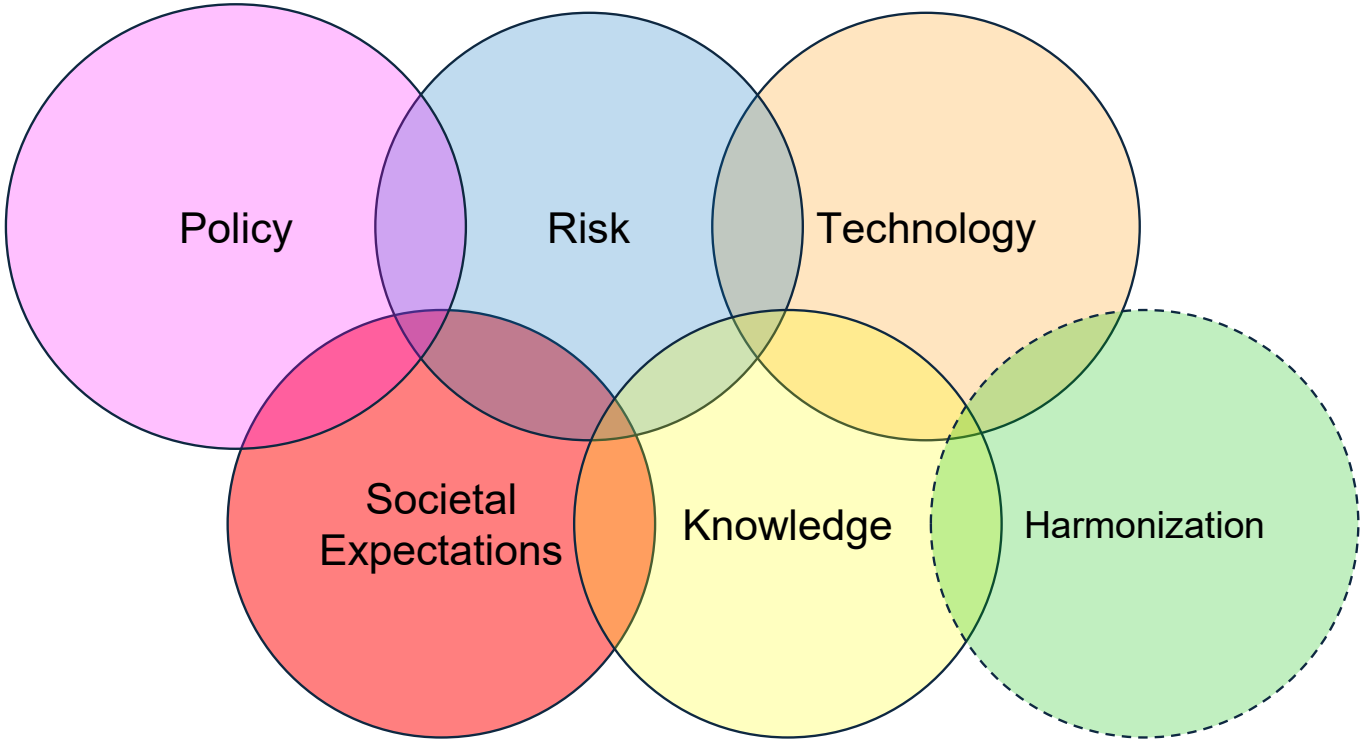
Changing and Variable Climates

Climate is not static. At any location, weather and climatic conditions vary from season to season, year to year, and over longer time periods (climate cycles). This has always been the case. In fact, evidence is mounting that the climates of Canada are changing and will continue to change significantly into future. When estimating climatic design loads, this variability can be considered using appropriate statistical analysis, data records spanning sufficient periods, and meteorological judgement. ~~The analysis generally assumes that the past climate will be representative of the future climate.~~

PCF 1979

Why does our Code change?

Why does our Code change?



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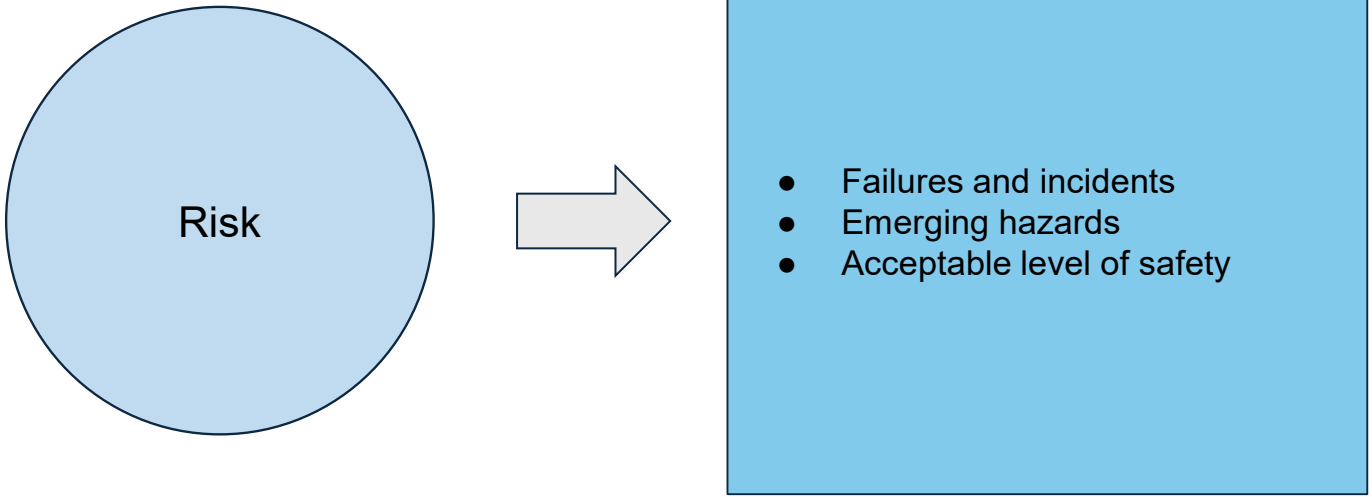

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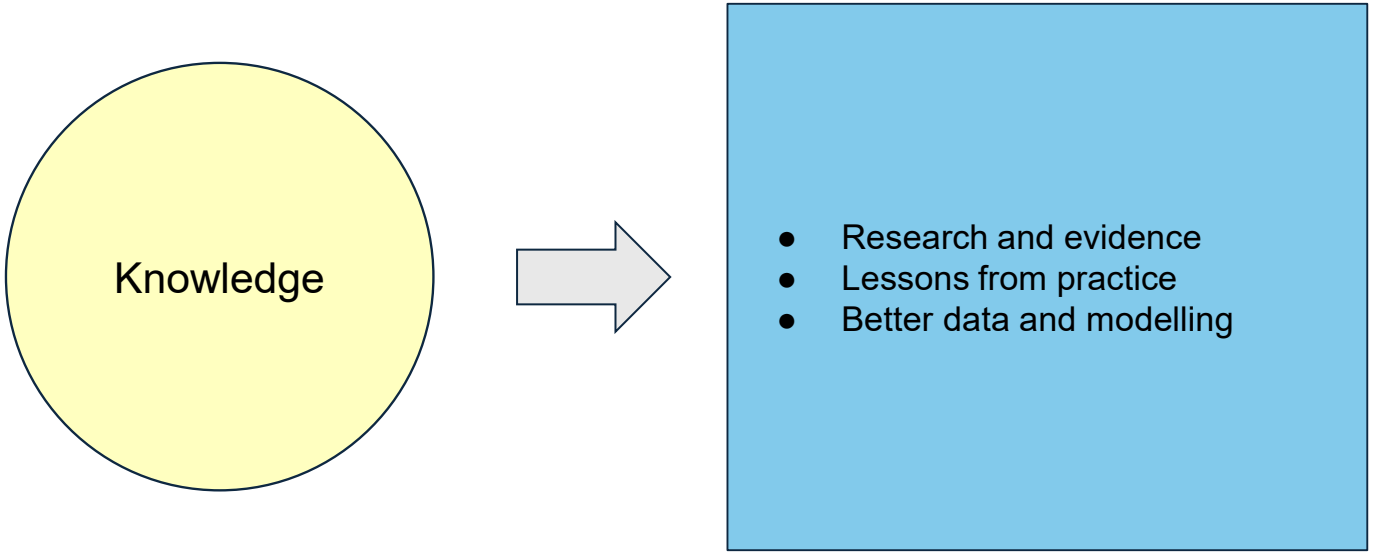

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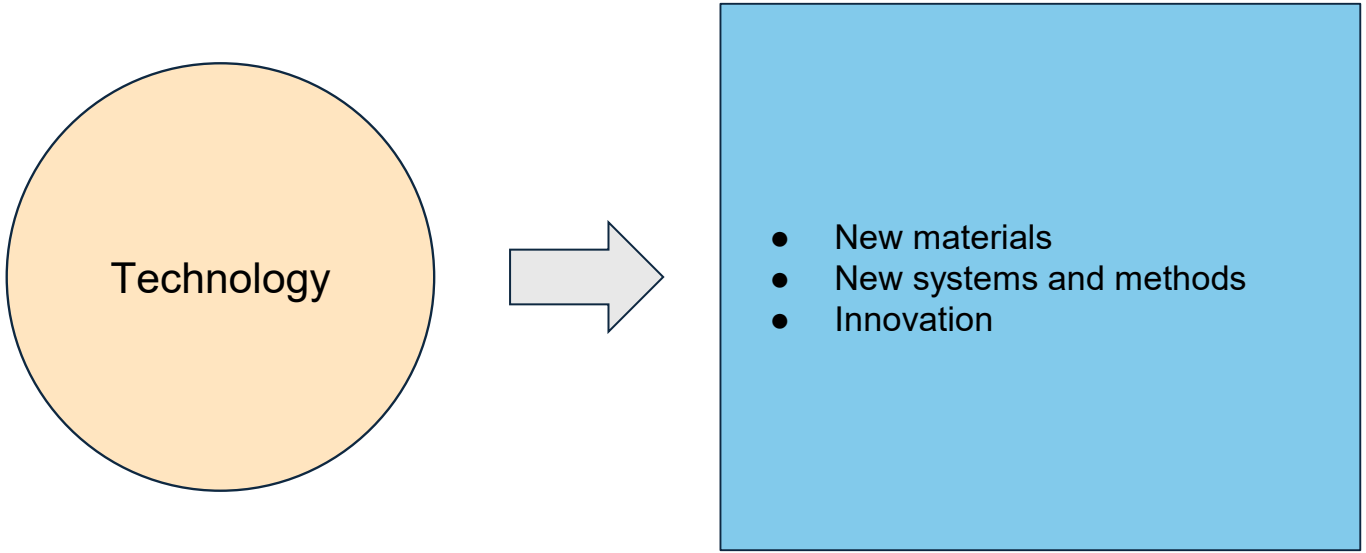

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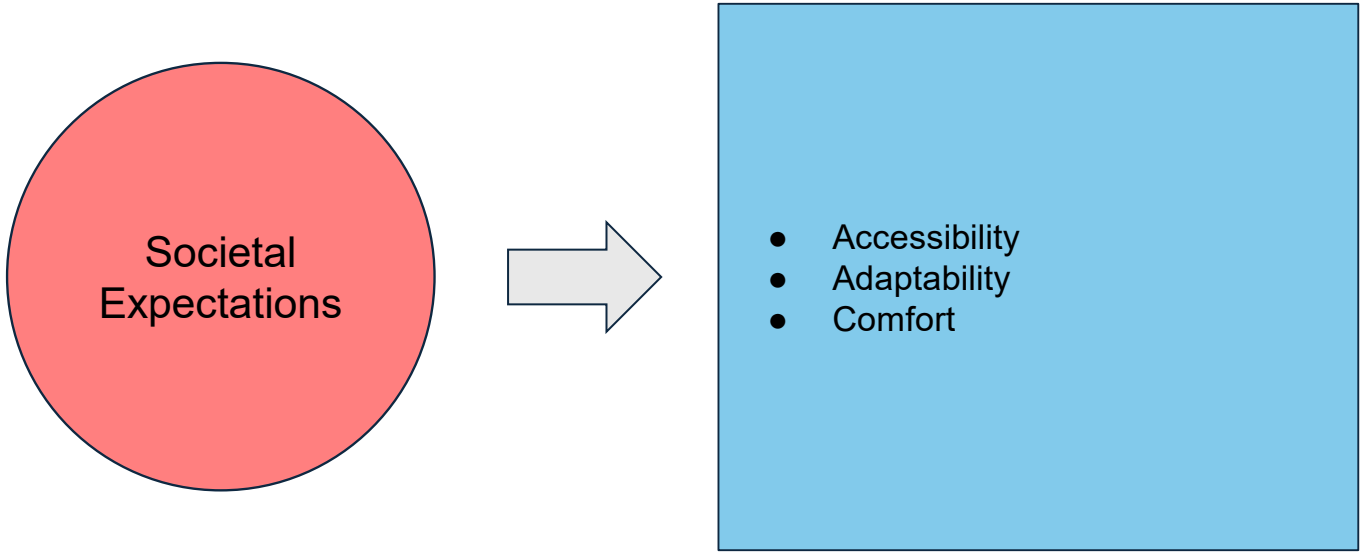

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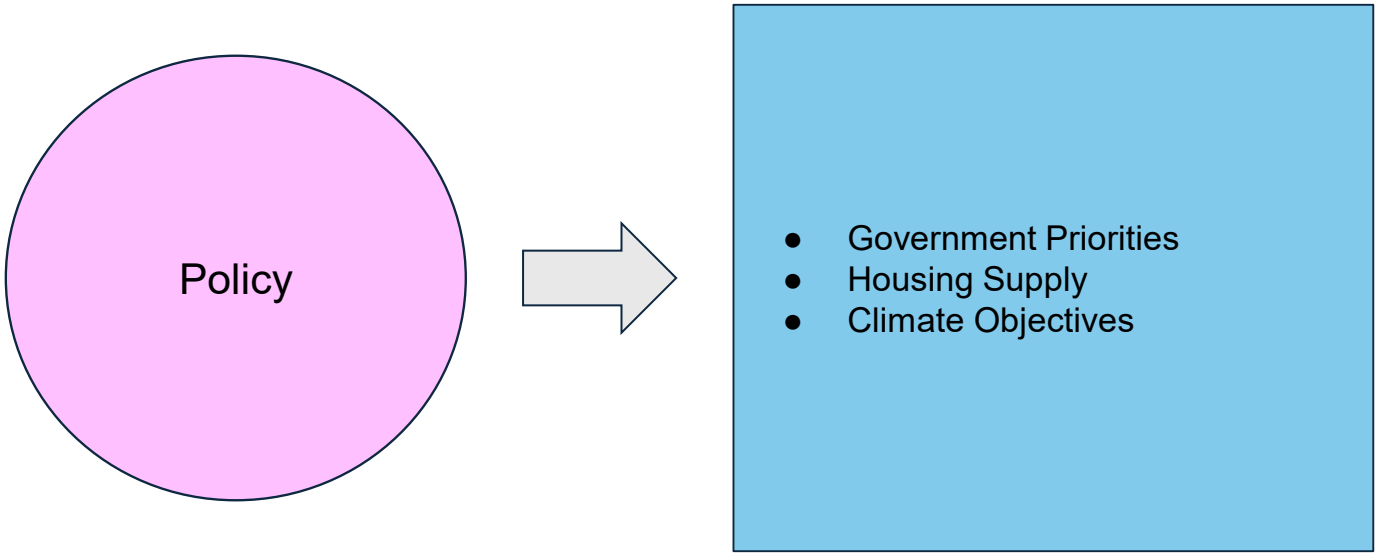

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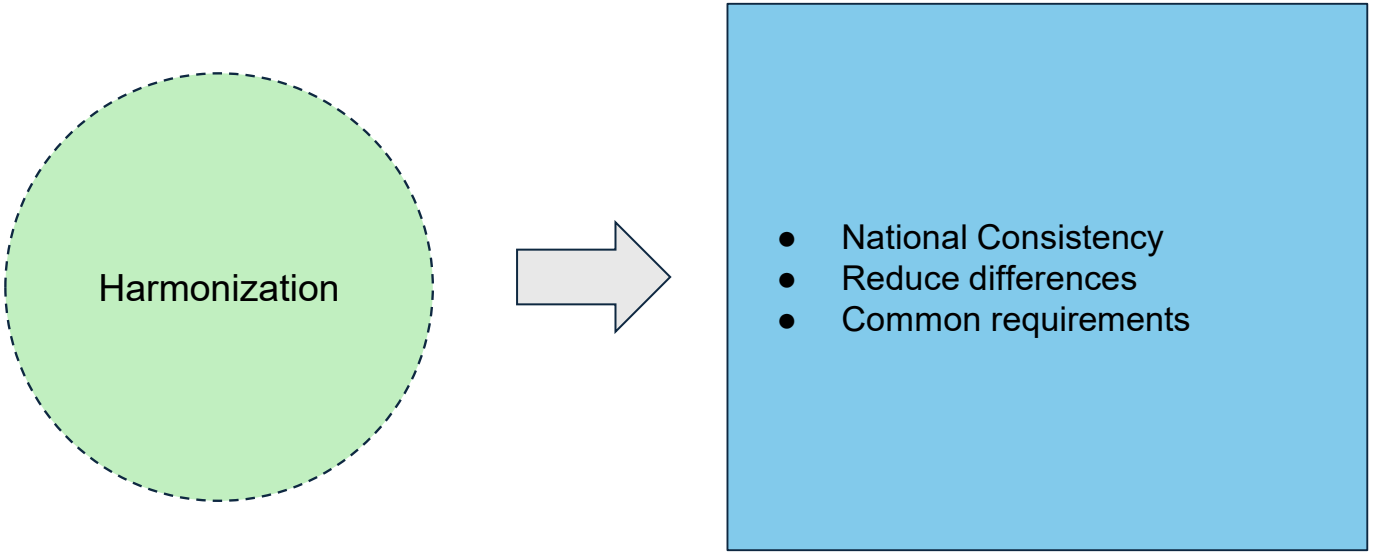

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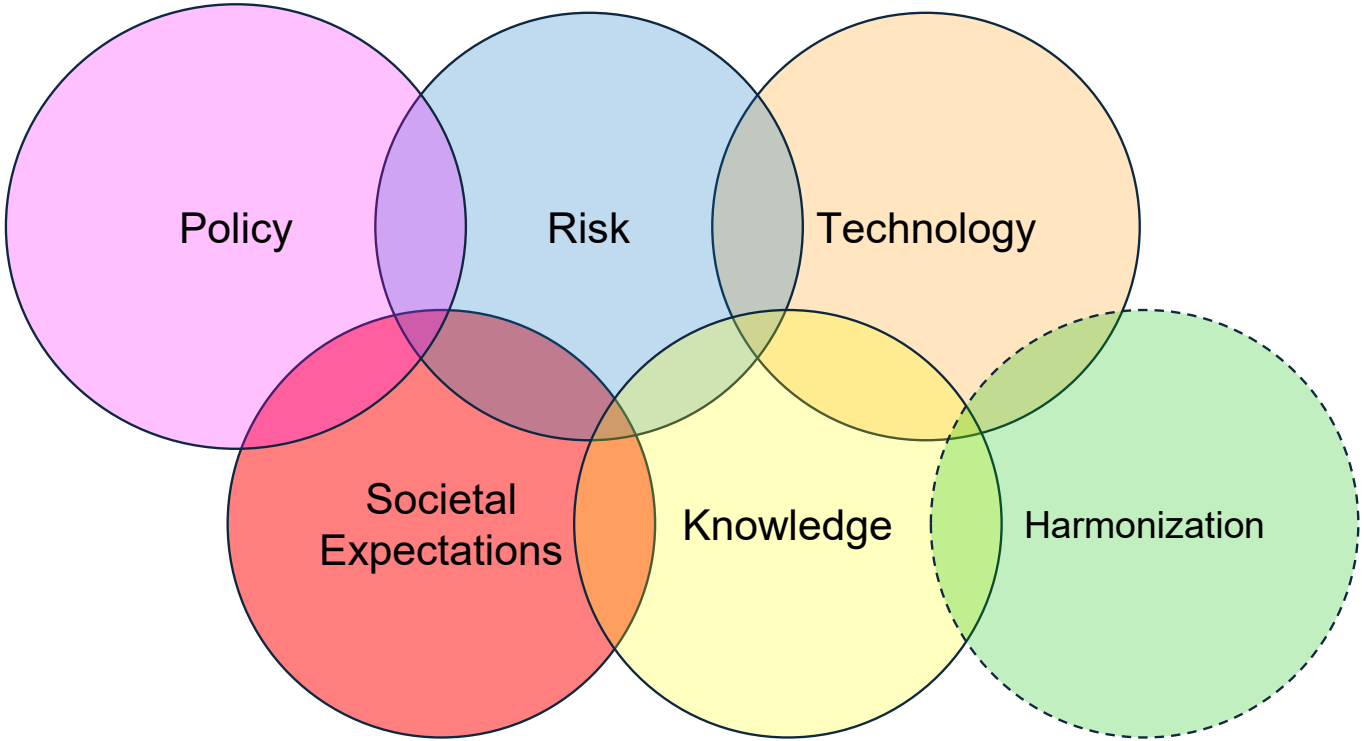

How does our Code change?

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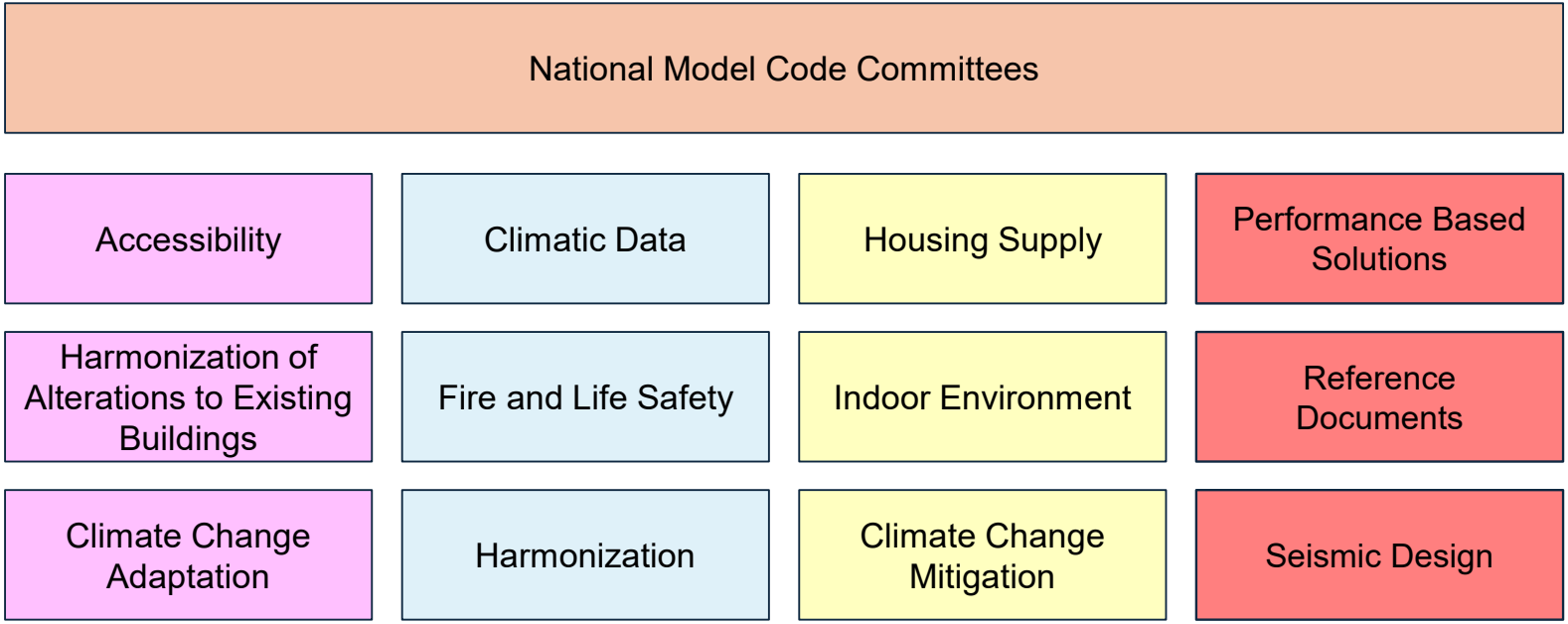
CBHCC
Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes

CCHCC
Comité canadien de l'harmonisation des codes de construction

National Model Code Committees	Leads development within its technical mandate
↳ Task Groups	Tackles a defined technical problem for the NMCC
↳ Working Groups	Focused work supporting NMCC or TG

How does our Code change?



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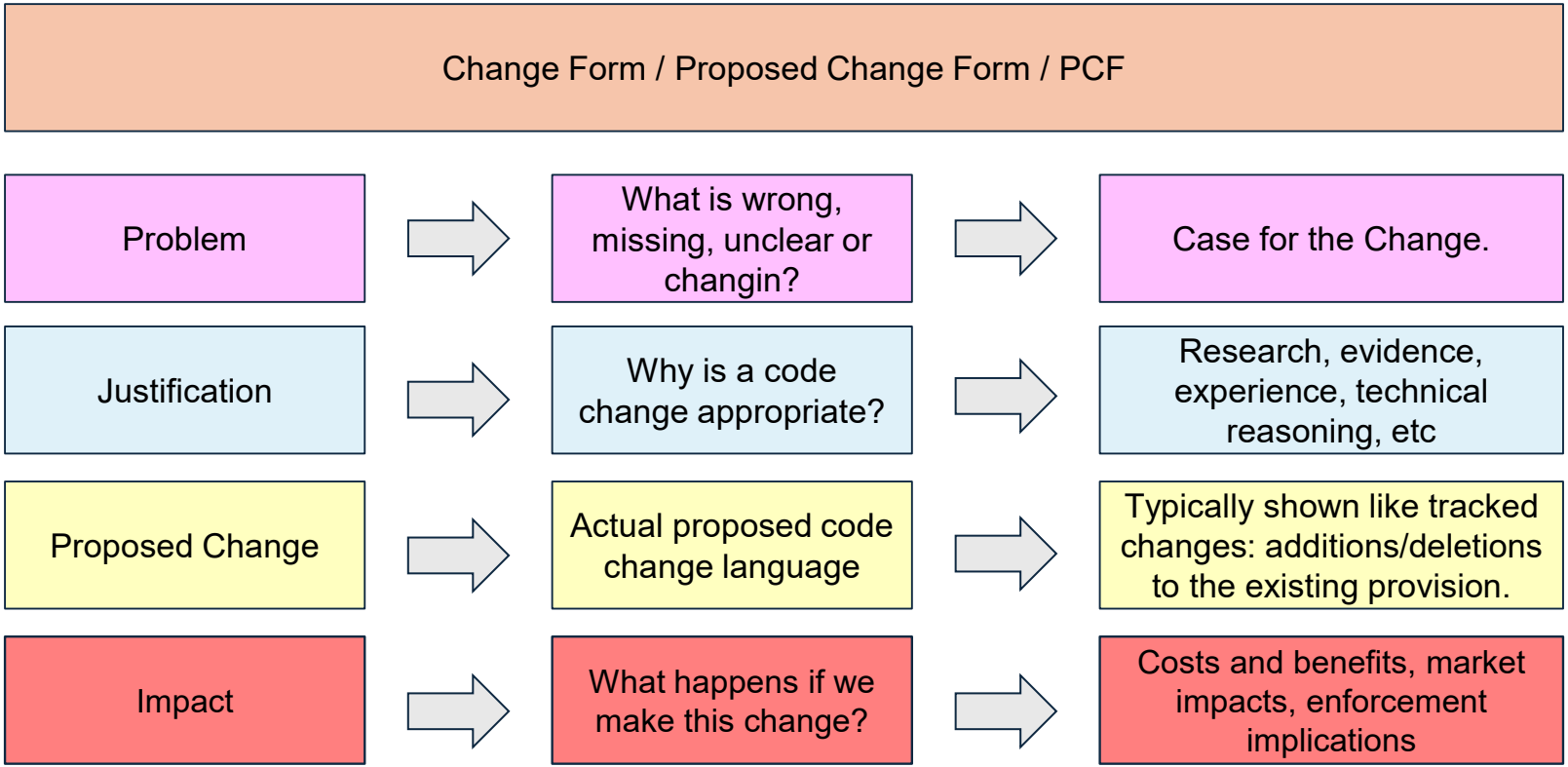

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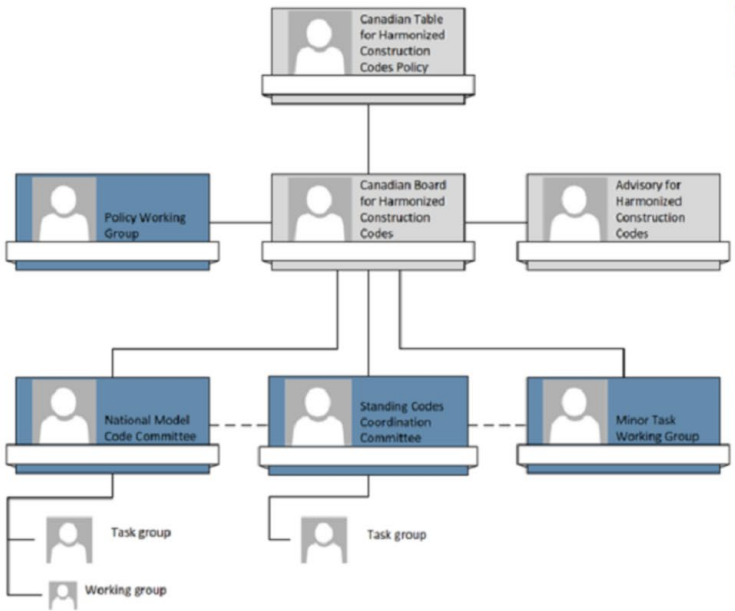

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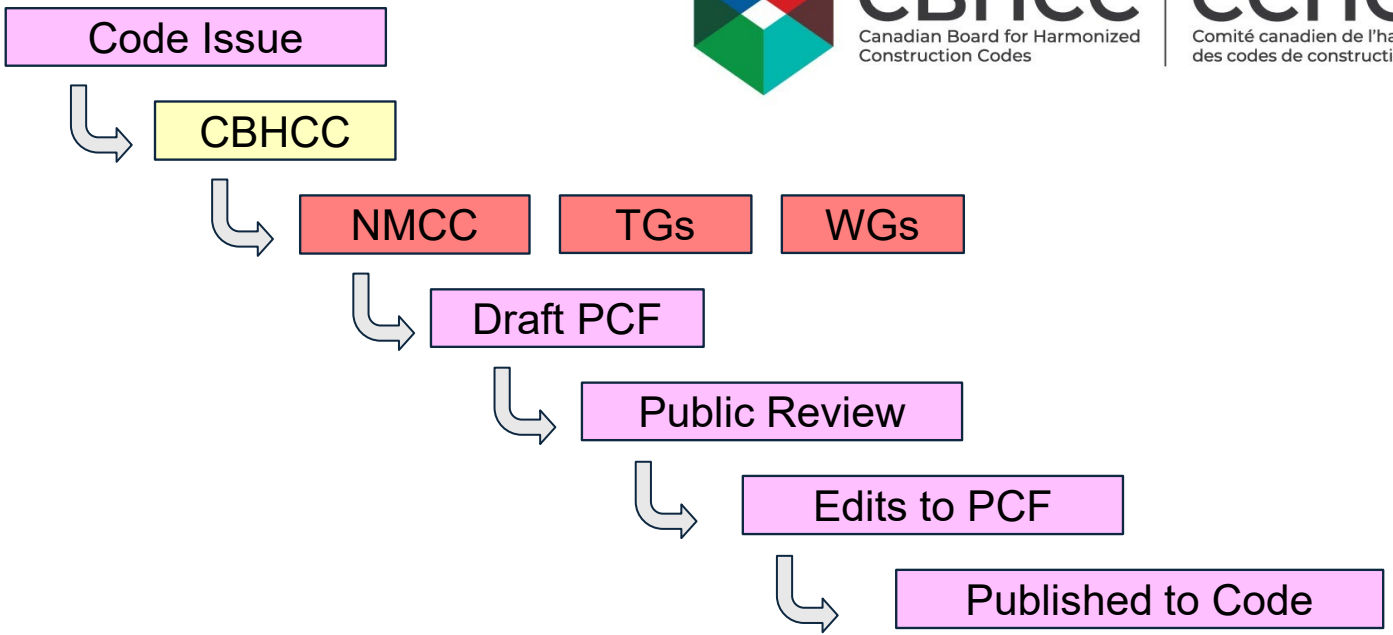
Figure 1: Harmonized Code Development System committees and their relationship to code system governance

https://cbhcc-cchcc.ca/en/operating-procedures-for-development-committees/

How does our Code change?



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Code change in practice

Code change in practice

Code Issue

BCBC [B] 9.23.13.5.(3)

3) Interior or exterior wood-sheathed *braced wall panels*, other than panels of WSP-A framing in the uppermost storey shall

a) extend to the roof framing, and

b) have their the top plate connected to

i) top chords of perpendicular or offset parallel trusses by using blocking panels or other methods of lateral load transfer designed by the roof truss manufacturer,

ii) perpendicular or offset parallel joists or rafters by using blocking of the same construction as the *braced wall panel* below, or

iii) rafters, joists or trusses by using methods of lateral load transfer designed in accordance with good engineering practice.

(See Note A-9.23.13.5.(3) and (4).)

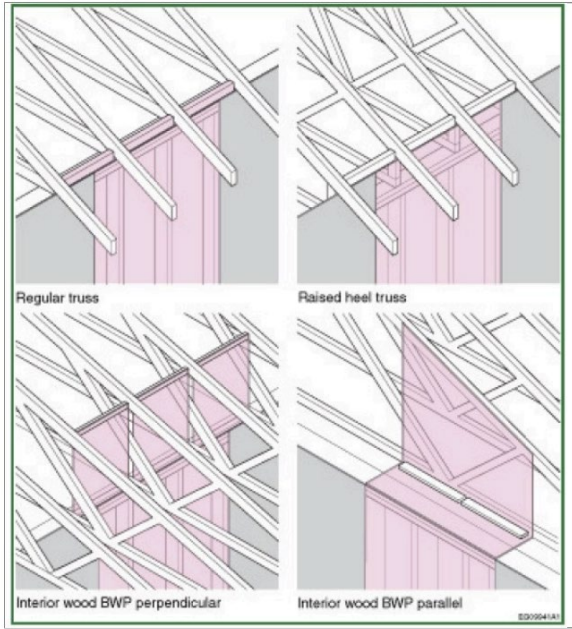


Figure A-9.23.13.5.(3) and (4)

Source: BCBC 2024r6

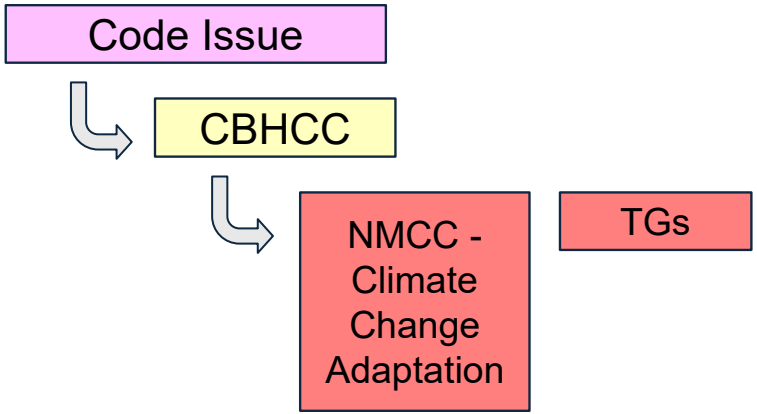
Code change in practice

Code Issue

↳ CBHCC

WESTERN WOOD TRUSS &
BUILDING COMPONENTS ASSOCIATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Code change in practice



CBHCC | CCHCC
Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes | Comité canadien de l'harmonisation des codes de construction

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Home > Code development committees

Terms of Reference for National Model Codes Committee on Climate Change Adaptation

Mandate

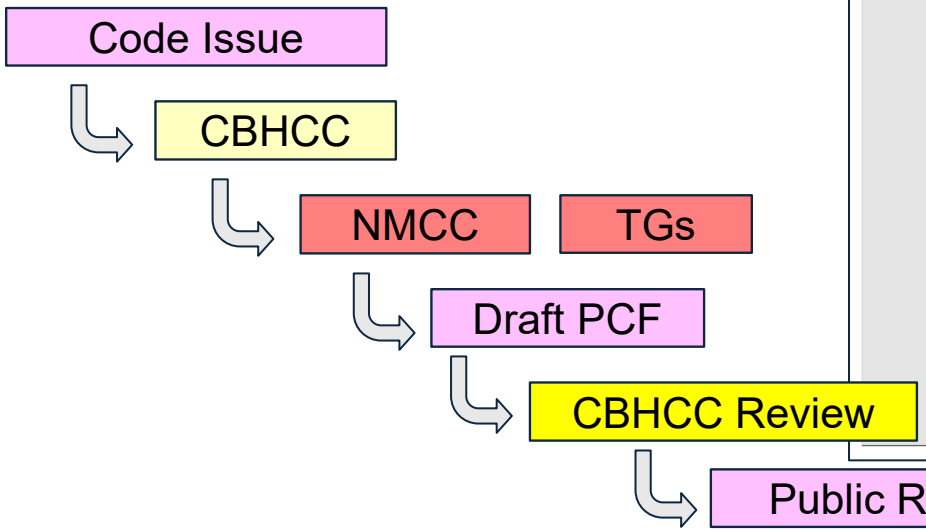
Subject to CBHCC direction on the role of the codes on aspects of climate resilience, the National Model Codes Committee (NMCC) on Climate Change Adaptation will develop requirements in response to the changing climate in the areas of overheating, durability and resistance to deterioration, high winds and tornadoes, permafrost zones, wildland urban interface, and flood-resistant design in buildings in the National Model Codes as described below and in accordance with the Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes (CBHCC) approved work plan.

Note: the breakdown of mandates shown below does not necessarily reflect the recommended task groups and working groups being planned.

Lateral loads on Part 9 buildings

- Recommend code changes, where appropriate, for the interim update to the NBC 2025 to address an issue with the newly approved lateral load provisions in Part 9, Division B—specifically concerning the transfer of lateral loads from roof trusses to braced wall panels using blocking panels.

Code change in practice



Proposed changes – Tracking database

ID	Title	Description	Code Reference	Status	Code Change Requests
2216	Roof load transfer to braced wall panels	The proposed change addresses the transfer of loads from roof rafters or roof trusses to braced wall panels.	NBC25 Div.B 9.23.13.	NMCC on Climate Change Adaptation: Review 2026-05-20 Standing Codes Coordination Committee: Review 2026-06-09 NMCC on Climate Change Adaptation: Review — Recommended for Public Review 2026-06-24	-

How do I get involved?

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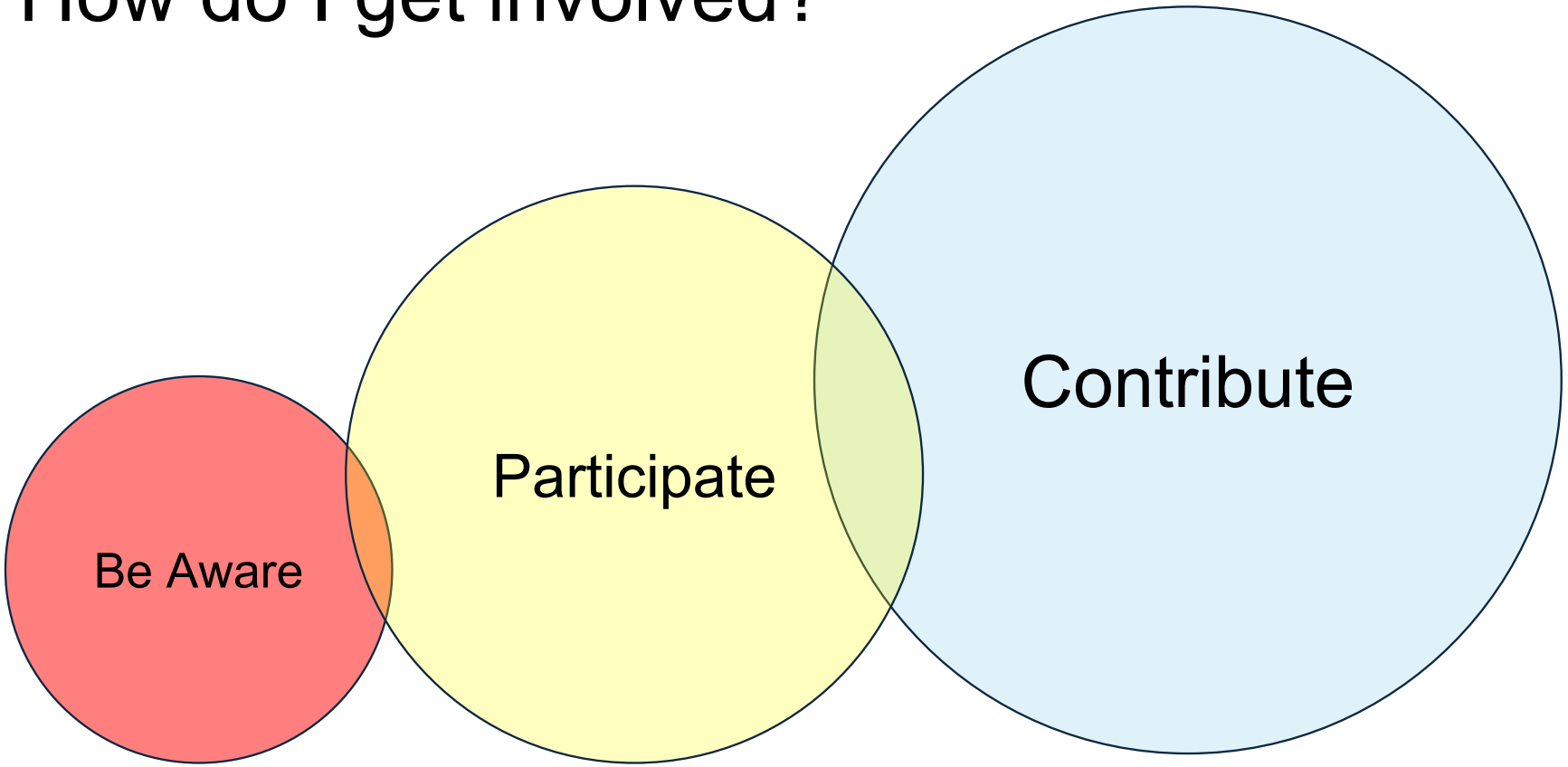

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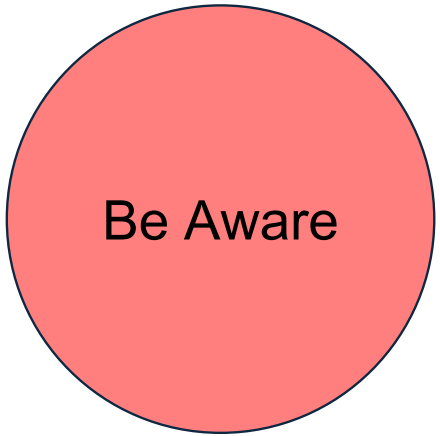
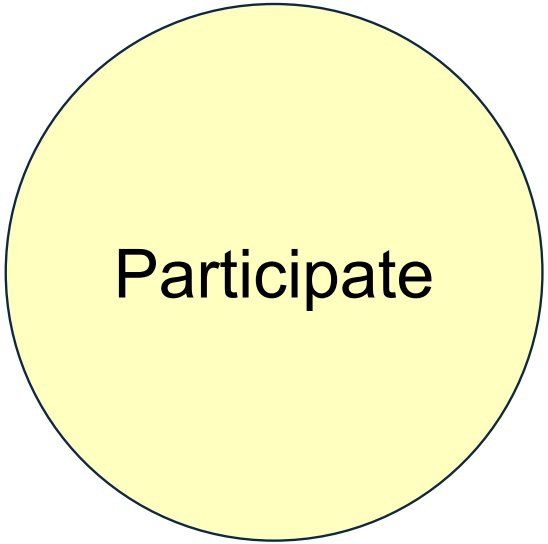


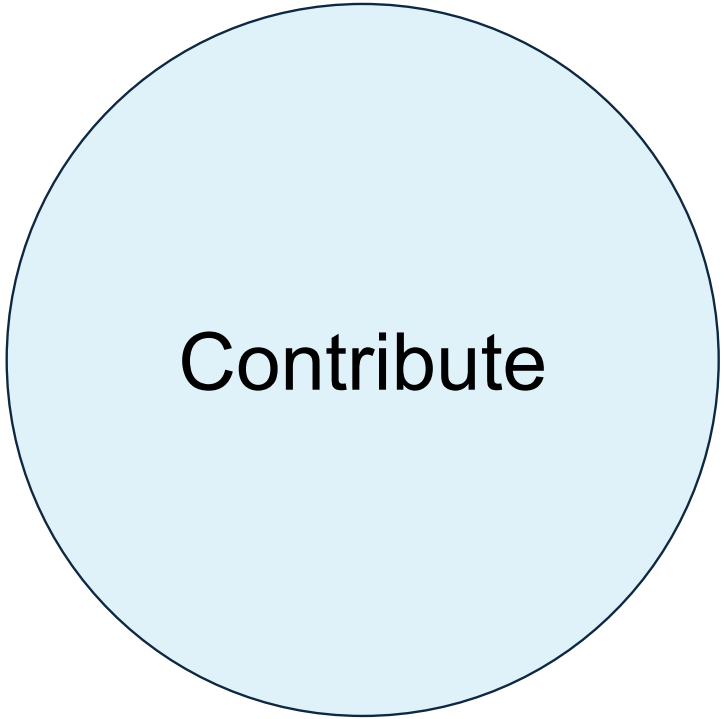
- Join the CBHCC mailing list
- Understand where we are in the code development cycle
- Review past code changes
- Note the formatting ques in BCBC

How do I get involved?



- Review Proposed Code Changes
- Respond to Public Reviews
- Attend code development meetings as an “Observer”
- Review NMCC agendas

How do I get involved?



- Join a National Model Code Committee
- Submit a code change request

How do I get involved?

Contribute

Development committee / Membership	Policy working group	Standing Codes Coordination Committee	National model codes committee	Task group	Minor task working group
Recommended number of members, excluding NRC technical advisor(s)	**3 to 7**	**No less than 6[8]**	**10 to 25**	**5 to 10**	**2 to 3**
CBHCC member	Yes	No	No	No	No
FPT representative other than CBHCC member	Yes	No	Yes[1]	Yes	Yes
Non-FPT representative (see additional breakdown of representation below, where applicable)	No[9]	Yes[3]	Yes[4]		
Regulatory[5]	–	≈50%	≈25%	Yes[4]	Yes[1,2]
Industry[6]	–	≈50%	≈40%		
General interest[7]	–	–	≈35%		
Association stakeholder[10]	No[9]	No	Yes[4, 11]	Yes[4]	No
NRC researcher	No	No	Yes[1,2]	Yes[1,2]	Yes[1,2]
NRC Technical advisor (support)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

End/Questions

Tim Warner

Email:
twarner@boabc.org