



# THE CANADIAN NATIONAL MODEL CODE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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# Disclaimer

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NAIMA Canada provides this report for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide advice or interpretation on the application of the various changes to the National Model Code Development System. Predictions on or suggested Implications of these changes are the opinions of the authors and should not be relied upon as a statement of future action.

# Background

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On November 22, 2022, the National Model Code Development System was changed. This document is intended to describe the new, and current system.

The Provinces and Territories have always been responsible for their building code. This resulted in a significant amount of duplication of effort over the years and the result was that each Province and Territory had a different code. In the 1940's the Federal Government saw what was happening and attempted to create a system to help improve the situation. At that time, the Federal Government created the Model National Building Code Development System. This was done to reduce the cost for the Provinces and Territories and to create a harmonized Code across the country.

The Model National Code done by the Federal Government and updated every 5 years does not have any legal status until it is adopted by a Province or Territory, and then, only in the jurisdiction where it is adopted. The National Model Codes were not adopted by all the Provinces and Territories at the same time and many of them modified the Code to address specific concerns of their Province or Territory. As a result, the Code was not harmonized across the country and some jurisdictions were working with different editions of the Code. The new National Model Code Development System was created to address these issues.

Leading up to this change, the Federal Government negotiated the Construction Codes Reconciliation Agreement with the Provinces and Territories. This document describes how the National Code Development System was to be transformed. All parties to the agreement accepted to reduce or eliminate variations to the technical requirements in the Codes when they adopted them, and they agreed to a "timely adoption" of the Codes. Timely adoption was defined to be 24 months from when the 2020 National Model Code was published, and 18 months after all future Codes are published. Codes are published every 5 years.

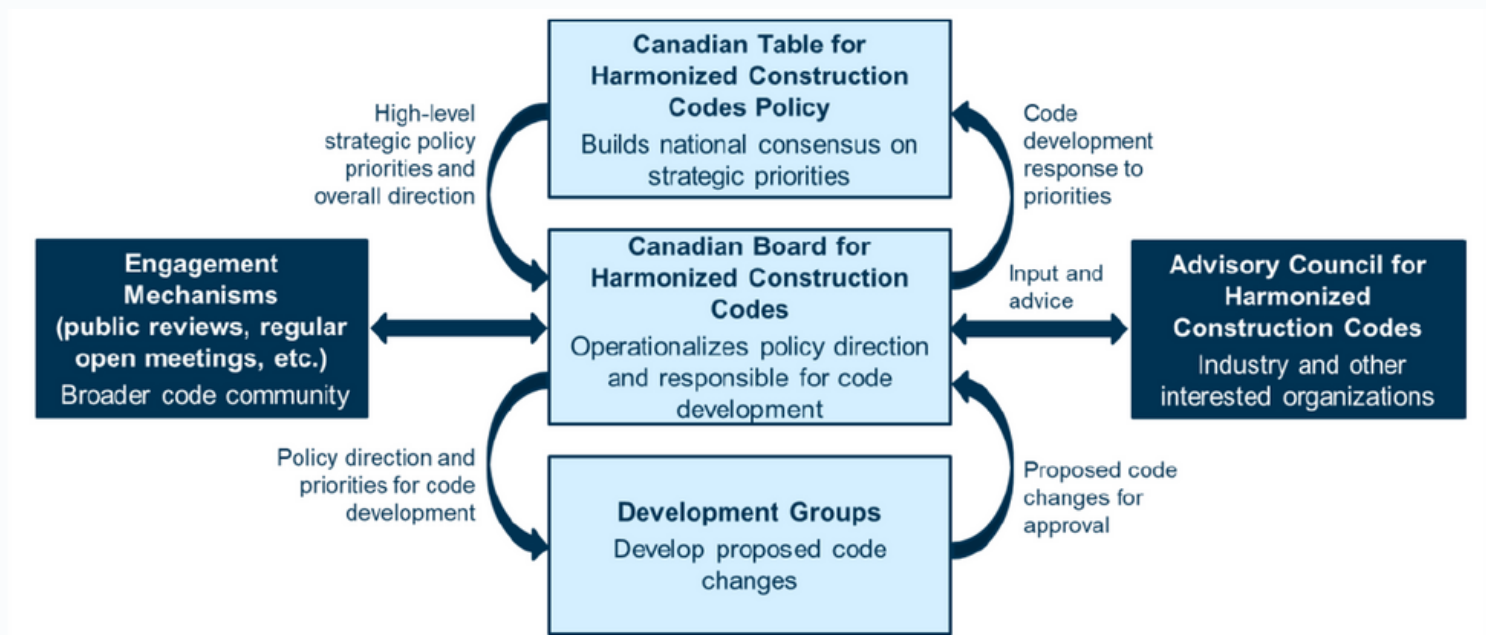
Another significant part of the Construction Codes Reconciliation Agreement is that the Codes will be made available to anyone wanting a copy, free of charge, in a digital format.



# The National Model Code Development System

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The organizational structure of the System can be represented as follows:



The boxes represent a group or groups of people, each with a specific role in the Code Development System. Those familiar with the process and those working in the Code Development System historically have referred to each group by their acronyms, so the group name and acronym are both provided in the descriptions below.

# Code Development Roles

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## Canadian Table for Harmonized Construction Code Policy (CTHCCP)

This group is made up of Provincial and Territorial Deputy Ministers of Housing and the representatives of the Federal Government. This group will provide policy direction to the Codes. By the fact that each Provincial and Territorial jurisdiction is represented, it is believed that this will promote harmonization of the Code.

This group will also receive feedback from the CBHCC as to the progress of the Code Development and any issues that have arisen that may need policy discussion and input.

## Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes (CBHCC)

This group is made up of individuals (volunteers) selected from a wide range of groups who use the Codes. This group is responsible for receiving the policy directions from the CTHCCP and providing direction to the Development Groups (DG) to create the proposed changes to the Codes.

In addition, this group is responsible for receiving input from the Advisory Council for Harmonized Construction Codes on the specific priorities identified by this group. The priorities of this group will be considered and shared, as appropriate, with the CTHCCP to further consider and decide if they will become national policies for the Code.

Once the Code changes are prepared, this group is responsible for engagement with the public to solicit input on the proposed changes. As appropriate, public comments will be shared with the DG for modifications to the proposed changes or shared with the CTHCCP if they relate to policy considerations.

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## Development Groups (DG)

These will be several Development Groups, representing areas such as:

- Use and Egress
- Energy Efficiency
- Housing and Small Buildings
- Earthquake Protection.

The number of Development Groups and job of each Development Group will be decided upon by the CBHCC. Some Development Groups may have a short duration depending on the issue it has been tasked to resolve while others may be ongoing.

These groups will be primarily technical people (volunteers) and supported by National Research Council technical and support staff. Their job is to write the Code sections. In the event that research and/or testing is required to demonstrate a Code requirement is adequate, it would be this group that would recommend that work be done and NRC staff would be responsible for having it completed.

Once the Code changes have been made and approved through the DG's, the proposed changes would go to the CBHCC for approval. Public comment on changes will be solicited through the CBHCC.

## Advisory Council for Harmonized Construction Codes (ACHCC)

This is a council made up of representatives from a wide range of associations or groups that are involved with the Code in some way. This is where NAIMA Canada has input directly before Code changes are made. There is also opportunity to comment through public reviews once the Code changes are written and being finalized.

The ACHCC members include groups and associations that represent companies that work directly with the Code such as; builders, renovators, HVAC contractors, electricians, wood producers, concrete suppliers, steel fabricators, window manufacturers, and insulation manufacturers. Others at the table represent, for example; building officials, fire chiefs, insurance companies, and accessibility advocates, to name a few.