

Backgrounder

Information about the BC Building Code to help you fill out the survey.

Why are we doing a survey?

The B.C. government is working to update the BC Building Code. This means new buildings will be more accessible for all people. You're invited to fill out an online survey to give feedback to help us develop better BC Building Code accessibility rules.

Who does what?

The provincial government sets the BC Building Code. This code provides rules about how buildings get built in B.C. The only exception is the City of Vancouver and on some federal lands. Local governments can enforce the BC Building Code. This helps buildings be safe and healthy places to visit, work, and live.

The BC Building Code and accessibility

Accessibility code requirements set the rules for the design and construction of new buildings. Accessible buildings have features to help people use a building's services safely and independently. The BC Building Code does not set the rules for building operation and management. It also does not set the rules for furniture design and placement.

In 2018, the BC Building Code adopted most of the National Building Code requirements. It kept some B.C. accessibility rules to increase accessibility.

The BC Building Code changes about every five years. A building must meet the BC Building Code in force when it is built. Currently, a building already in use does not have to be changed each time the code is updated unless the building is being changed. Visit www.gov.bc.ca/buildingcodes to learn more about the BC Building Code.

Having the same code across Canada

In 2020, B.C. signed the Reconciliation Agreement on Construction Codes. The agreement will help provide consistent codes and standards throughout Canada.

National and provincial accessibility laws

On July 11, 2019, the Accessible Canada Act came into force. The Act seeks to address barriers in federal jurisdiction in a range of areas. On June 17, 2021, the Accessible British Columbia Act came into force. It enables the government to develop new accessibility standards to remove provincial barriers.

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Future building codes and standards

The B.C. government is working to develop new and better accessibility requirements. Partners include provincial ministries and national partners. These requirements will inform a harmonized approach to accessibility in future national and provincial building codes.