

Adopt 2020 National Building and Energy Codes

Moved by: Sustainable Building Manitoba

This is a new policy resolution.

Whereas: Energy efficient buildings are the low hanging fruit of climate action and economic development. The latest National Model Building Codes were released in March of 2022 and the government has not made any commitment to their swift adoption and implementation. Manitoba is the only province in Canada that did not adopt the last round of building codes, putting us two code cycles behind. Buildings are responsible for 20% of Manitoba's GHG emissions. The new codes have a tiered structure so that industry has a roadmap to progressively improve energy performances of buildings over a number of years. In 2021 Manitoba passed legislation (Bill 38: The Building and Electrical Permitting Improvement Act) to harmonize with the National building codes but this was never proclaimed. The new codes are for new builds only and retrofit codes are not expected out until 2030.

Currently the government is committed to adopting the 2015 national model construction codes but have not given a timeline. As a signatory to the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Agreement which states the 2020 national model codes must be adopted within 24 months of being published and for subsequent code versions within 18 months. Within the tiered system of these new codes they have not yet indicated which tier they will adopt. This timeline is out of sync with the severity of the climate crisis.

Whereas: The best time to make a building sustainable and energy efficient is at the time of design and construction. Poorly built buildings will need to be retrofitted at greater expense in the future to meet our emissions targets, increasing the financial burden on Manitobans and exacerbating the climate crisis. Energy poverty, where people struggle financially to heat and cool their homes and power their lights and appliances, is a major issue in Manitoba that can be addressed by improving the energy efficiency of buildings. As we see the rising cost of energy around the world it is more important than ever that we learn to make the best use of our resources. Energy efficiency, specifically insulation, is necessary for security from the elements during the extreme climate that Winnipeg and Manitoba experiences.

Whereas: Any new building constructed is a net increase to MB's GHG emissions and will continue to emit over its 30 to 50 years of operation, it is vital that Manitoba proclaim Bill 39 and adopt the increasingly higher performance tiers the 2020 National Model Construction Codes to avoid excess energy use and the associated costs for operation.

Whereas: Bill 38, The Building and Electrical Permitting Improvement Act, must be proclaimed to ensure swift adoption of the 2020 National Model Codes. The government should then work with industry to develop a plan to move up through the tiers to increase the sustainability and energy efficiency of buildings. Resurrect a new version of the Building Standards Board to ensure that stakeholders are in conversation with government to address issues of adoption and implementation as they arise - a tactic that was instrumental in BC's recent Step Code implementation. Learning from other jurisdictions on how they were successful in building code adoption across industry, the Manitoba government should fund an education campaign on code adoption.

Currently the Manitoba workforce does have a skills gap in so investing in training programs will be the key. Implementation without enforcement is a losing battle and so making sure that programs and personnel are in place and appropriately trained for inspections and issuing permits will also play a key role.

Whereas: Manitoba strives to be the cleanest and greenest province in Canada and without modern building codes this goal is simply unattainable. The government also seeks to make the lives of everyday Manitobans more affordable but without these codes being adopted and implemented, Manitobans will be spending significantly more money on building maintenance and retrofits down the road.

Whereas: Community Economic Development is based on the value and significance of a circular economy, and CED approaches and strategies should address the ecological and climate crises in ways that enhance equity and well-being for all. Adopting strong building codes will make sure that our buildings will not adversely contribute to the climate crisis, support the concept of a circular economy, and reduce the burden of higher energy costs on lower-income communities. Adopting better building codes contributes to environmental, social, and economic justice.

Whereas: This resolution relates to numerous theme areas within the Road Map, including;

- *Local & Fair Economies* - social procurement and economic development
- *Ending Poverty* - Addressing energy poverty. Housing is not affordable if it is not energy efficient. Too often the lowest income renters are forced into the least energy efficient spaces
- *Tackling Climate Change* - Reduce Emissions, a key piece of a Just Transition for workers.
- *Directing Our Own Future* - development of industry stakeholder group to ensure that there is a clear method for people to raise issues and provide feedback so that we have made-in-Manitoba solutions driven by the people doing the work.

Be It Resolved That: The Manitoba government fast track the adoption of the 2020 National Model Building and Energy Codes, and do so above Tier 1, as well as implementing the following supportive actions:

- A. Reform a committee of stakeholders to work with industry to develop a plan to swiftly move up through the tiers outlined in the code
- B. Fund an education campaign on code adoption
- C. Invest in workforce training and code enforcement

How the Resolution will be Advanced: Sustainable Building Manitoba working with other stakeholders within the CCEDNet membership and also from the construction sector to show strong support from the public and industry.