



August 11, 2022

The Honourable David Joanasié, MLA
Minister of Community and Government Services
Office of the Minister
Legislative Assembly Precinct
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

#48-6(2)
Oct 31/22

TRANSLATION TO FOLLOW

Dear Minister Joanasié:

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet to draw your attention to concerns that have been raised with me regarding the administration of the territorial *Building Code Act* and *Building Code Regulations*.

As you are aware, information published by your department indicates that:

“All construction projects require a Building Permit. The Building Permit must be applied for and issued by the Office of the Chief Building Officer (OCBO) before any construction activity begins. Plans and detailed drawings showing the proposed work are required to be submitted with the building permit application. All fees must be paid in full before a Building Permit will be issued.”

Section 39 of the *Building Code Regulations* provides, in part, that:

Plans and specifications

39. (1) Plans, drawings and related documents submitted with a building permit application for a building of the following groups must be prepared, signed and sealed by engineers, or architects and engineers:

- (a) Group A (assembly occupancies);
- (b) Group B (care, treatment or detention occupancies);
- (c) Group C (residential occupancies), if the building area exceeds 600 m² or three storeys;
- (d) Group D (business and personal services occupancies), if the building area exceeds 600 m² or three storeys;
- (e) Group E (mercantile occupancies), if the building area exceeds 600 m² or three storeys;

- (f) Group F, Division 1 (high-hazard industrial occupancies);
- (g) Group F, Division 2 (medium-hazard industrial occupancies), if the building area exceeds 600 m² or three storeys;
- (h) Group F, Division 3 (low-hazard industrial occupancies), if the building area exceeds 600 m² or three storeys;
- (i) any other building covered by Part 4 of Division B of the Code.

Complex designs

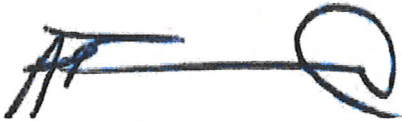
- (2) Where a building official is of the opinion that a proposed construction requires specialized knowledge, the building official may require that
- (a) plans, drawings and related documents be prepared, signed and sealed by an engineer, or an architect and an engineer; and
 - (b) field reviews be performed by an engineer, or an architect and an engineer.

Although I fully appreciate and recognize the importance of ensuring compliance with relevant codes and safety requirements in respect to large-scale and complex projects, concerns have been brought to my attention by individual constituents and industry stakeholders regarding current regulatory requirements for small-scale projects involving renovations, additions and improvements to existing residential properties. It is my understanding that the requirement to engage engineers is creating a major barrier to such projects, and does not take into account the circumstances and capacities of our communities, including the role of qualified journeypersons.

I ask that you undertake to review the current provisions of the *Building Code Act* and *Building Code Regulations* as they relate to these issues.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a large, circular flourish.

Alexander Sammurtok, MLA
Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet

c.c. MLA for Rankin Inlet South
Mayor, Municipality of Rankin Inlet
Mayor, Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet



September 7, 2022

Alexander Sammurtok
MLA, Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet
P.O. Box 874
Rankin Inlet, NU
X0C 0G0

Re: Administration of the Building Code Act and Regulations.

Dear Mr. Alex Sammurtok,

Thank you for your letter dated August 11th, 2022, regarding the territorial *Building Code Act* (BCA) and *Building Code Regulations* (BCR).

I am writing in response to your concern about the application of regulatory requirements to small-scale projects: renovations, additions, improvements to existing residential property.

Under the BCR Section 39(1) I, 600m² three-story homes and smaller do not require plans sealed by engineers and architects (excluding foundations). Small and medium builders with a journeyman workforce could take advantage of this when:

1. Plans include enough detail to inform the Office of the Chief Building Official (OCBO) that the design is building code compliant
2. Buildings use dimensional lumber framed to the building code requirements
3. Design excludes premanufactured building systems

This easement for small-scale residential projects aims to simplify projects, reducing costs and saving time. However, an issue that impacts virtually all residential homes built in Nunavut, is the use of premanufactured systems: engineered wood trusses, beams, and flooring systems. While premanufactured systems offer a sufficient advantage to builders, they include a requirement for design review, hence, your concern.

My department is currently investigating opportunities to increase efficiencies and service standards for builders and community members seeking to build, renovate and improve their homes. One consideration under review is the viability of a parallel permitting process that would allow builders to provide the OCBO with alternative



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Building *Nunavut* Together
Nunavut Iluqatigiingniq
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble


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Office of Minister David Joanasié
Havakvingni Ministam David Joanasié
Bureau du ministre David Joanasié

documentation to comply with regulatory requirements. Many suppliers of premanufactured systems provide configurable assembly instructions stamped by the manufacturer's engineers. This documentation and code compliant design will make building in Nunavut more accessible. Changes to the permit process would result in a decrease to cost and regulatory barriers for small and medium sized contractors, reducing the construction cycle timeline.

While I am not prepared to initiate a review of the BCA or BCR at this time, my department is committed to increasing efficiencies and service standards. I expect that the parallel permitting system will help address the primary issues identified by homeowners and developers quickly and effectively until such a time that a fulsome review of the BCA and BCR can be completed. The Department is dedicated to providing the best building code legislation for our climate, housing needs and Nunavummiut.

Sincerely,

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Hon. David Joanasié
Minister, Department of Community & Government Services

Cc: Lorne Kusugak, MLA Rankin Inlet South
Harry Towtongie, Mayor, Municipality of Rankin Inlet
Tony Amauyak, Mayor, Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet
Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister CGS
Jonathan Potts, A/Director Safety Services
Brad McFaul, Director Policy and Consumer Affairs