
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range

ACT INTRODUCED TO EXPAND WOOD USE IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

VICTORIA – British Columbia’s new Wood First Act aims to increase demand for wood products by requiring provincially-funded building projects use wood as the primary construction material, Forests and Range Minister Pat Bell announced today.

“In an average year, the Province funds about \$3 billion worth of capital projects. Putting a ‘wood first’ lens on this spending is an effective way to support B.C. forest workers and showcase wood products,” said Bell. “Leading by example is the best way we can demonstrate to architects and builders the benefits of innovative wood building systems.”

The Wood First Act provides the basis on which the Province can recommend best practices and report on the use of wood in provincially-funded buildings. The government will implement this requirement through new procurement standards. Additional consultation will occur as the Province develops best practices and a reporting structure to support the legislation.

Currently, wood is under-utilized in non-residential construction in North America, representing only 19 per cent of commercial or institutional buildings when it has the potential to be used in the majority of cases. The act will help facilitate a stronger wood culture by displaying the benefits of using wood in new building projects.

“Wood is durable, cost-effective and climate-friendly,” said Bell. “We need to promote a culture that sees wood as the preferred choice for all construction, interior design and daily living. By using more wood, we can strengthen our forest dependent communities and help fight climate change.”

British Columbia is actively encouraging other provinces and the federal government to implement a pan-Canadian, wood-first policy. The Wood First Act also builds on amendments to the B.C. Building Code that allow for six-storey, wood-frame construction. Starting with Alberta and Saskatchewan, British Columbia is working to extend the six-storey wood-frame building code across the country.

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