

Reforms to construction standards and building codes overview

Local construction standards and building codes provide important safeguards that ensure buildings are safe for habitation. At the same time, excessive or obsolete standards and codes can add unnecessarily to the cost of new development, which can depress new construction activity.

To support a healthy supply of housing, cities, towns, and counties should examine whether there are ways to eliminate requirements in construction standards and building codes that raise costs but do little to enhance safety. For example, local jurisdictions can ensure their codes align with those adopted by neighboring jurisdictions, or reconcile inconsistent or conflicting requirements. Communities can also ensure their codes are up to date and loosen restrictions on the types of materials that may be used – for example, authorizing the use of newer, less expensive materials that allow developers to realize cost savings in the building process without compromising safety.
