SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES
Between the
2012 & 2015 International Codes and Local Amendments

INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE—2015 EDITION

Means of Egress

The means of egress provisions in Chapter 10 were reformatted to relocate similar provisions to be located together in an effort to provide a more logical approach for designers and building officials. Few significant changes were made outside the reformatting, other than to increase the travel distance permitted in sprinklered buildings. These changes were paralleled in the *International Fire Code*.

Construction in Flood Hazard Areas

Significant changes were made in multiple codes to address construction in flood hazard areas. However, most of these provisions were deleted from the code by regional amendments, including in the attached document, as cities in North Texas as a whole prohibit construction in flood hazard areas.

Building Materials

Provisions have been added to the codes to address the use of building materials that are fairly new to the market, such as cross-laminated timbers (CLT) or plastic composites, such as those commonly used for building decks.

Special Inspections

Provisions have long been included in the building codes requiring a building owner to obtain a third-party special inspector to certify certain construction elements during construction. Local amendments have been created and regionally similar forms created in order to provide a single set of documents for these third-party special inspectors to use when submitting to various cities in the region.

Existing Buildings

Chapter 34 of the *International Building Code* has always regulated construction in existing buildings, and also referenced the *International Existing Building Code* (IEBC), which contained additional and sometimes conflicting requirements. Chapter 34 has now been deleted in its entirety and simply references the standalone IEBC, which establishes limits on what changes can be required within existing structures when remodeling work is being performed. The IEBC is now included in the adopting ordinance, in sections 150.070 and 150.071, as a separate document.

Solar Systems

Due to the increased activity in installation of solar panels, provisions have been introduced into the *International Fire Code, International Residential Code* and the *International*

Building Code related to the installation of solar panels. These provisions require the installer to account for dead loads, live loads and other loads such as wind and snow loads when designing systems to be installed.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The provisions requiring the installation of carbon monoxide detectors have been moved to a new section, separating them from smoke and fire alarm systems, which are typically inter-connected. Carbon monoxide detectors are now required in E (educational) occupancies with fuel-fired appliances, instead of just in residentially-related occupancies and may also be combination devices.

Energy Code

Provisions for energy code compliance have been removed from the *International Residential Code* and that chapter replaced with a reference to the *International Energy Conservation Code*. This change did not modify the requirements of the code, but merely eliminated the duplication between the two separate codes. The State of Texas' State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) has adopted the provisions of the 2015 *International Energy Conservation Code* with an effective date of September 1, 2016, and state law prohibits cities in "non-attainment areas" (the entire North Texas region is within a "non-attainment area") from adopting any code that is less stringent than the state's adoption. Therefore, the NCTCOG-recommended amendments to the *IECC* have been reviewed by the State of Texas' Energy Systems Lab (ESL) at Texas A&M University, which has determined that the amendments are no less stringent than that adopted by the State of Texas.

Swimming Pools

Requirements for swimming pools, spas and hot tubs have long been contained in an appendix to the *International Residential Code*, but recently a new code was published titled the *International Swimming Pool & Spa Code* (ISPSC). NCTCOG recommended amendments included placing these requirements back into the appendix to the *IRC* as Appendix Q. This will eliminate the requirement for the City or contractors to purchase additional code books.

Wind Speeds

The *International Residential Code* contains wind speed maps to be used by designers in determining potential wind speeds based on location. However, the *IRC* also used the term "basic" wind speed, which differed from the term used by the *American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE),* who publishes the *ASCE 7-10* standard titled *Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures,* which uses the term "ultimate" design speed. This created confusion for designers and reviewers working with both codes. The tables in the *IRC* were revised to provide ultimate design speeds. While this change to the wind speed maps may seem significant, Table R301.2.1.3 provides conversion of these to nominal wind speeds, which actually vary less than 2 miles per hour from former "basic" wind speeds. This is basically a change of nomenclature.